**Briefing paper to Manchester Crown Courts on behalf of Greater Manchester Integrated Healthcare in Custody and Wider Liaison and Diversion service**

1. **Purpose of paper and summary**

The purpose of this paper is to:

* Inform Judges and court users about the newly commissioned Liaison and Diversion service to be provided at Manchester Crown Courts (Minshull Street and Crown Square)
* Provide an overview of the existing liaison and diversion service across Greater Manchester
* Outline the liaison and diversion Crown Court provision
* Explain how the service will function and clarify capacity limitations

1. **Background to the national liaison and diversion programme**

In 2007, the Secretary of State for Justice asked Lord Bradley to undertake an independent review of the diversion of offenders with mental health problems or learning disabilities away from prison.

The Bradley Report was published in April 2009 and set out the recommendations for service improvement, leadership and governance arrangements to support change. One of its key recommendations was for a national model of liaison and diversion to be rolled-out across the country.

The national programme commenced in 2010 with the aim to have full coverage across England by 2021 and liaison and diversion services part of mainstream NHS service provision.

Liaison and Diversion is a process whereby people of all ages passing through the criminal justice system are assessed and those with mental health, learning disability, substance misuse and other vulnerabilities are identified as soon as possible in the justice pathway.

Identified suspects/offenders are provided with and supported in access to appropriate services including, but not limited to:

* mental and physical health care
* social care
* substance misuse treatment
* safeguarding.

Information gained from assessments is shared with relevant youth and criminal justice agencies to enable key decision makers to make more informed decisions on diversion, charging, case management and sentencing.

Diversion should be interpreted in its wider sense, referring to both diversion ’out of’ and ‘within’ the youth and criminal justice systems. Access to liaison and diversion services by individuals with identified vulnerabilities does not imply that they will avoid appropriate sanctions imposed by the YJS/CJS, but that the process will be better informed, and access to appropriate health and social care interventions will be improved.

The aims of the service are to provide and support:

* Improved access to healthcare and support services for vulnerable individuals and a reduction in health inequalities
* Diversion of individuals, where appropriate, out of the youth and criminal justice systems into health, social care or other supportive services
* To deliver efficiencies within the youth and criminal justice systems
* To reduce re-offending or escalation of offending behaviours

1. **Current Liaison and Diversion Service in Greater Manchester**

The Greater Manchester Integrated Healthcare in Custody and Wider Liaison and Diversion Service is commissioned by Greater Manchester Combined Authority with monies devolved from NHS England and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

The service commenced in February 2017 and was the first integrated custody health care and liaison and diversion service commissioned nationally. Several others areas have now commissioned services in this way.

There are three providers in the partnership:

* **Mitie Care and Custody** who provide the custody health care element
* **North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust** who provide Liaison and Diversion in police custody and courts
* **Cheshire and Greater Manchester Community Rehabilitation Company** who provide short term support into the community to help service users to first appointments with local services.

The service is embedded in all Greater Manchester police custody suites and Greater Manchester magistrates and youth courts.

1. **National Crown Court Provision**

Four pathfinder sites commenced in 2017/18 to implement the delivery of enhanced services located at the Crown Court centres in Birmingham, Bristol, Liverpool and Nottingham. In 2018/2019, a further four Crown Court centres rolled out the service in Leeds, Preston, Sheffield and Reading.

Manchester Crown Court centres have been identified to receive the enhanced service.

1. **Crown Court service specification**

* Information management, advising, trouble-shooting, and raising issues early in the proceedings
* Screening, assessment and referral of defendants
* To develop and maintain effective communication pathways with the main court departments and criminal justice agencies - list office, clerks, judiciary, CPS, probation, PECS, defence teams, police and prison service
* Provision of immediate advice (for example regarding accessing mental health services/referral pathways or general psychiatric queries)
* Provision of advice to reduce adjournments for full medical reports by offering a concise and thorough report prepared by the team on the day of the court hearing
* Where cases are assessed as requiring an in-depth and full psychiatric reports advice is given regarding consultants and their field of specialism
* Provision of advice on the appointment of intermediaries (recognising that the commissioning of intermediaries is a function for the court)
* To advise probation and to provide input into the production of probation reports, including risk management and community assessments
* To facilitate an effective pathway for information gathered by colleagues in the police station or magistrates’ court to reach the Crown Court L&D practitioner. Both secure email and access to local mental health data bases play a vital part in this communication process
* To provide input into meetings and to negotiate access to relevant sources of information e.g. case summaries, MG5s etc.
* To provide awareness training for the judiciary, court staff, prosecution and defence representatives, probation and youth offending teams.
* To establish and maintain links with mental health ‘gatekeeper’ Trusts

**Exceptions**

* Liaison and diversion practitioners will not be eligible to be appointed as ‘expert witnesses’
* Liaison and diversion services are not responsible for the production of formal HMCTS commissioned psychiatric reports
* Liaison and diversion practitioners will not be required to act as a supporting adult within the courtroom

1. **Manchester Crown Court service overview**

We aim to launch the Crown Court service in early autumn 2019.

The service will provide 2.8 Crown Court practitioners, based in Minshull Street and Crown Square Crown Courts.

In terms of delivery, this would usually be one practitioner per site (unless there was sickness when the practitioner on duty may need to cover both sites).

The practitioners will be available during court delivery hours.

The service will be part of the wider liaison and diversion service. They will work closely with the team in the police custody suites and magistrates’ courts to ensure follow up of service users’ needs/vulnerabilities. The practitioners in the Crown Court will use the same care record system as the existing service to ensure timely access to service user information and to ensure that this information is shared with the court.

The service in Crown Court will accept referrals from all court users.

1. **Reporting**

The service has been asked by the commissioners at GMCA to report on:

* The number of interventions provided in Crown Court
* The number of written and verbal court reports provided
* The number of psychiatric reports which have been recommended
* The number of occasions where immediate advice is provided
* The number of occasions where advice is given to Probation / YJS workers

1. **Key contacts for the service**

* Cath McDonald, Liaison and Diversion Operational Manager, email: [Catherine.mcdonald@nwbh.nhs.uk](mailto:Catherine.mcdonald@nwbh.nhs.uk)
* Neil Willis, Integrated Partnerships Manager, email: [NeilWillis@interservefls.gse.gov.uk](mailto:NeilWillis@interservefls.gse.gov.uk)

1. **For information on how the service is commissioned**

* Karen Smith, Service Commissioner, email: [Karen.Smith@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](mailto:Karen.Smith@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)