

SUMMER 2023

ISSUE 7

The Link

The Regional Care and Justice Campus Programme
Newsletter



Welcome

Welcome to the latest edition of *the Link*; the Regional Care and Justice Campus Programme newsletter.

Lots of progress has been made since the last edition of the newsletter, and there have been some changes to the programme workstreams including how we're progressing our harmonisation workstream to share services, facilities and space across Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre and Lakewood Secure Care Centre. There's also been some changes to the teams who are delivering change and improving outcomes for our most vulnerable children and young people.

If you want to find out more about the Programme and our work, you can contact the Programme Team via the details on page 13 of this edition.

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Introducing...

Peter Toogood

Joint Programme Senior Responsible Owner



Peter joined the Northern Ireland Civil Service in 2011 and was appointed as Department for Health Deputy Secretary for Social Services Policy Group in January 2023. Peter leads on a range of policy areas including children's and adult social care; mental health services; services for people with a learning disability or physical disability and services for older people and community care.

Peter will also be the Department of Health Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for the Regional Care and Justice Campus Programme. As joint programme SRO, Peter has personal responsibility and accountability for the delivery of the programme objectives and policy intent.

Staff Changes

As you may know, Ronnie Armour left the Department of Justice in June to take up a position in the Department of Education. We wish Ronnie the best in this new role and thank him for his support to the Programme as Senior Responsible Owner.

In March, the Programme also said goodbye to Paul McStravick who retired as Director of Woodlands and welcomed Mary Aughey to the role along with Kelvin Doherty as Director of Youth Justice Services.

Dr Ruth Fleck

Consultant Clinical Psychologist
Service Lead

ACORN Therapeutic Service: Northern
Ireland Secure Care



Dr Ruth Fleck was appointed in September 2022 as Service Lead and Consultant Clinical Psychologist to develop and establish a multi-disciplinary mental health and therapeutic team to work across Northern Ireland's secure care for children and young people, (Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre and Lakewood Regional Secure Care Centre). Ruth is a Clinical Psychologist with over twelve years' experience in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) across England and Northern Ireland. Ruth brings a breadth of experience working with children and young people in secure settings.

Focus On...

ACORN Therapeutic Service: Northern Ireland Secure Care

The Campus Programme has supported the introduction of a new multi-disciplinary health and therapeutic care service - 'ACORN Therapeutic Service: Northern Ireland Secure Care'. ACORN has been chosen as the new name for the service as stands for providing **A**cceptance, **C**onnection, **O**pportunities and **R**elationships to meet individual **N**eeds. This new name for the service reflects its core aims and values. Young people across Woodlands and Lakewood are designing a new logo for the ACORN Service.

ACORN works across Woodlands and Lakewood and provides trauma-informed care and a formulation-driven evidence-based whole system approach to meeting the needs of children and young people in secure care.

The ACORN Service will;

- enhance current health and therapeutic service provision across Lakewood and Woodlands by sharing resources and developing one model of care;
- implement multi-disciplinary assessment, formulation and intervention based on the needs of the young person;
- implement Healthcare Standards for Secure Care and the principles of the Northern Ireland Framework for Integrated Therapeutic Care (NIFITC);
- provide young people with a comprehensive mental health and neurodisability assessment;
- provide dedicated and timely access to psychiatric and psychological input and professional services through the multi-disciplinary service team; and
- provide teams within Lakewood and Woodlands with consultation, advice, supervision and support.

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Focus On...

ACORN Therapeutic Service: Northern Ireland Secure Care

Representing a broad range of disciplines including social work, nursing, psychology, occupational therapy and psychiatry, in order to meet young people's needs in an individualised and holistic way, the ACORN team is now operational across both sites, and has begun to look at pathways and procedures as it becomes more embedded. Recruitment is also planned, or underway, to fill vacancies in the team.

The ACORN Service offers a dedicated trauma-informed, multi-disciplinary therapeutic provision, to include mental health, neurodiversity and emotional wellbeing assessments and interventions for young people admitted to secure care, as well as integrated workforce supports for the delivery of therapeutic care practice. This includes Step 3 Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, where appropriate.

The ACORN Team is really passionate and excited about the new developments and being able to enhance the care provided to young people in secure care as well as being able to support young people in a holistic way. More information is coming soon on the official service launch later in the year.

Establishment of the ACORN service is a key milestone for the Regional Care and Justice Campus Programme is a first step in developing a harmonised approach to the care of our children and young people in these settings.

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Gateway Programme Review

In November 2022, the Regional Care and Justice Campus Programme was reviewed as part of the **Gateway Review** process. A form of “health check”, the process is designed to provide an impartial view of a programme’s ability to deliver against its objectives and make recommendations and advise where programme improvements can be made.

Overall, the Programme received an **Amber** rating. The reviewers noted that delivery appeared feasible, but that some work was needed to strengthen the programme management and governance arrangements. This work is well progressed.

In response to the review, the programme objectives have been revised. Moving forward, the programme will improve outcomes for some of Northern Ireland’s most vulnerable children and young people by;

- **achieving harmonisation** across Lakewood and the Juvenile Justice Centre by the sharing of services, facilities, practice, training and physical space; and
- **developing or improving services** that help children and young people consolidate the progress made in secure care to reduce their risk of returning to secure care and assist in successful community placement living and help them avoid admission to secure care, in either centre, in the first place.

To meet the revised objectives, the programme has been restructured into two main workstreams:

- **Preventative Activity**, i.e., community based supports aimed at preventing admission, or re-admission, to a secure facility.
- **Harmonisation Activity**, i.e., aligning standards of practice and services across Woodlands and Lakewood to support the future sharing of space.

The programme will continue to progress a number of strands of activity across the **Prevention** and **Harmonisation workstreams**.

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Programme Workstreams

Prevention Workstream

The Prevention Workstream includes several key workstrands based on community supports to prevent admission, or re-admission to a secure facility, for example;

- **Wider NIFITC:** Begin roll out of a single model therapeutic approach across residential settings and prevent escalation to regional secure facilities.
- **Minimising unnecessary admissions to the Juvenile Justice Centre:** Focusing on care-experienced children and young people, scope and analyse admissions to the Juvenile Justice Centre, explore and develop options for minimising unnecessary admissions particularly under PACE and remand, including options for alternative accommodation.
- **Admissions Panel:** taking account of learning from the pilot phase, deliver proposals for the formal establishment of a regional, independently chaired Panel.
- **Staffing and Skills Mix within Children's Homes:** completion of an examination of the residential workforce giving consideration to skills mix and capacity issues.

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Harmonisation Workstream

The Harmonisation Workstream includes several key workstrands based on aligning standards and services across Woodlands and Lakewood, for example;

- **Secure Care Standards:** Develop common standards to support practice delivery within, and on the edges of, secure care which inform regulation and inspection.
- **NIFITC:** implement a single integrated therapeutic model of care across both facilities.
- **Multi-disciplinary Therapeutic Service:** provide all young people in both facilities with equitable access to a single multi-disciplinary therapeutic service.
- **Health:** ensure all young people within both facilities receive healthcare which meets their needs and have the same access to services as those in a community setting.
- **Education:** provide all young people in both facilities with equitable and consistent access to a range of education and training opportunities.
- **Vocational Training:** enable young people from Lakewood to safely learn vocational skills within the Woodlands facility.
- **Partnership:** establishment of a partnership board with responsibility for the harmonisation agenda.
- **Training:** embed an approach where staff from both facilities are trained together where possible and appropriate.
- **Space:** develop and implement an agreed approach to the sharing of space within the Woodlands footprint by youth justice and children's secure care.
- **Managing Safety and Security:** develop and implement an agreed approach to the mitigation and management of risk to ensure the safety and security of young people and staff within both facilities.
- **Legislation:** identify and progress any legislative amendments that may be required to give effect to harmonisation.

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Wider NIFITC

Health and Social Care Trusts have begun implementation of the Northern Ireland Framework for Integrated Therapeutic Care (NIFITC) model more widely, initially in two residential homes in each area. This roll-out will be supported by a programme of training for all those providing support to looked after and adopted children.

Minimising unnecessary admissions to the Juvenile Justice Centre

A sub-group of the Programme Working Group was established to consider reducing unnecessary PACE and remand admissions and its report was considered at the June Working Group meeting. The report identified actions across 3 areas: evidence collection and analysis; preventing arrests; and accommodation. A workplan was submitted to the Programme Board for consideration at its June meeting, and an action plan has been agreed.

Admissions Panel

The Pilot Multi-Agency Secure Care Panel continues to operate and provide the thresholding decision making forum for all children in Northern Ireland who may require secure care. Learning from the Pilot will inform proposals to be considered by the Programme Board on the future direction and development of the Panel.

Staffing and Skills Mix within Children's Homes

Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG) has undertaken an examination of the residential workforce giving specific consideration to skills mix and capacity issues. SPPG is currently developing proposals and recommendations which will be considered by the Programme Board in due course.



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Education and Vocational Training

A shared model of education and training will be introduced across Woodlands and Lakewood which will support young people to learn and achieve to the best of their ability. One of the model's key aims will be to ensure equity of access to education and training across both facilities, particularly in relation to vocational training and building on the positive steps already taken across both sites.

The Department of Education and the Education Authority are leading on the development of the shared education model and a Working Group was established in May 2023 to consider a range of education models.

Staff across both Woodlands and Lakewood have also been working towards establishing a vocational learning pilot to support some of the young people from Lakewood accessing vocational learning provision on the Woodlands site. The young people will be able to access vocational learning provision as part of their Care Plan. What we learn from the Pilot will help support the development and introduction of the shared education and training model across Lakewood and Woodlands in the long term.

Sharing of Facilities

To inform the vocational learning provision pilot and the development of a shared model of education and training for young people across Lakewood and Woodlands, staff across both sites are developing proposals to support young people from Lakewood to access facilities such as the Woodlands swimming pool as part of their therapeutic care plan. In May, the first young person from Lakewood began to use the Woodlands facilities. We can also use the learning from this to inform future sharing of space, services and facilities across both sites.

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Sharing of Space

A workshop was held in March to discuss sharing of space by establishing a secure care unit in one of the existing houses within the Woodlands estate, on a pilot basis for a two year period. It is anticipated that this approach will provide a more spacious and therapeutic physical space for young people who require secure accommodation, irrespective of location, resulting in an improved standard of secure care provision. It is planned that the new unit will be staffed by those from South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust (SEHSCT), and that the total number of secure beds available across the region will remain at 16.

Following the workshop, a SEHSCT and Youth Justice Agency co-chaired Project Steering Group has been established and met for the first time in May. It will aim to plan, deliver and implement the establishment of a new secure residential children's home within the Woodlands estate. This will be a complex process with many details to be considered and worked through. We will provide you with further details on this important element of the Campus Programme through future editions of *the Link*.

Standards

Standards are being developed in line with the eleven Northern Ireland Framework for Integrated Therapeutic Care (NIFITC) building blocks. These will support practice delivery within, and on the edges of, secure care and inform regulation and inspection.

Health Care

The South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust is continuing its work to progress the development and implementation of reshaped primary care service provision across both facilities.



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Multi-Disciplinary Service - ACORN Therapeutic Service: Northern Ireland Secure Care

ACORN Therapeutic Service: Northern Ireland Secure Care began operating across both sites in February. More information about the new service can be found in the **Focus On...** section of this edition of *the Link*.

NIFITC Secure Care Implementation

NIFITC implementation has begun in both Woodlands and Lakewood. A joint Woodlands and Lakewood Implementation Team has now been established and is led jointly by Woodlands' Deputy Director and Lakewood's Assistant Director. The Team is in the process of establishing two Implementation Working Groups, in Woodlands and Lakewood, which will start planning the detailed elements of implementation. Three areas of development have been selected for initial focus, including individual Health and Wellbeing planning and review processes, training for staff about trauma-informed care and NIFITC processes, and approaches to staff support. The Working Groups will be led by the operational lead for each service and involve a range of operational staff.

NIFITC Training Roll Out

As part of NIFITC residential care implementation, a training programme has begun in each HSC Trust. This has been developed collaboratively for the residential workforce, including peripatetic teams, with input from the Regional NIFITC Implementation Team, residential therapeutic providers, and other social work colleagues within HSC Trusts and Queen's University Belfast. The programme will be delivered across ten half day workshops. These workshops are followed by eight interactive sessions exploring topics such as attachment, developmental trauma and supporting staff wellbeing, as well as describing and providing opportunities to practice aspects of the new Health and Wellbeing Planning and Review Process.



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Stakeholder Reference Group

The Programme Stakeholder Reference Group met virtually in February to discuss the Programme's work and progress to date, including the Gateway Review. In June the Group met to discuss Programme progress, the draft Communications and Engagement Strategy, and received a presentation, and provided their views, on the draft Standards.

Programme Board

The Programme Board met in person in February to consider programme progress and work to implement the recommendations of the Gateway Review. The Programme Board also met in June to consider Programme governance, Stakeholder Engagement and Communications, primary care and education provision, On-Site Step-down Provision, the draft Standards and a PACE and Remand action plan.

Working Group

The Programme Working Group met in person in June to discuss the progress of the Programme as well as the way forward on On-Site Step-down Provision, the draft Standards, PACE and Remand and Programme governance.

Department of Education Visit to Woodlands and Lakewood

In March, Claire McClelland, the Department of Education's (DE) Director of Raising Aspirations, Supporting Learning and Empowering Improvement, and DE's Programme Board representative, visited education settings in Lakewood and Woodlands' to see the services and support provided to young people across both sites.



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Harmonisation Workshops

Two workshops have been held, in November and March, with leaders from Youth Justice Agency, South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust and the Department of Health's Strategic Policy and Performance Group to help develop further proposals around harmonisation and sharing of space.

Engagement with Young People Report

The Regional Care and Justice Programme Team has published a report on its engagement with young people in Lakewood and Woodlands from May to September 2022. The report is available on the [Department of Health](#) and the [Department of Justice](#) websites. As part of the engagement sessions across both facilities, discussion focused on a number of areas, e.g., coming into a secure care setting; indoor and outdoor space; getting the right support; education and training; everyday life and leaving Lakewood/Woodlands. The Programme Team has used the findings of these discussions with young people to inform the development of draft standards, which are then being further refined further through engagement with members of the Workstream Advisory Group.

Find out More

You can find more information about all elements of the Regional Care and Justice Campus Programme on the [Department of Health](#) and the [Department of Justice](#) websites as well as on each department's social media.

Or you can contact us via:

RegFacilitiesProgrammeTeam@health-ni.gov.uk for more information or suggestions for future editions of *the Link* Newsletter.

