

## 01 Background

Ben was a young person who was 17 years old at the time he stabbed his brother, who was aged fifteen  
Two key services were involved in his care; the first was the Child and Adolescents Mental Health Services (CAMHS). The second service involved, was the Adult Mental Health, Intensive Care unit. Ben's clinical presentation involved thoughts of extreme violence and harming his younger brother

## 02 Good Practice identified

- The GP showed good practice in that they were in regular contact with Ben's mother about his care and treatment. This ensured that the GP had a good insight into the family's lives.
- Given the complexities of his mental health, it is good practice that CAMHS often sought advice regularly from Specialist Forensic CAMHS in relation to how they could best support Ben.
- The school provided good pastoral support for Ben. The meetings with [PREVENT](#) took place within the school.
- Before the case was stepped back up to Children's Social Care (CSC), an Early Help worker who was pending allocation the case sought advice from CAMHS, which shows good information sharing and communication between agencies.
- Voice of the child: When CSC completed a Single Assessment in October 2018, they spoke to both Ben and his brother.

**07 Finding 5: All agencies to be aware of the potential impact on a young person with complex Mental Health needs when professional relationships are disrupted, for example due to extended sickness or leave.**

In this case, Ben had a good relationship with his CAMHS worker. However, when the CAMHS worker was absent from work for a long period of time, Ben's Mental Health began to deteriorate and agencies were not able to 'plug' the gap. Ben also refused to engage with any replacement CAMHS worker.



**03 Finding 1: When a Young Person has complex Mental Health needs, consideration should always be given to implementing Multi-Agency planning processes**

In this case it became clear that there was an overreliance on the CAMHS agency being able to meet this young person's needs when broader multi-agency intervention may have provided better coordination of his support.

If a young person is being supported by CAMHS and has complex mental health needs, consideration should be given to a multiagency planning process being applied and a CSC assessment should be considered to inform the tier of that intervention.

**06 Finding 4: When support for a Young Person with complex Mental Health needs is stepping down, workers from other universal / targeted services including Early Help should be considered to support this transition**

When closing involvement in a case, agencies should consider whether other universal or targeted services can be used as a step down. In this case, after the case was stepped back up to CSC, Early Help felt that they could have still provided some further ongoing support to Ben as part of a Multi-Agency package of support in the form of identity work, behavioural work, building positive relationships, anger management and criminal justice work etc.

**05 Finding 3: Agencies to ensure that relevant staff have a clear understanding of the process and practicalities of mental health assessment for children/young persons including the potential impact of assessments being undertaken out of hours.**

When an assessment is requested and falls into the out of hours timeframes, all relevant information may not be available, as well as potentially there being issues around bed availability. In this case, different agencies had different powers under the Mental Health Act (MHA) and yet no one used said powers after Ben was released from Police custody and then taken to a family members house.

**04 Finding 2: Any agency which is coordinating support for a Young Person with Mental Health needs should always consider the Young Person's educational setting as an important partner in any planning process**

When dealing with a child / young person with complex mental health needs, there should be close liaison and information sharing with the school. Schools reported that they felt it would have been useful for their record keeping, to receive updates from agencies involved, especially once that involvement ceased as typically this would mean the school would then keep a more watchful eye on the child. This is crucial so that schools know whether they in turn need to step up the level of pastoral care provided.