Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services in Scotland: Waiting Times, Service Demand and Workforce

CAMHS Tier Model

**Tier 1**
Child and adolescent mental health services at Tier 1 are provided by practitioners working in universal services who are not mental health specialists. This includes:

- GPs
- health visitors
- school nurses
- teachers
- social workers, and
- youth justice workers and voluntary agencies

Tier 1 practitioners are able to offer general advice and treatment for less severe problems. They contribute towards mental health promotion, identify problems early in the child or young person’s development and refer to more specialist services.

ISD and Official Statistics
Information Services Division (ISD) is the principal and authoritative source of statistics on health and care services in Scotland. ISD is designated by legislation as a producer of ‘Official Statistics’. Our official statistics publications are produced to a high professional standard and comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. [Further information about our statistics.](#)
Tier 2

Mental health practitioners at Tier 2 level tend to be child and adolescent mental health specialists working in teams in community and primary care settings (although many will also work as part of Tier 3 services). They can include, for example:

- mental health professionals employed to deliver primary mental health work
- psychologists and counsellors working in GP practices, paediatric clinics, schools and youth services

Tier 2 practitioners offer consultation to families and other practitioners. They identify severe or complex needs requiring more specialist intervention, assessment (which may lead to treatment at a different tier), and training to practitioners at Tier 1 level.

Tier 3

Tier 3 services are usually multidisciplinary teams or services working in a community mental health setting or a child and adolescent psychiatry outpatient service, providing a service for children and young people with more severe, complex and persistent disorders. Team members are likely to include:

- child and adolescent psychiatrists
- social workers
- clinical psychologists
- community psychiatric nurses
- child psychotherapists
- occupational therapists
- art, music and drama therapists

Tier 4

Tier 4 encompasses essential tertiary level services such as intensive community treatment services, day units and inpatient units. These are generally services for the small number of children and young people who are deemed to be at greatest risk (of rapidly declining mental health or serious self harm) and/or who require a period of intensive input for the purposes of assessment and/or treatment. Team members will come from the same professional groups as listed for Tier 3. A consultant child and adolescent psychiatrist or clinical psychologist is likely to have the clinical responsibility for overseeing the assessment, treatment and care for each Tier 4 patient.