

Mental Health Navigators

for Children and Young People in
Norfolk & Waveney

Parent and Carers' guide



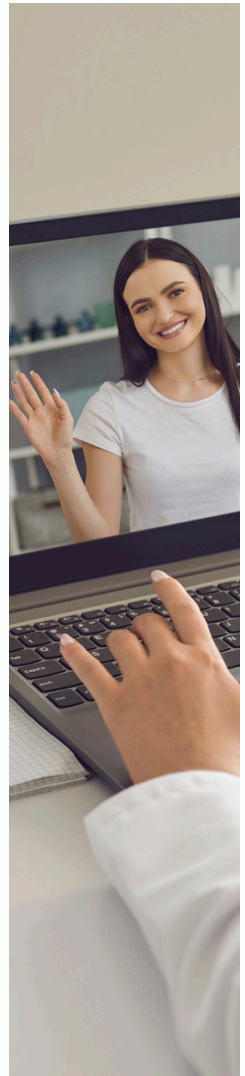
The service...

In April 2021, NHS Norfolk and Suffolk ICB secured funding to become an early adopter site for the national Transforming Care Keyworker programme aimed at supporting children and young people with a Learning Disability (LD), Autism (A), or both, who are at risk of admission to a specialist hospital. The service became operational on 1st October 2021 and has proven to be effective for the targeted cohort of children.

The Transforming Care Navigator Service has successfully achieved the objectives outlined in the NHS Long Term Plan. Consequently, the ICB has secured two years of funding from NHS England to expand the service to include children without a diagnosis of LD/A. Feedback from support network and children indicates that they felt heard and involved in their care planning.

Some support network have mentioned a reduction in stress as a result. Moreover, there has been a decrease in the need for physical restraints for behaviours of distress exhibited by children and young people. Additionally, there has been increased engagement with services through restorative efforts and alternative points of contact.

The new service, called the Mental Health Navigator Service, will support children and young people facing mental health challenges to prevent admission to a specialist Mental Health Hospital and/or facilitate timely discharge.



We have the ability to provide support for children and young people (up to the age of 18) who meet the following criteria:

- Living in Norfolk and Waveney.
- Currently under section in an acute general hospital or mental health hospital.
- Within 2 months of discharge from a Mental Health Hospital.
- Receiving support from the U18 Eating Disorder Lighthouse Service as an Alternative To Admission offer.
- Awaiting allocation of a hospital bed following a Form 1 Bed Request being submitted.
- On MH Dynamic Support Register risk rated as medium or high
- Receiving Crisis Assessment Intensive Support Team (CAIST) support for over 90 days.
- Referred to CAIST for support 4 or more times in a 6 month period.

AND

- The individual must have a diagnosed mental health condition
- Be displaying behaviours of distress that are of concern.

It is required that a request for support be made by a professional within the child or young person's team.



The navigators are here to coordinate in bringing together various services to ensure seamless support for children and young people. Our goal is to help children stay in the community whenever possible and have a smooth transition when leaving the hospital. The navigator will work closely with the professional team and the child or young person's support network.

We want to address issues before they become crises and prevent unnecessary admissions or readmissions. We will collaborate with children, young people, and their support network to enhance their quality of life, improve their ability to manage challenges, and build the skills and confidence needed to maintain a safe and positive environment.





The aims of our service, which are made up of several key objectives:

Primary goals:

- Where safe to do so, avoiding a hospital admission.
- To decrease the length of stay for detained children under the Mental health Act 2005.
- To assist in the development of effective aftercare plans for all individuals entitled to them after their hospital care

Through these, we want support network and children to feel supported and informed about their rights and available support systems. Also, for children to achieve their goals, enhance their sense of self-worth, and build effective relationships with their professional team. We want all children to thrive.

The focus of our service is to prevent crises and hospital admissions/readmissions by working closely with the child and, with their consent, their support network. Our goal is to enhance their quality of life, skills, and confidence in order to sustain a safe and happy environment.

The Navigators...

The Mental Health Navigators are a specialised team of 5 highly experienced individuals who work in Norfolk and Waveney to establish effective structures and interventions for early identification, recognition, and accountability. Their goal is to provide coordinated and supportive responses that promote long-term, sustainable change for children and support network.

The navigators offer personalised and flexible face-to-face support to children and their support network to determine what strategies work well for the individual and where additional support may be beneficial. The service is focused on the child's needs while also considering the support network as a whole, with support tailored to the goals identified by the young person and their support network. The navigator's role will be collaboratively discussed with existing care teams and the support network to determine the most beneficial additional support that can be provided.



The Navigators...

Navigator support is designed to assist in reducing the need for crisis intervention and hospitalisation. While there is no set time limit on the support provided, navigators are not intended to engage with children and young people on a long-term basis. The duration of the intervention will be determined by the achievement of the individual's identified outcomes to meet their needs. The navigator will ensure that the appropriate team and support network are established and effective before concluding their support.

From the beginning, we will collaborate with the young person and their support network to establish a goal or outcome to work towards. The length of the intervention will depend on the progress made towards these goals. The navigator will identify the ongoing support network for the child before transitioning the support over to them. The decision to step away will be discussed and planned in a manner that is empowering and smooth for the child or young person. Navigators will schedule check-ins at 3 and 6 months to assess progress and discuss any necessary adjustments. However, if circumstances change before the scheduled check-ins, there is always the option to communicate with the team via email or telephone contact.



A Navigator for children and young people will be a...

SUPPORTER

For children and young people's and their network.

Professionals.

-

Not their social worker.

FACILITATOR

Making children and young people's voice heard.

Conversations.

Joined-up working.

-

Not their advocate.

EDUCATOR

What is available to children and young people.

Best practice.

The law.

-

Not their teacher.

COLLABORATOR

With people.

With professionals.

With organisations.

-

Not with social media.

COORDINATOR

Of MDT communication.

Of resources.

-

Not a care coordinator.

CHAMPION

Of the service.

Of the law.

Of children and young people.

-

Not a service champion.

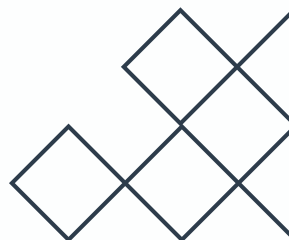
Additional notes

The navigator is meant to support you as a professional and work alongside existing professionals, rather than replace them or take on their roles. The navigator is an additional resource that focuses on building relationships with and for the child and young person and their support network.

As the service has been funded for an initial two years, we will actively seek feedback throughout 2025/26. We kindly ask for support and embrace the Mental Health Navigator function to work together to break down barriers and improve outcomes for children and young people.

We will share evaluation surveys with you and welcome your thoughts to help us improve the service in its first year and better meet the needs of our Mental Health cohort.

The navigators will follow the Norfolk & Suffolk Safeguarding Children Policies and procedures, and the service will undergo close evaluation and review based on specific outcomes.



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for Children and Young People in
Norfolk and Waveney

Get in touch

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