

Firstly, I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the Foundation for Professionals in Services for Adolescents for funding me to undertake the course 'Risk and Decision Making in Practice', for which I have now completed and achieved a distinction!

The course is a pre-requisite to going on to do the 'Post Graduate Diploma in Advanced Mental Health Practice', which is necessary to complete to become an Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP). The foundation has also very kindly part-funded me in doing this course, which will commence next year.

Currently the AMHPs involved in Mental Health Act (MHA) Assessments in Devon come from an adult mental health background and have limited experience of working therapeutically with children and young people with mental health difficulties.

Furthermore, mental health services, specifically accessing support during a mental health crisis is very high on the Government agenda. CAMHS services, particularly inpatient admissions and s.136 place of safety provision have gained much media attention recently. Moreover, there are a growing number of young people being formally detained under the MHA.

With this in mind and considering that my current role is at the interface of community treatment and hospital admission, working in a CAMHS Assertive Outreach Team, supporting young people who are considered to be the most risky in the community. I feel it is imperative we have a specialist CAMHS-based AMHP within our service. Therefore, I have spent the past year working on a proposal and creating this as an opportunity within the organisation I work for.

In this role, I will be able to act as a specialist advisor to CAMHS teams across Devon on areas requiring an AMHP's expertise and knowledge. This would include the ability to clarify statutory duties, responsibilities and legislation; the ever-changing legal frameworks governing 'deprivation of liberty' and the admission to hospital and treatment of children and young people (CYP); identifying least restrictive and legally viable options; while upholding a person's fundamental human rights. Ultimately, seeking the most desirable outcomes for young people.

Furthermore, in this role (when not coordinating the MHA assessment) I will be able to offer support and specialist advice to the AMHP and assessing team on child and adolescent mental health when CYP are being considered for assessment under the Act, thus improving overall outcomes for young people.

I believe my skills are best suited to this area of work, and my interests and experience certainly reflect this, and are a testament to my passion and dedication for working with such vulnerable, complex and high-risk young people.

Finally, this course has helped to enhance my skills and knowledge in this area of practice to enable me to prepare for the next stage of development in my chosen career path.

Thank you again; I am one step closer in my endeavor of becoming a warranted AMHP.