

Parental Mental Ill health and the Neglect of Children

Lisa Williams - Perinatal Safeguarding Nurse

Jason Hakin – Safeguarding Practice Development Facilitator

Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust

Birmingham Safeguarding Children Partnership Neglect Practice Week
April 2024



Birmingham and Solihull
Mental Health
NHS Foundation Trust



Welcome

Session outline and introductions



Intended Outcomes

Raised awareness of some common mental health conditions and potential support available to people suffering with these conditions.

To have had an opportunity to consider the potential impact of these mental health conditions on individuals and their ability to parent

Raised awareness of what your role may be in identifying and responding to neglect of children associated with a variety of mental health conditions.



Firstly..There is a difference...!

Mental health

Mental health problem

Mental illness

NHS

Birmingham and Solihull
Mental Health
NHS Foundation Trust



Do you know your AOT from your HTT?

56,587 service users
in BSMHFT*

118,853 active
BSMHFT referrals in
the last year*

BHM
CMHT
AOT
HTT
FCAMHS
Psychiatric Liaison
Psychiatric Diversion
Forward Thinking Birmingham

Birmingham Healthy Minds
Community Mental Health Team
Assertive Outreach Team
Home Treatment Team
Forensic CAMHS
Mental health services in A and E
Mental health services in custody suite
0-25 CAMHS service (not BSMHFT)



Help and Support

Support access to GP
Emergency 999

Acute/General Hospital A and E – Liaison Psychiatry

Mental Health Helpline - Crisis

0121 262 3555 (24hours/7days)

0800 915 9292 (24 hours/7 days)

Pause Café (Drop in - Forward Thinking Birmingham)

0300 300 0099



Common Diagnoses

Schizophrenia

Anxiety

Depression

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Bipolar Disorder

Psychosis

Personality Disorder

e.g Emotionally

Unstable Personality disorder

Always ask how these might affect someone



Birmingham and Solihull
Mental Health
NHS Foundation Trust





Potential Impact on Parenting Ability

Boundaries/consistency

Emotional/physical availability

Decision making

Motivation

Medication

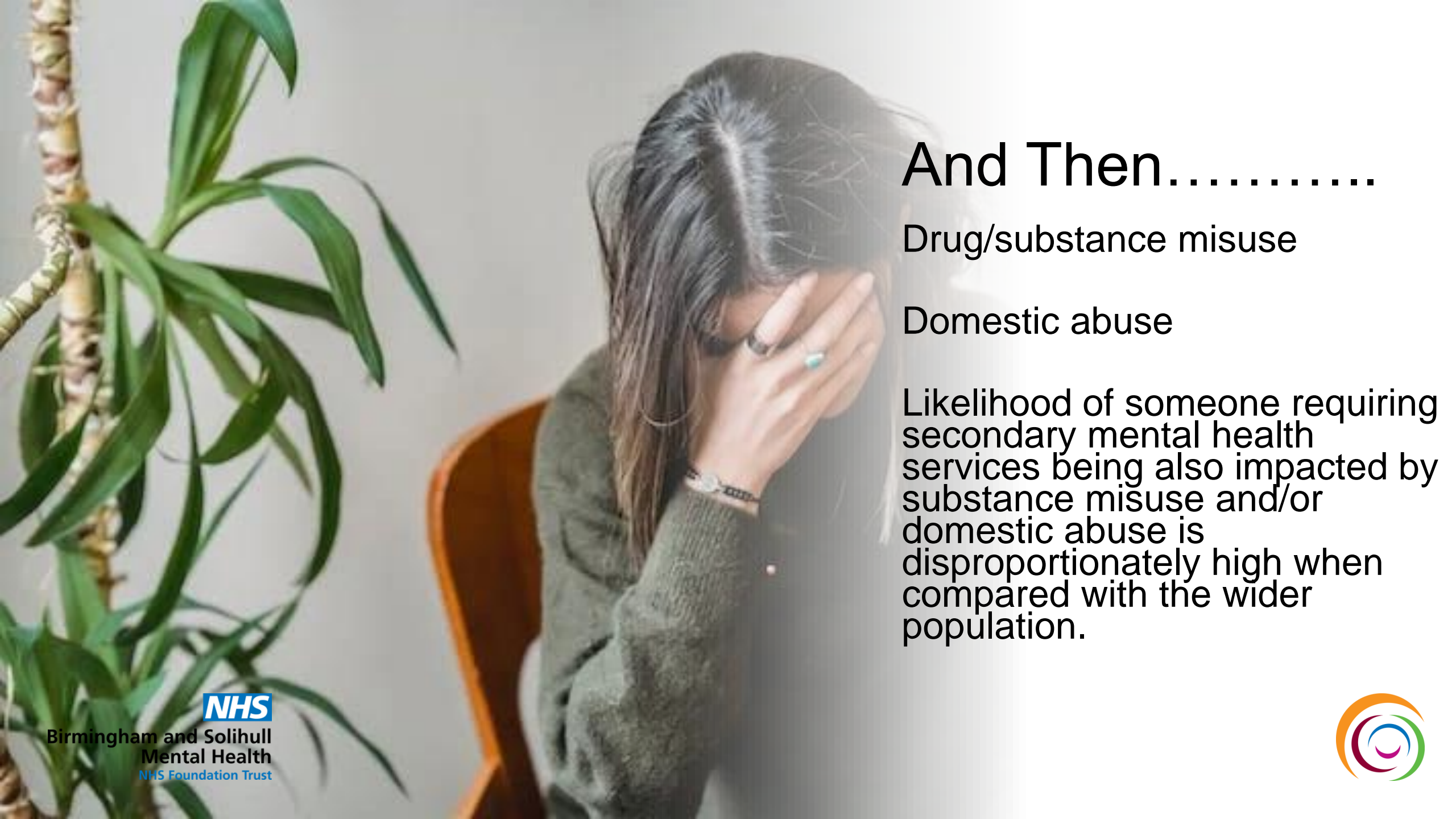
Delusional beliefs involving the child

Ability to provide care and emotional warmth

Ability to provide routine and structure

Access to funds - work





And Then.....

Drug/substance misuse

Domestic abuse

Likelihood of someone requiring secondary mental health services being also impacted by substance misuse and/or domestic abuse is disproportionately high when compared with the wider population.

NHS

Birmingham and Solihull
Mental Health
NHS Foundation Trust



The Elephant(s) in the Room

Cost of living crisis

Poverty and deprivation

Scarcity of services and
resources

**A risk of becoming
used to this....or
overwhelmed by it?**



Birmingham and Solihull
Mental Health
NHS Foundation Trust



Case Study – ‘Carrie’ and ‘Noah’

Carrie - Diagnosis of Bipolar

Worked previously in a child-care setting

10 years under mental health services prior to pregnancy

Perinatal Mental Health Team support

Engages with services – we think

‘Bubbly’ ‘Engaging’ ‘Gregarious’ ‘Quirky’





A 'different/alternative' kind of lifestyle

Noah arrives and goes home with mom

Flat was often noted to be particularly untidy.

Empty takeaway boxes etc

Gave account of cooking once Noah was weaned, but no evidence

Professional acceptance – This is how Carrie rolls!

Disclosure that Noah's dad (now separated) was controlling and domestically abused Carrie



Late Night Picnics and spontaneous fun

Just Carrie being Carrie

Evidence from pattern of prescriptions that meds were not being taken – ‘running on high’.

Previous recreational drug use – moving in same circles

‘Only a bit of Weed’

Family Support Worker/Early Help

Family Courts – focus of Carrie and professionals





Naps in the Afternoon and Access Arrangements

Focus remains on difficulties ensuring smooth 'pick ups' etc following Noah's dad having him at weekends

Carrie's love for Noah is genuine and 'touching'

State of flat – never organized

Carrie's personal hygiene deteriorates

Noah remains 'bouncy'

No apparent routine for Noah – The afternoon napping described was always Carrie's

Always commits to changing things for Noah, but does not make changes

NHS

Birmingham and Solihull
Mental Health
NHS Foundation Trust





Noah is removed from his mother's care – He has suffered neglect in his earliest years



Mental Health - Useful Contacts/Avenues of Support and Information

BSMHFT Central Switchboard - 0121 301 0000 (General Queries)

BSMHFT Safeguarding Team - 0121 301 1100 9am – 4pm Mon –Fri (Safeguarding Queries)

Urgent Help – Call 0121 262 3555 or 0800 915 9292 for advice and support (24/7 – no previous contact with service is necessary)

Forward Thinking Birmingham - Access Centre Number - 0300 300 0099

Mind –Mental Health Charity – Information and advice – 0300-123-3393
<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/>

Young Minds – Advice, support and training <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/>

Mental Health Foundation = Information, resources, policy advocacy
<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/>