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HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE ·
TASK 1 ACADEMIC POSTER
Community Mental Health Services in the United Kingdom

01 · EXPLANATION

What Are Community Mental Health Services?

Community Mental Health Services (CMHS) provide treatment, care, and support for individuals experiencing mental health conditions, enabling them to live within their communities rather than long-term hospital settings. The focus is on improving wellbeing, promoting independence, and supporting daily life management (NHS England, 2024). Delivered through the **NHS** in collaboration with local authorities and voluntary organisations, care is coordinated by Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTs) multidisciplinary professionals supporting conditions including depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and personality disorders (Mind, 2024). In 2023–24, approximately **3.8 million people** were in contact with NHS mental health services in England (NHS Digital, 2024).

Multidisciplinary Team Members:

- Psychiatrists
- Psychologists
- Mental Health Nurses
- Social Workers
- Occupational Therapists

02 · HISTORY

A Brief History of CMHS

Historically, UK mental health care centred on psychiatric asylums focused on containment rather than recovery (Rosen, Mezzina & Feldman, 2022).

Pre-1980s: Long-stay psychiatric hospitals dominated; limited patient autonomy and social integration.

1983: Mental Health Act 1983 — established legal frameworks for treatment and patient protection.

1980s–90s “Care in the Community” policy introduced — large hospitals closed; community services expanded.

The Care Act 2014 supported the duties of social care and the safeguarding procedures.

Community care is one of the key pillars in the healthcare system of the United Kingdom today with the system receiving millions of patients annually.

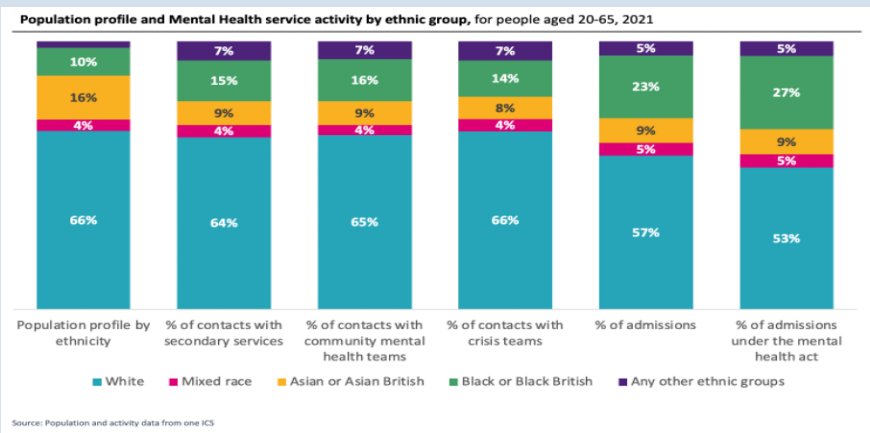


Figure :01 Population Profile and mental health service activity Source: Olivia Goodwin | , (2020)

CURRENT FUNCTIONING

03A · HOW IT WORKS

Assessment & Treatment

Assessment & Diagnosis

Patients presented by way of general practitioners, hospitals or social services are exposed to comprehensive examinations that include symptoms, medical history, as well as socioenvironmental conditions. An individualized care plan is then developed together with the service user (NHS England, 2024).

Psychological Therapies

03B · HOW IT WORKS

Crisis & Ongoing Support

Crisis Resolution Teams (CRHT)

Emergency care (24 hours) is offered in case of acute mental healthcare crisis. These teams strive to stabilise people in their homes when it is possible, which minimizes such hospital admissions that are not essential (Rosen, Mezzina and Feldman, 2022).

Long-Term Community Support

There are rehabilitation programmes, housing and job support, carer counselling, and regular review of care plans, which are put in place to facilitate a process by which services adapt to individual needs that change as well as encourage autonomy (Mind, 2024).

Interventions that are evidence based, such as cognitive behavioural therapy, dialectical behaviour therapy, and trauma-focused therapy, are used. Psychiatrists often prescribe pharmacological treatments, which are then used to complement counselling and reduce the symptoms and improve overall wellbeing (NICE, 2022).

KEY CHALLENGES

04A · CHALLENGE

01 Rising Demand for Mental Health Support

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused social pressures, financial hardship and long-term consequences resulting in a significant rise in anxiety, depression and the ensuing conditions. In England, more than five million people used NHS mental health services in 2022/23 and this created a significant burden on the healthcare resources (NHS England, 2024). This growth in demand leads to the extended waiting times and increased workloads, thus making proper funding and workforce planning to be one of the major policy needs.

04B · CHALLENGE

02 Workforce Shortages Across the Sector

The issues of recruitment and retention are common to psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses, and social workers across the United Kingdom. The staffing shortages that follow contribute to higher workloads, time losses when starting treatment, decreased patient contact time, and staff burnout (Mind, 2024). The targeted workforce development and an increase in funding are the key elements of the sustainable offer of effective mental health services in communities.

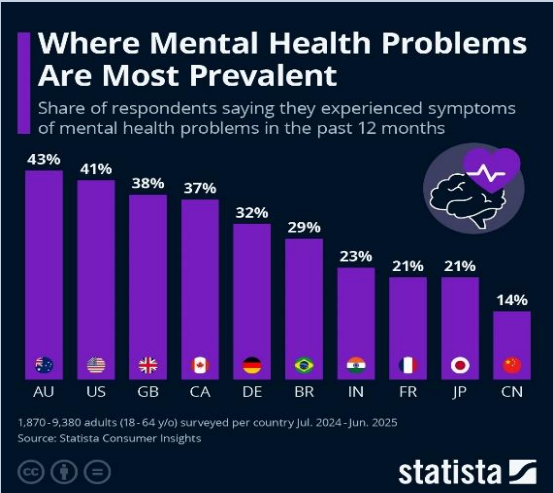


Figure: 02 Where Mental Health Problems Are Most Prevalent
Source: (Felix Richter,2025)

CONCLUSION

Community mental health services play a crucial role in supporting individuals with mental health conditions while enabling them to live independently within their communities. Through multidisciplinary teamwork, evidence-based therapies, and long-term support programmes, these services improve patient wellbeing and promote recovery. However, increasing demand and workforce shortages present ongoing challenges — strengthening services through improved funding, workforce development, and integrated healthcare planning will be essential to effective and sustainable mental health care in the future.

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Task:02

Essay: Pharmacy Services in the United Kingdom

Pharmacy services represent a central component of the healthcare system in the United Kingdom, providing medication management and clinical consultation, as well as health interventions to the population. Traditionally, pharmacists had the main responsibility of dispensing drugs that were prescribed by doctors. In the last two decades, Pharmacy services have been significantly broadening their scope so that community pharmacies are now able to provide an expanded range of clinical and preventive care (Ababneh et al., 2023). A study conducted by NHS England (2024) proves that community pharmacies significantly contribute to the improved care access and the reduction of burden of general practitioners (GPs) and the medical facility-based care. However, the origin and development of modern pharmacy service in the UK cannot be completed without the creation of the National Health Service (NHS) in 1948. Furthermore, NHS established a universal health care system that incorporated the community pharmacies into the primary care provision. Originally, pharmacists were limited in their duties to compounding and dispensing drugs prescribed by doctors (Hussain and Babar, 2023). Moreover, due to the transformation in the healthcare environment where treatment plans were becoming very intricate, pharmacists started taking on more clinical roles. The academic literature confirms that the healthcare policy changes during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries significantly expanded the role of pharmacists Salgado et al., (2020) The recent NHS instructions, such as, invite pharmacists to perform medication reviews, offer preventive healthcare services and engage in independent prescribing. These innovations indicate a paradigm shift of taking multidisciplinary care where pharmacists have a direct role to play in managing patients together with doctors and nurses.

Pharmacy services are currently functions in the community pharmacies, hospitals and primary care networks. However, the importance of community pharmacies is especially high due to the fact that patients can access healthcare services without the need to have an appointment. According to Sousa Pinto et al., (2020) over one billion prescription items are dispensed each year in England, indicating the wide scope of the pharmacy activities in the country. Essentially, clinical services that are provided by pharmacists include medication reviews, long-term disease management, and instructions on minor conditions. Programmes such as Community Pharmacist Consultation Service (CPCS) allow patients to have minor ailments treated by pharmacists, which then means that the GP services are not booked as often. Empirical research by Shirdel et al., (2021) shows that these programs improve efficiency in healthcare and increase the access of more patients to care. Furthermore, the importance for quality of life improved significantly as a result of the provision of safe access to medications and professional medical advice by the pharmacy service to the person and community. Firstly, pharmacists provide support to patients with long term illnesses like diabetes, asthma, and hypertension by counselling patients on medication usage and monitoring adherence. Furthermore, the (Leal et al., 2025) states that pharmacists can contribute to the improved health outcomes through encouraging safe administration of medications and contributing to preventive healthcare. Another important benefit of pharmacy services is accessibility. According to NHS data, nearly 89 per cent of the population in England live within a 20-minute walk of a community pharmacy, and thus they become one of the most accessible health care services (NHS England, 2024). Pharmacy services have considerably changed their former state as dispensing drugs as they are now part of the primary healthcare system in the UK. Pharmacists also play a role in creating better patient outcomes and reducing the strain on other health professionals through medication management, preventive health care and clinical support. However, the literature suggests that the pharmacy services delivery is still affected by shortages of workforce, inadequate funds, and integration issues. These concerns will have to be solved so that pharmacy services become an effective and sustainable input into the healthcare system of the UK.

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