



Supporting children
and young people in
complex situations



CAMHS

The Link Programme

Information for Families and Carers



What is the Link Programme?

The Link Programme has been established to help young people who have a range of needs including education health, social care and others.

These young people may have:

- Both physical and mental health needs
- Longer-term issues such as autism or learning disabilities or both
- Needs that are not being met by the 'standard' treatments and professionals are finding it difficult to help.

Because of the variety of needs there is no one service that can support them. These young people may be described as having 'complex needs'.

Concerns for the mental well-being of the young person

Professionals and others who provide the day-to-day care and support for the young people often have significant concerns about the young person's ongoing emotional, mental health or neurodevelopmental difficulties.

How does it work?

The Link Programme has a 'stepped approach' to how it works with professionals and there are four levels:

1) Advice only

The Link Team will discuss the young person's situation with the referring professional. If it is thought to be generally well-managed and there is a strong professional network in place, the LINK team may reaffirm the actions already taken.

2) Single or Multiple Agency consultation

There may be several professionals who are working to support a young person with complex needs. A single or multiple agency consultation could involve, among others, a social worker, NHS Child and Adolescent Mental Health Practitioner, Youth Offending Services, Pupil Referral Units or staff from educational settings.

The group would meet to develop a joint understanding of the young person's needs.

A care plan would then be developed to support the young person and this would be reviewed.

3) Assessment by a Link Team

There may be certain situations where a young person needs further clinical assessment. If this is not immediately available elsewhere, an experienced clinician from the Link Team will carry this out.

This could be a psychologist, psychiatrist or occupational therapist. As part of this they will look at the young person's wider home, school and social environment.

4) Assessment and Direct intervention

In certain cases a Link Team will take on the case management of the young person alongside other professionals.

The young people will take part in helping to develop and review the plans for their care.

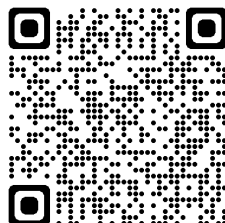
Direct intervention might also include medication monitoring, psychological, educational/occupational and youthwork input.

How is the Link Programme going to help?

One of the main outcomes the project is hoping to achieve is to see stabilisation or improvement in the emotional health of the young person.

Having an improved mental health will also help in other areas of the young people's lives.

For more information please see the Link Programme pages on the Oxford Health Website.



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Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust

Trust Headquarters

Littlemore Mental Health Centre

Sandford Road, Oxford OX4 4XN

Switchboard 01865 901 000

Email enquiries@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk

Website www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk

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