



Kent and Medway

Young Adult Mental Health

Rapid Needs Assessment
2024

MENTAL HEALTH NEED



1 in 5 young adults...

in Kent & Medway are estimated to have a probable mental health disorder.

Young women are twice as likely as men to report struggling with mental health.

“
I feel supported
now to move
forwards and live
the life I choose
”

BARRIERS TO SUPPORT



"Stuck in the system"

Many young adults fall between primary & secondary care, leaving those with moderate needs unsupported.

Strict criteria mean many don't get help until crisis point.

“
I had to start over
from scratch when
I moved to adult
services
”

REACHING CRISIS



1 in 4 A&E visits

Young adults account for 1 in 4 A&E visits for mental health and self-harm.

Adult mental health wards are often intimidating & unsuitable for young adults.

“
Safe Havens gave
my family a break, I
felt secure knowing
someone was there
”

Progress and Strengths

Transition link workers are improving support for young adults moving from children's services.

More ways to engage (including digital & hybrid services) make access easier.

Navigators for Care Leavers are helping more young people into education & employment.

Areas for development

Developing youth-friendly in patient and community services for those in crisis.

Tailor support for neurodiverse & trauma-affected young adults.

Strengthen data tracking to ensure smooth transitions & continuity of care.

This research engaged over 50 young adults, parents, and professionals across Kent and Medway. Data from NHS Kent & Medway ICB, local services, and Healthwatch Kent provides a comprehensive view of mental health needs and service engagement.

access
learning