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Ms S Dugan  
Chief Executive  
Herefordshire & Worcestershire Health & Care NHS Trust  
Kings Court  
Charles Hastings Way  
Worcester WR5 1JR

10 February 2022

[By email]

Dear Ms Duggan

**Ref: Healthy Minds Service**

At our Public Board Meeting on 18 November 2021 a representative of a voluntary & community sector organisation expressed concerns to the Healthwatch Worcestershire Board that patients were waiting up to 12 months to access mental health services from the 'Healthy Minds' service which I understand your Trust is commissioned to provide as part of the mental health services for adults in Worcestershire. As this correlated with similar reports that Healthwatch had previously received from another voluntary sector organisations that is involved in supporting people's mental well-being the Board asked our Director, Martin Gallagher to make enquiries with your Trust and report back to our Board at its meeting on 27 January 2022.

As you may be aware Martin has established regular meetings with your senior operational lead to discuss issues relating to the delivery of mental health services in a timely way and used this forum to make enquiries about patients access to the Healthy Minds service. Therefore, based on the response to his enquiries through that forum he reported back to the Healthwatch Worcestershire Public Board meeting on 27 January 2022 as follows:

- The Trust is meeting its target of treating patients who have been assessed as requiring a consultation with a clinician within 6 weeks of the completion of an assessment.
- In response to the significant increase in the numbers of patients being assessed as requiring a consultation the Trust has redeployed its resources from the initial assessment process to treating those patients.
- Acknowledgement of the wait for assessment but no recognition of the extended period of wait of 'up to 12 months' and no indication of the numbers of patients waiting for assessment.

In response to this report the voluntary and community sector representative who had expressed concerns at Healthwatch Worcestershire's Public Board meeting on 18 November 2021 reiterated those concerns and referred to the case of a patient who has been waiting some 18 months.



Directors: Jo Ringshall, Simon Adams,  
Jane Stanley, John Taylor, Martin Gallagher  
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In view of the repetitive nature of these concerns I am writing to you for assurance about the waiting times for access to treatment from the Healthy Minds service and, given I recognise that many patients are not aware of the distinction between waiting for assessment and for a consultation it would be useful if you can provide the numbers of people waiting for assessment and the length of time a patient can expect to wait for assessment.

Healthwatch Worcestershire's next Public Board Meeting is on the morning of Thursday 24 March 2022 and I would be grateful to receive the information by that date. I would also like to extend an invitation to you to personally attend the Public Board meeting which will be held on Zoom. The meeting is scheduled between 1000 and 1200hrs and if your diary permits, I'd be delighted if you could attend to speak to the Board about the future of Adult Mental Health Services in Worcestershire.

I look forward to receiving the assurance and information I have requested in relation the Healthy Minds service and hopefully welcoming you to our Public Board Meeting on 24 March 2022. If you require further information in relation to this enquiry or the Public Board Meetings, please contact Simon Adams in the first instance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Ringshall'.

Jo Ringshall  
Chair  
Healthwatch Worcestershire

Cc  
Mr S Trickett  
Chief Executive  
Herefordshire & Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group

