

CAMHS Faculty Statement on Diagnostic Clarity and Effective Care Delivery

The Stakes for Young People and Society

The functionality of young adults(18-25 yr olds) is critical to our nation's social and economic wellbeing. Young people drive economic and social growth, and untreated mental health difficulties in childhood and adolescence create lasting impacts that extend far beyond the individual. Effective early intervention, before this critical time, is not just clinically appropriate and cost effective—it is economically essential.

Our Position

The Faculty of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry recognises that effective mental health care for children and young people requires clarity about what we are treating, the evidence based intervention being provided and what outcomes we are delivering. While we acknowledge diverse perspectives within our field regarding diagnostic approaches, we require a consistent approach to enable our commitment to provide the best possible care for young people and their families.

Core Principles

Clarity in Care Delivery: Using a combination of formal diagnosis and formulation, or other clinical frameworks where required, we must be able to clearly articulate:

- What difficulties we are addressing
- What interventions we are providing
- What outcomes we are achieving

Evidence-Based Practice: Our clinical decisions should be grounded in the best available evidence, communicated clearly to families, and documented in ways that support continuity of care and service evaluation.

Outcome Measurement: We commit to using validated outcome measures at multiple points during treatment to track progress, inform clinical decisions, and demonstrate the impact of our interventions.

Diagnostic Coding as Clinical Tool: We recognize diagnostic coding as an important clinical and administrative tool that:

- Facilitates communication between professionals
- Supports care continuity as young people transition between services
- Enables national collection of data
- Enables service planning and resource allocation
- Provides frameworks for evidence based treatment selection and Provides frameworks for evidence based treatment selection and outcome measurement
- Allows clarity over research and service improvement priorities

We are clear that the medical workforce in CAMHS needs to be supported and enabled to take a leadership approach in delivering this approach within their local multidisciplinary teams.