

OP06.4

The Bermuda Triangle of child and adolescent mental health

Philip Wilson(1), G King(1), A Roberts(1), C Mearns(2)

(1) Centre for Rural Health, University of Aberdeen, Inverness, Scotland, UK

(2) NHS Highland, Inverness, Scotland

Corresponding author: Professor Philip Wilson, University of Aberdeen, Centre for Rural Health, Inverness, UK. E-mail: p.wilson@abdn.ac.uk

Background & Aim: Confusion about which service is most likely to offer effective interventions can mean that young people with mental health problems can become caught in the triangle of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHs), Paediatrics and Social Work Services. At best this can cause frustration for families and service providers, and at worst delays in service provision can be potentially damaging.

Method: We recently introduced a pilot rapid diagnostic service for primary care physicians (GPs) in Highland Scotland. The service involves parents, teachers and children over 10 years completing the Developmental and Well-being Assessment (DAWBA) followed by a psychiatric assessment of the data and feedback to GPs. DAWBA is an online diagnostic interview, rated by a CAMHS specialist, which is highly sensitive and specific for most child psychiatric diagnoses. GPs can then make an informed decision about which service is most appropriate, hopefully making families less likely to get caught in the triangle.

Results: We shall present the results from our pilot work and describe the changes we have introduced to streamline the service. Early evidence suggests that GPs very much appreciate rapid access to a diagnostic mental health assessment for children and young people. It appears that the DAWBA assessments may have helped to strengthen the role of GPs in finding the best service to help families.

Conclusions: Along with colleagues from Norway, Sweden and Finland we now have obtained funding from the EU Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme to support a multi-national randomised controlled trial of DAWBA. The challenges in ensuring appropriate and efficient referral to CAMHS and related services are international, and despite different service configurations in the Nordic countries, international colleagues are keen collaborators in designing this trial.