



## Infant Minds Matter

# Infant Mental Health Service

The aim of this service is to provide an *infant centred approach* to Infant Mental Health in Lanarkshire through direct clinical intervention with infants and their families, and support to professionals working across Lanarkshire, who contribute to the mental health and emotional well-being of infants.

### Why has an Infant Mental Health Service been established?

- Infants are the most vulnerable group in society, yet they have often been omitted from mental health services and policies
- There continues to be a lack of awareness and understanding that infants can suffer from serious mental health difficulties and disorders
- Epidemiological research indicates that approximately 16% of 18-month-olds in the general population have serious mental health difficulties
- The Scottish Government, as part of their Mental Health Strategy, has required all Health Boards to set up an Infant Mental Health Service

### What will the service offer?

- A direct Infant Mental Health clinical service for infants with moderate to severe mental health difficulties and their carers
- Multi-disciplinary and multi-agency Infant Mental Health training to up-skill the wider workforce
- Awareness raising of Infant Mental Health throughout Lanarkshire
- An Infant Mental Health consultation and advice line to health visitors/family nurses, early years and social work.

### Who is in the team?

The Infant Mental Health Team is multi-disciplinary and multi-agency, and each discipline and agency brings its particular training and perspective to addressing the mental health of infants. Our team consists of: Lead for NHSL Infant Mental Health Service; Consultant in Infant Mental Health Psychiatry; Child & Adolescent Psychotherapist; Clinical Psychologist; Social Worker (North and South Lanarkshire); Early Years Practitioner; and Admin support.

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### Referral Process

From September 2023 the Infant Mental Health Service is accepting referrals from the infant's health visitor/family nurse, from early years establishments, and from MNPI and PMHS. An IMHS Request for Assistance Form should be used, and should be sent to [infantmentalhealth@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:infantmentalhealth@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk). The form can be found either on NHSL Firstport, or on the IMH Service page of the NHSL website.

### Referral Criteria

- The team works with infants from 0 – 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday who present with moderate to severe mental health difficulties or disorder
- The infant must reside in Lanarkshire with parents or in kinship care
- The infant's primary caregiver must share the concerns and want to work with the service
- The infant's mental health presentation is not better accounted for and assessed/treated as a neurodevelopmental or physical condition

### Infants not seen by the IMH Service

- Infants who are Looked After and Accommodated:** the CAYP Team (CAMHS for Accommodated Young People) specialises in working with infants with moderate to severe mental health difficulties who are Looked After and Accommodated
- Infants with parents with severe and/or enduring mental illness or mental health difficulties:** the CAMHS Reach Out Team specialises in working with infants (and children and young people) with moderate to severe mental health difficulties who have parents with severe and/or enduring mental illness or mental health difficulties.
- Infants with neurodevelopmental conditions:** the Neurodevelopment Service for Children and Young People specialises in assessing and working with infants with neurodevelopmental conditions, and where an infant's mental health presentation is better accounted for and assessed/treated as a neurodevelopmental condition, the referral would normally be re-directed to the Neurodevelopment Service **UNLESS** the infant's need for intervention to address the parent–infant relationship is a greater priority. Re-direction to the Neurodevelopment Team would be as a result of discussion and agreement with that team and with the agreement of parent(s).

### Further Information

To find out more about the service please access our dedicated webpage at:  
<https://www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/services/infant-mental-health/>