

Task 1: Poster

Community Mental Health Services



Explanation of the Service

Community Mental Health Services help and support people with mental health conditions in the community, they also help people live independently at home whilst maintaining contact with them for their safety along with this they also provide therapy, medication and social support

In the UK, mental health services are primarily delivered through the National Health Service (NHS). Services operate across primary care (GP's and community teams), secondary care (private specialist clinics)

Brief History of the Service

The origins of mental health services in the UK were mostly based in hospitals and before 1948 when the National Health Services was established, most people with mental health conditions were treated in mental health asylums, which were overcrowded.

Once, the NHS was established it reduced the overcrowding issue that asylums had, and healthcare was made free at the point of use and over the next few decades, there was a shift from hospital-based care towards services in the community

The NHS and Community Care Act 1990 supported community care and services are now mostly based in local communities as the act states that it is a duty for local authorities to assess people for social care and support to ensure that people who need community care services or other types of support and get the services they are entitled in which Community Health Services do

Current Functioning By the Numbers

The scale of mental health patients continues to grow as a result placing significant demand on services across all sectors. For example, in January 2026

More than 2 million people were in contact with mental health services, at the end of January

More than 500 thousand people were in contact with children and young people's mental health services, at the end of January

How it Works Today

Today, individuals can contact support services such as Samaritans and also access professional support in GP's in which they can talk to specialists who specialise in psychological therapy or if urgent support is needed people can contact NHS 111 online or by simply calling the number

Two Challenges Faced by The Service

Underfunding & Long Waiting Times

Despite the Governments investment into the NHS' Mental Services, they remain underfunded especially with increased waiting times, people must wait a longer time to talk to therapists and have specialist assessments which can stretch to months or potentially years. For example in January 2026, the NHS waiting list consisted of more than 6 million patients waiting for treatment in England which increases crisis episodes and places more pressure on emergency services and their employees

Workforce Shortages and Staff Burnouts

The mental health workforce faces a serious staffing crisis. For example as of March 2026, there are more than 10,000 vacancies for a mental health support worker which show that there has been

a huge impact on the burnout of psychiatrists, nurses and social workers which also impact their morale at work and drives experienced staff to leave the profession entirely as it also may affect their mental health from all the stress.

Task 2: 600 word essay

Ambulance Services

The ambulance service is a very important element of the UK's healthcare system as it provides pre-hospital care and treatment and urgent transportation. It serves an important purpose in society and serves as a link between medical emergencies and actual hospital treatment which plays an essential role in improving patient outcomes on a national level

The development of the UK's ambulance services was brought together by public health pressures in the 19th and 20th century. For example, Florence Nightingale, who served as a nurse in the Crimean War (1853-1856), used a Russian built carriage which was used as a field ambulance during the war which allowed her to provide aid to the injured soldiers and reduce the death rate of those wounded. Later, in 1877, The St John Ambulance Association was founded and was used to train volunteers in first aid in which was very useful as it allowed individuals to provide immediate care before medical professionals arrived. However, this may have only been the case in more middle-class areas as at this time it was highly unlikely that people in poor communities had emergency cover. The biggest change came in 1948 when the NHS was created, and ambulance services became part of the public healthcare system which meant everyone could access emergency care for free which also reduced health inequalities as poor people could even access emergency care. In the 1970's, paramedic training was introduced which was a major step forward as paramedics could now treat patients at the scene which as a result reduced overcrowding in hospitals as they wouldn't have to drive patients back unless very urgent which also greatly improved survival rates for serious conditions

Today, urgent and emergency care has evolved incredibly as ambulance services ran by 10 trusts which operate in all areas of England, responding to around 12 million calls every year. Calls to 999 regarding ambulance services are now categorised by the severity of the situation. For example, Category one is for life threatening injuries like a cardiac arrest, Category two is for emergency calls such as stroke patients, Category three is for urgent calls such as abdominal pains in which patients would most likely be treated in their homes and lastly Category four is for less urgent calls such as diarrhoea or constant vomiting in which these patients would most likely just be referred to a GP and have an emergency appointment.

However, there is also a downside with the NHS ambulance service. For example, their response time in January 2025 illustrated that they were all higher than the NHS target, for example, Category one calls were 8 minutes when the NHS target is 7 minutes, Category two calls were 35 minutes when the NHS target was 18 minutes and categories 3 and 4 were more than an hour and 50 minutes. These issues show the pressure that the service is under due to a demand and limited resources.

In summary, the service has had a huge impact on the quality of life of patients and has grown from an uneven Victorian system where there were health inequalities into a modern emergency healthcare service and with the issues that it experiences, it continues to save lives and support those who need it the most across the country

References

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