

# Working with Adults who have ADHD: What do nurses need to know?

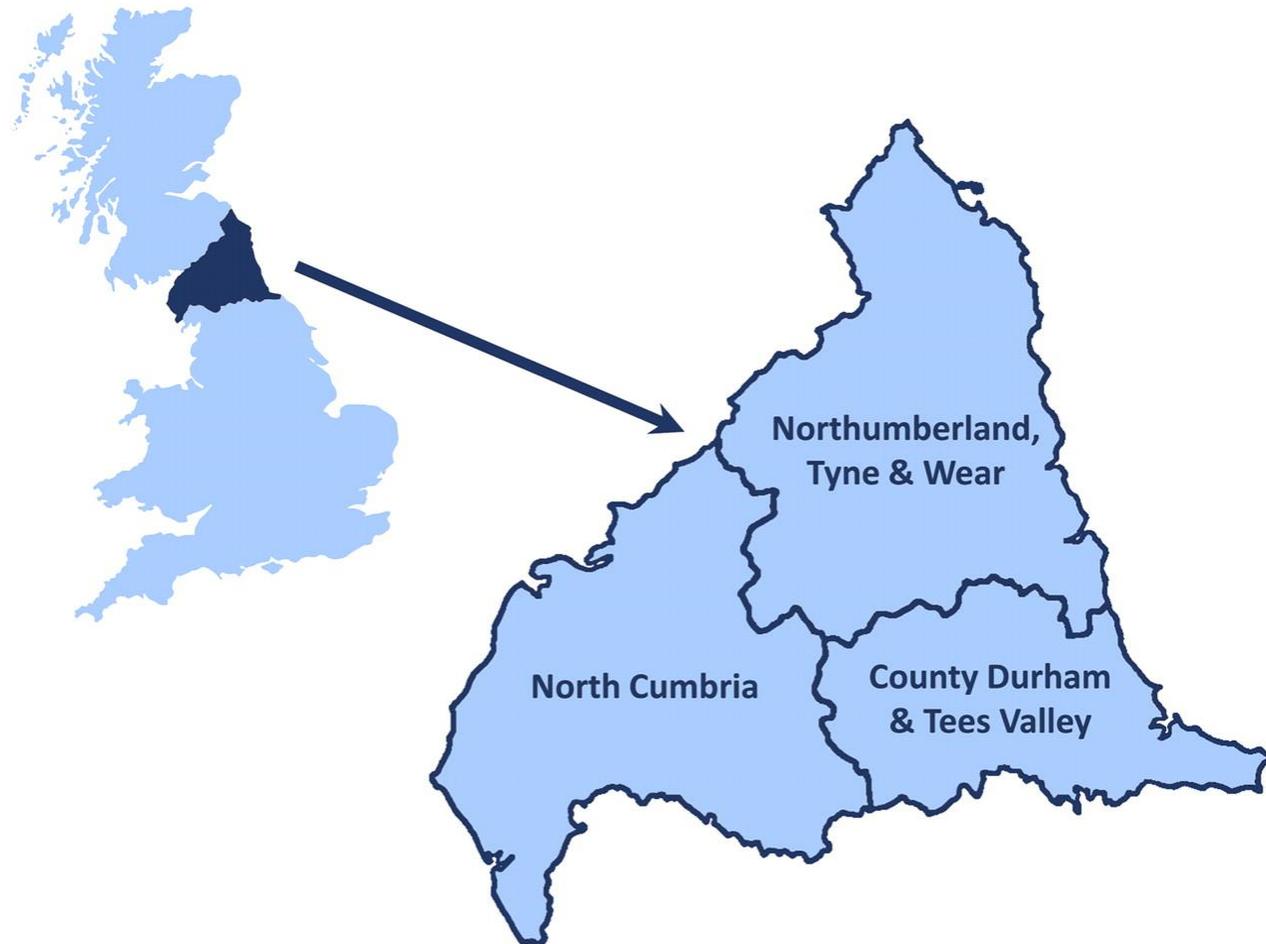
Developing a competency based framework to prepare  
nurses to work with this client group.

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# Setting the Scene

- ▶ Background to the service
- ▶ Why do nurses need development in the area?
- ▶ What skills and knowledge are required to work with this client group and how can this be provided?
- ▶ How to evidence competence and the benefits and limitations of using a competency framework
- ▶ Any questions?

# Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust



# The Service

- ▶ Commissioned in April 2015 to cover Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, Gateshead, Sunderland and South Tyneside localities.
- ▶ Provides services for a population of 1,458,099: research suggests between 2.5% - 4% of adults will experience ADHD symptoms so potentially a high level of need.
- ▶ Prior to 2015 was in operation as a pilot project for approximately 3 years.
- ▶ Commissioned to provide an assessment, diagnostic and treatment service for adults with ADHD and to transition young people from CYPS/CAMHS who need continued support

# The Service continued

- ▶ The service is based on the NICE guidelines although currently we are only able to offer treatment in the form of medication.
- ▶ Make of the team is 4 Band 7 Clinical Nurse Specialist, 2 P/T Consultant Psychiatrists, 8 Band 6 Nurse Practitioners, 3 Band 3 Support Workers and a Team Manager
- ▶ Majority of assessments are undertaken by the nursing staff.
- ▶ A clinic system is used to review clients every 3, 6 or 12 months depending on need.

# Growing a Team

- ▶ Still a relatively new area of clinical work in the UK.
- ▶ Most mental health and learning disability nurses have limited experience working with this client group
- ▶ Limited training opportunities available
- ▶ The different needs of Adults with ADHD to children - issues of co-morbidity and differential diagnosis
- ▶ Need to ensure clinicians have the knowledge and skills to provide an effective service

# So what do nurses need to know?

- ▶ What is ADHD? - symptoms, treatments, possible impact on daily life
- ▶ Assessment - developmental history, mental state, differential diagnosis, co-morbidities, physical health
- ▶ Treatment - medications, complications with co-morbidities, psychological interventions

# What do we know about ADHD?

- ▶ Clinicians need time to develop an understanding of what ADHD is, how it presents and the impact it can have on all aspects of a person's life.
- ▶ Staff need support to feel comfortable assessing and working with this client group

# Assessment - Developmental and Personal History

- ▶ Vital to get a detailed and full developmental history
- ▶ Important to cover sensitive issues such as domestic abuse, parental substance misuse, neglect, emotional/physical/sexual abuse, traumatic events - could indicate a different diagnosis
- ▶ Need to be able have difficult conversations
- ▶ How to get information if parents are not available - other relatives, school reports, health/social service reports, employer

# We can all assess mental state, can't we?

- ▶ Mixture of Mental Health and Learning Disability nurses from a wide range of clinical experience
- ▶ Often an emphasis on risk which although important is not what we are primarily looking for in our assessments
- ▶ Need a degree of detail to accurately give, or not give, a diagnosis
- ▶ Need to ensure core elements are covered

# What is differential diagnosis?

- ▶ Analysing the probability of one diagnosis against another following a thorough assessment
- ▶ Symptoms of ADHD similar to those of other mental health diagnoses - low mood, anxiety, Bi-polar affective disorder, personality disorder
- ▶ Links to the importance of a detailed developmental and personal history
- ▶ Accurate assessment is pivotal to ensuring correct diagnosis and appropriate treatment

# Co-Morbidities

- ▶ Higher incident rates of co-morbid depression, anxiety, bi-polar, personality disorder and substance misuse
- ▶ Need to differentiate possible ADHD symptoms from other mental health diagnoses
- ▶ Ongoing and regular substance misuse can cause difficulties for assessment and treatment

# Impairment

- ▶ Need to be able to define what impairment is and the level of the impact it has on daily life
- ▶ Consider relationships, employment, medication, contact with criminal justice system, chaotic lifestyle, risk taking, substance use
- ▶ Is treatment required or wanted?

# Treatment

- ▶ Awareness of the medications which are available to treat ADHD in adults including possible side-effects and contraindications
- ▶ Physical health issues - history of cardiac issues, high blood pressure, weight
- ▶ Knowledge of when treatment may need to be stopped - what is the primary need that requires treatment

# What is competence?

- ▶ Competency frameworks have been used in nursing for a number of years - they can provide evidence that clinicians have reached a required level of skill and knowledge; they do NOT create experts
- ▶ Clinical effectiveness and evidence based healthcare are an integral of healthcare
- ▶ Helps to establish confidence that practice is safe and effective
- ▶ Benner's novice to expert model - we can all be novices at different times in our professional life
- ▶ Change in the role of nurses - more independent roles

# Evidencing competency

- ▶ Needs to be robust and provide what is needed.
- ▶ Objectives need to be related to clinical practice and achievable
- ▶ Clinicians need to be able to clearly demonstrate the skills and knowledge that they have obtained

# Providing the skills

- ▶ Internal training program delivered by the Band 7 clinical nurse specialists in the team
- ▶ Reflective discussions in clinical supervision
- ▶ Shadowing all members of the team
- ▶ Live supervision
- ▶ Participation in formulation meetings

# So what have we achieved?

- ▶ Anecdotally the Band 6 nurses' feel more confident in assessing and reviewing service users - more detailed assessments, increased participation in formulation discussions, more varied role.
- ▶ Service is able to provide increased number of assessments - can now offer 20 assessments weekly compared to 12 previously.
- ▶ Reduced reliance on Band 7 nurses completing the majority of assessments allowing them to focus on other aspects of their role.

# Where now?

- ▶ Need to review the framework - involve the Band 6 nurses within this process.
- ▶ Discussions within the team to consider how we may be able to provide some psychological interventions within the resources we have while continuing to offer an assessment/review service.
- ▶ Converting the framework and internal training sessions into a training program we can role out across the Trust.

Thank you and any questions

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