**Expressions of Interest – Looked After Children Initial Health Assessments**

Doncaster CCG is looking for providers who are competent to complete initial health assessments for Looked After Children aged 0 – 18 years and have the capacity and flexible to respond to need.

Under the Children’s Act 1989 Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG’s) have a duty to comply with requests from the local authority to help them provide support and services to children in need. What we know is that the NHS can only effectively meet the needs of Looked After Children when there are systems and processes in place to actively track and target health needs. One way in which this is done is by ensuring that all Children and/ or Young People that become Looked After have a comprehensive Initial Health Assessment (IHA) within 20 working days.

The initial health assessment provides an opportunity for the identification of health need and health neglect that otherwise may go unrecognised. The initial health assessment is not an isolated event, but part of a continuous process, with emphasis being put on ensuring that actions in the health plan are being taken forward. This expression of interest applies to the provision of:

1. Children and young people looked after by Doncaster Local Authority who are referred for an IHA to a service provider commissioned by Doncaster Clinical Commissioning Group to undertake such assessments.
2. Children and young people placed in Doncaster by an originating out of area Local Authority, where there has been prior agreement with the commissioner to undertake the IHA in Doncaster.

There is a wider LAC health team in post and there is an expectation that the provider of IHA’s will function within this wider team framework to ensure holistic assessments. Principles of a good IHA are as follows:

* The welfare of the LAC or young person is paramount (Children Act, 1989).
* LAC should be central to the initial health assessment process and be given the opportunity to express their wishes and concerns.
* LAC should have timely access to services in accordance with their significantly increased need for health care compared with their peers, and their access problems caused by their greater mobility.
* Initial health assessments and Health Care Plans will promote the current and future health of the LAC, and not solely focus on the detection of ill health.
* Initial health assessments and health care plans will be holistic and cover a range of issues including developmental health and motivational wellbeing. They will be conducted in a way that enables and empowers children and young people to take appropriate responsibility for their own health, and provide flexibility so that the assessment is appropriate to the age and stage of development of the child or young person.
* Initial health assessment services for LAC should be non-discriminatory and be sensitive to age, race, sexual orientation, culture and language.
* Partnership working between agencies is essential to the initial health assessment process. **In particular the IHA is to be completed with the wider LAC health team and (where-ever possible) the respective Social Worker.** If the allocated social worker is unable to attend the IHA, then there is an expectation that the provider will request a written report to be provided by the Social Worker when the put in a request for an IHA. This report should include child place of birth, any previous addresses/out of area, and previous and current school.
* Where circumstances are appropriate, the involvement of birth parents at the initial health assessment should be encouraged. The Social Worker is best placed to make this judgement based upon assessment of complete history of the circumstances resulting in the child becoming looked after.
* Information sharing should be in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and local policies and information sharing protocols. Information sharing should be limited to the minimum necessary for the purpose, add value to the process and be restricted to those who need to know.

If you would like to be considered for this service, please send your expressions of interest to [Nicola.Burrow@doncasterccg.nhs.uk](mailto:Nicola.Burrow@doncasterccg.nhs.uk) by 10th June 2016.

Further information will be provided once the expressions of interest stage have closed.

We expect the service to commence in August 2016.