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| Children and Young People’s Psychological Trainings  (CYP PT)  Enhanced Evidence-Based Practice (EEBP) Curriculum for Children and Young People’s  Mental Health Practitioners |
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| Version 3.3, 18 March 2024 |

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# Background and context

#### Introduction

This curriculum is part of the Children and Young People’s Psychological Trainings (CYP PT) programme. The Enhanced Evidence-Based Practice (EEBP) curriculum is designed to complement the existing CYP PT curricula, which specialise in psychological practice and therapies. The EEBP curriculum is of benefit to the development of the psychological professions’ workforce, existing as a ‘stand-alone’ qualification, with the aims of developing psychological mindedness and reflective practice, and bolstering skills in assessment and in providing brief, low-intensity, evidence-based interventions. Additionally, it emphasises the core competencies essential for working effectively with children and young people, and supports other qualified psychological professions in Children and Young People’s Mental Health (CYP MH) services. In many cases, however, the EEBP curriculum can be viewed as a foundational step, leading to further training in psychological approaches and specialised therapies.

#### Rationale for the EEBP curriculum

Mental health services cater for children and young people across a variety of settings. While the structure of CYP MH services in England is diverse, most children and young people access services in a community setting. These include voluntary, community and social enterprises, and local authority, NHS and independent providers, as well as specialised NHS services. The overarching goal of the CYP PT programme is to ensure that, regardless of the service delivery point, CYP MH services are safe, effective and tailored to the unique needs and preferences of children, young people and, when applicable, their families. Given the diverse population of children and young people that these services cater for, it is imperative that the workforce, where possible, mirrors this diversity, ensuring sensitivity and understanding across key facets of difference. Not every child, young person or family seeks or requires extensive psychological therapies. Where timely and adeptly administered, brief evidence-based interventions can offer focused support for prevalent challenges, such as anxiety and low mood. When executed effectively, these interventions can stave off the onset of chronic issues, disability and distress.

Beyond proficiency in specific, short-term, evidence-based interventions, the curriculum underscores the foundational skills essential for professionals working with children, young people and families. These encompass co-production, inter-agency collaboration, fostering a mutual understanding with families, leveraging supervision and consultation, actively involving parents/carers and family members, and addressing the diverse needs of children and young people with the utmost sensitivity. This skills-based approach amplifies the capabilities of healthcare professionals working with children, ensuring that they are equipped with the requisite knowledge, mindset and skills to function within an inclusive, value-centric service.

The EEBP curriculum is tailored to professionals across various organisations offering CYP MH services. It is ideal for those whose responsibilities encompass brief interventions for children, young people and families, and who possess foundational clinical competencies. During their training, students must manage a caseload, undergo regular clinical supervision, have the capability to video-record their sessions with children and families, and use the designated routine outcome measures. It is essential that students are working within services that facilitate consultations with colleagues in CYP MH services and which have established pathways for referring children and young people to specialised multidisciplinary care, positive activities, social prescribing and other necessary services.

CYP MH professionals on the EEBP training course will learn how to always operate from an inclusive values-focused base, which promotes recovery and recognises and respects diversity. Diversity represents the range of cultural norms, including personal, family, social and spiritual values, held by the diverse communities who are accessing the service where the practitioner is working. Professionals must respect and value individual differences in age, sexuality, ability, gender, spirituality, race and culture. They must be able to respond to children and young people’s needs while maintaining sensitivity around aspects of diversity. The EEBP curriculum is therefore underpinned by a commitment to equal opportunities for all and to encourage children and young people’s active participation in every aspect of care and treatment. As a result, diversity, inclusion and multiculturalism, as well as the necessary knowledge, attitudes and competencies to operate in an inclusive, values-driven service, are woven throughout the curriculum.

Throughout this document, trainees in the EEBP programme are referred to as children and young people’s mental health (CYP MH) practitioners. This designation pertains to individuals addressing mental health concerns in children and young people, irrespective of their professional or organisational affiliations.

#### Learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of the EEBP programme, students will be able to:

* grasp the fundamental components of an efficient CYP MH service, including the broader system, the social determinants of health and the influence of protected characteristics on health outcomes
* illustrate the integration of these core components in their interactions with children, young people and families
* undertake a thorough assessment of a child, young person or family, considering risk factors, protective characteristics, developmental stages and mental health diagnoses
* implement brief evidence-based interventions targeting anxiety disorders and depression in children and young people
* utilise clinical supervision effectively and exhibit self-reflective practices concerning their clinical engagements and anti-discriminatory practice
* show evidence of effective co-production and competence in relation to NHS England’s (NHSE) equality, diversity and inclusion priorities, including the NHS [Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework](https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/patient-and-carer-race-equality-framework/)

#### Learning methods

The EEBP curriculum employs a diverse array of instructional techniques. These encompass e-learning modules, problem-solving exercises, supervised clinical practice within the workplace, workshops, hands-on skills training and traditional classroom instruction at the university level. The curriculum emphasises the cultivation of foundational skills, with evaluations primarily centred on the appraisal of direct clinical engagements. The clinical techniques imparted are versatile, suitable for deployment across various environments, including the voluntary sector, social care, children’s services, educational institutions and the NHS.

Across the duration of the programme, students dedicate 10–15 days to attending workshops, skill development sessions and other university-based activities. An additional 10 days are allocated to on-site learning within their workplace. This segment involves collaborative activities with peers from the same or adjacent organisations. Additional hours are set aside for workplace supervision. Furthermore, students are expected to allocate personal time for academic assignments, clinical session preparations, supervision and reading relevant literature.

The entire duration of the study is structured to align with a standard academic year.

#### Qualifications and entry level

The EEBP curriculum is structured to offer 60 credits over an academic year. It welcomes both staff with graduate-level qualifications and those without. Depending on their entry qualifications, participants may receive either a postgraduate certificate or a graduate certificate in EEBP.

#### Purpose

The EEBP curriculum is designed to bolster existing CYP MH services, whether they operate within the statutory or voluntary sectors. The curriculum aims to ensure that care and treatment are:

* collaboratively and comprehensively assessed
* evidence-based
* routinely guided by feedback from monitoring outcomes and goals during sessions and supervision
* inclusive and driven by core values, whereby children, young people and their parents/carers from diverse backgrounds are engaged and involved in a way that maximises their collaboration and engagement in mental health services and related settings and contexts
* delivered in partnership with young clients and their families with a focus on legitimate co-production
* supported by a facilitative supervisory system
* facilitative of inter-agency collaboration
* delivered with an acute awareness of the social determinants of health and an understanding of stigma in relation to mental health and how this may have an impact on families and communities

This programme is aimed at professionals with foundational competencies in assisting children and young people facing emotional or psychological challenges. For services using the [Agenda for Change banding](https://www.nhsemployers.org/articles/pay-scales-202324), there is a wide range of suitable staff grades, up to Band 6. Candidates can access the EEBP curriculum from support worker roles, youth work and undergraduate training, as long as they also have experience working with children, young people and families. In general, staff should possess [core competencies](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/clinical-psychology/competency-maps/camhs-map.html) and prior experience with children, young people and families. This is not an introductory course for those aspiring to become CYP MH practitioners. Instead, it is appropriate for recently qualified nurses, counsellors, social workers, school nurses with significant mental health engagement, parenting workers and family support workers. The EEBP curriculum can be a standalone qualification but can also serve as a gateway to psychology practitioner roles from youth work and other occupations working with children and young people.

The academic level is set at graduate or postgraduate certificate level, so participants must be prepared for formal learning and open to having their practice evaluated. Training providers may collaborate with provider organisations to interview candidates, ensuring both academic suitability and the presence of requisite competencies.

#### Participant requirements

Staff enrolling in the course should:

* primarily work directly with children, young people or families, addressing their emotional or psychological challenges
* be able to apply newly acquired skills routinely
* be dedicated to ongoing professional development and the application of the skills and outcome framework after the course
* allocate time for study and reflection
* access regular supervision
* participate in partnership learning sets for service-based activities

#### Service requirements

Services nominating staff for the course should:

* facilitate local learning sets that are an integral element of the training, with proper supervision, leadership and resources
* ensure course-long supervision by qualified staff and continued post-course supervision for skill reinforcement
* allow staff to video-record sessions for review with supervisors and university personnel and, if needed, to provide the necessary equipment to achieve this
* provide staff with protected time for study and skill enhancement
* contemplate the course’s alignment with staff career trajectories, ensuring opportunities for growth

#### Curriculum delivery

The curriculum’s delivery should:

* be facilitated entirely by the higher education institution (HEI), which should collaborate closely with services for candidate selection and guided learning set design
* ensure that the HEI remains available remotely on training days to address course content queries
* ensure that the service environment for staff is inclusive, outcomes-driven and evidence-based, and prioritises NHSE’s equality, diversity and inclusion principles
* ensure that the practitioner is equipped with the necessary knowledge, attitude and competence to operate effectively in an inclusive, values-driven service

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# Course modules

The course outline below is a suggested model to illustrate the mission behind the EEBP course and must not be taken as more than a guide for implementing the programme. The programme supports the goal of making the CYP PT programme more accessible by offering an initial qualification that can lead to more advanced practitioner training.

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| **Module 1** | **Module 2** | **Module 3** |
| **Title: Core Skills Module** | **Title: Engagement and Assessment** | **Title: Evidence-Informed Interventions** |
| Module summary  Day 1: Core values of good CYP MH services; introduction to the Collaborative Care model; and ensuring equal access to CYP MH services.  MindEd sessions:   * Introduction to the history and key principles of NHS CYP MH services * Collaborative Care * Equality of access   Day 2: CYP PT outline of outcome monitoring; legal frameworks; consent, confidentiality and ethical practice.  MindEd sessions:   * Confidentiality, consent and ethics * Risk assessment and management * Active outcomes framework * Children Act * The Mental Health Act * Mental Capacity Act   Day 3: Participation of young people and parents/carers; stigma; and working with diversity.  MindEd sessions:   * Making participation meaningful * Stigma and mental health provision * Culture, beliefs and mental health * Co-production   Day 4: Introduction to CYP PT therapy modalities.  MindEd sessions:   * Introductory sessions for each modality (systemic family practice, interpersonal psychotherapy for young people, cognitive behaviour therapy, parent training for behaviour problems, including coverage of key theoretical ideas such as social learning and behavioural theory)   Day 5: Introduction to evidence-based practice and maximising supervision benefits.  MindEd sessions:   * Introduction to evidence-based practice * Supervising practice | Module summary  The HEI training days might follow this proposed structure:   * Day 1: Core assessment skills; engaging children, young people and families * Day 2: Risk assessment; leveraging supervision * Day 3: Basic diagnostic framework for children and young people; understanding the child’s perspective * Day 4: Functional analysis; using routine outcome measures (ROMs) in assessment; goal-setting; shared understanding * Day 5: Treatment planning; signposting; shared decision-making | Module summary  The proposed structure for the HEI days is as follows:   * Day 1: Working with parents/carers using positive reinforcement/social learning theory * Day 2: Promoting healthy lifestyles * Day 3: Addressing anxiety; working with avoidance using exposure * Day 4: Behavioural activation for mild depression * Day 5: Managing worry * Day 6: Supporting guided self-help; using supervision to aid interventions * Day 7: Relapse prevention; therapy conclusion; clinical skills supervision * Day 8: Clinical skills supervision * Day 9: Clinical skills supervision; competency assessment |

# Course structure, teaching and learning strategies

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| **Introduction to the EEBP curriculum modules** | | |
| **Induction day:** Course overview, including introduction to core values of inclusive, safe, evidence-based and reflective practice, registration, library, allocation of study adviser, use of equipment. | | |
| **Module 1: Core Skills Module**  This module encompasses the foundational elements essential for safe and effective work with children, young people and families. It introduces participants to the CYP PT programme, illustrating the connection between the EEBP training course and other components of the programme of change embodied in Future in Mind. The curriculum enhances trainees’ pre-existing clinical skills and knowledge within CYP MH services. A suggested structure for the 5-day teaching is provided, complemented by potential MindEd e-learning sessions.  Note: HEIs have the discretion to tailor sessions to their students’ needs and to allocate days between workplace learning and HEI-based learning. | | |
| **Module** | **Module aims** | **Content/learning objectives** |
| **Module 1:**  **Core Skills Module** | This module seeks to immerse clinicians in the core principles of transformation embodied in Future in Mind. CYP PT equips them with the vital skills needed to refine their clinical interactions with children, young people and families. This foundational module sets the stage for Module 2 (assessment) and Module 3 (interventions). | **Intended learning outcomes**  By the end of this module, trainees will be able to:   * engage children, young people and families to maximise their involvement in mental health services * comprehend and articulate the fundamental principles of CYP MH services, emphasising active outcomes and routine outcome measures * promote inclusive access to CYP MH services, mitigating disadvantage and discrimination and promoting NHSE equality, diversion and inclusion principles and the NHS [Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework](https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/patient-and-carer-race-equality-framework/) * explain the primary principles of core, evidence-based therapies * use self-reflection and supervision to refine their clinical practice * understand commonly used medications, their effects and potential complications * consistently operate from an inclusive, recovery-promoting and diversity-respecting value base * evidence competence in working collaboratively and co-producing solutions in partnership * recognise the social determinants of health and their impact on service engagement and intervention outcomes   ***Core competencies***  Initial assessments gauge these knowledge-based competencies. After completing this module, trainees will be able to exhibit several core competencies, including:   * understanding how evidence shapes clinical practice in CYP MH services * proficiency in using and explaining various routine outcome measures * effective communication with children, young people and families * competence in communicating with autistic individuals and other neurodiverse individuals * collaborative development of action plans that reflect the expectations and goals of the child, young person and family * reflective practices to enhance learning and clinical outcomes * understanding the nuances of obtaining appropriate consent * skills for shared decision-making, ensuring full collaboration with parents/carers and young individuals and ability to make assessments of risk * understanding the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion and promoting these values through their work |

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| **Module 2: Engagement and Assessment** | | |
| **Module** | **Module aims** | **Content/learning objectives** |
| **Module 2:**  **Engagement and Assessment** | CYP MH practitioners assess children, young people and families with various mental health challenges. This assessment should prioritise the perspectives and needs of the child and their family. It should foster a mutual understanding of the child or young person’s current challenges and guide collaborative decision-making about subsequent steps. These steps might encompass advice, psychoeducation, referrals/signposting, care within the multidisciplinary CYP MH team or low-intensity interventions delivered by the practitioner.  Practitioners must conduct child-centred interviews, understanding the child within their familial, cultural, developmental and social contexts, and demonstrate competence in appropriately engaging individuals from minoritised groups, neurodivergent individuals and children experiencing elevated levels of deprivation.  Engaging the child, their carers and other family members to establish therapeutic alliances is crucial. Practitioners should gather and interpret information from various sources, develop a shared understanding with the family, understand the child’s challenges within a diagnostic framework, and be aware of suitable evidence-based interventions.  This module will provide CYP MH practitioners with insights into the incidence, prevalence and manifestations of common mental health issues and evidence-based treatment options. Skill training will hone core competencies in active listening, engagement, alliance building, patient-centred information-gathering, information dissemination and shared decision-making. | **Intended learning outcomes**  By the end of this module, trainees will be able to:   * demonstrate knowledge of, and competence in, developing and maintaining a therapeutic alliance with children and young people from a diverse range of backgrounds, as well as with their families during their treatment programme, which includes effectively addressing issues and events that may threaten the alliance * exhibit core engagement skills, including listening, reflection, alliance-building, active questioning, sense checking and empathy * employ various methods, such as interviews, questionnaires and observations, to conduct thorough assessments that consider a multitude of factors * collaboratively develop an understanding that emphasises key factors, sets goals and delineates subsequent steps * leverage knowledge of diagnoses and evidence-based practices to guide families in making informed intervention decisions * assess risks associated with children and young people, including risks to them and risks to others * conduct assessments that respect individual differences, respond sensitively to diversity, and recognise the social determinants of health   ***Core competencies***  After completing this module, trainees will be able to:   * evaluate any immediate risks involving the child or young person and take necessary action * understand current diagnostic frameworks relevant to children and young people’s mental health challenges * use routine outcome measures to gauge the child’s current challenges and monitor progress over time * employ observational methods, questionnaires and family interviews to foster a mutual understanding of ta child’s challenges * conduct a basic functional analysis of a child’s presenting challenges * collaborate with families to devise a treatment plan based on the assessment |

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| **Module 3: Evidence-Informed Interventions** | | |
| **Module** | **Module aims** | **Content/learning objectives** |
| **Module 3:**  **Evidence-Informed Interventions** | This module aims to equip students with the skills required to deliver inclusive and evidence-informed interventions tailored to the presentation of young individuals. It delves into the essential components of offering evidence-informed interventions for mild manifestations of anxiety and depression in children, young people and their families. The curriculum enhances students’ existing clinical abilities and knowledge within comprehensive CYP MH services, building upon the successful completion of Modules 1 and 2 of the EEBP course.  The module spans 14 days, comprising 9 days of classroom instruction at the HEI and 5 days of learning sets within the student’s service. Potential MindEd e-learning sessions to complement the learning. | **Intended learning outcomes**  By the end of this module, trainees will be able to:   * critically evaluate a variety of evidence-based interventions and strategies to support children and young people from diverse backgrounds, and their parents/carers in managing their own or their child’s emotional distress and disturbance * provide evidence-based information and psychoeducation to children and young people, parents/carers and education staff, including those from minoritised or discriminated against groups * grasp techniques to effectively engage parents/carers in co-creating an understanding of challenges and empower them to support interventions informed by social learning perspectives * understand the impact of difficult life events, psychoeducation and normalisation * understand the phenomenology, diagnostic classifications and epidemiological characteristics of anxiety disorders in children and young people; critically interpret clinical research on exposure for these disorders; and adapt behaviour therapy to ensure equitable access, considering age, cultural and social differences * understand the phenomenology, diagnostic classifications and epidemiological characteristics of depression, display proficiency in the behavioural activation model and the role of behaviour in depression’s development and maintenance * apply knowledge of evidence-based interventions for addressing worry, encompassing psychoeducation, worry identification and sorting, worry time utilisation and uncertainty tolerance * understand and implement healthy lifestyle packages, such as sleep hygiene * comprehend the rationale and delivery process of guided self-help, using appropriate materials to aid clients * use supervision, outcome measurement and feedback to bolster the implementation of collaborative, evidence-based interventions * recognise the significance of thorough preparation for therapy conclusion, evaluate and solidify gains, and anticipate potential symptom recurrence; collaborate to devise a relapse prevention plan, incorporating medication if necessary   **Core competencies**  After completing this module, trainees will be able to:   * develop a shared understanding of issues with the child, young person or family within a systemic context * support parents/carers in engaging with the intervention and employing strategies such as positive reinforcement * determine the appropriate treatment approach or direct to a suitable treatment modality * deliver guided self-help with fidelity; use supervision effectively, incorporating routine outcome measures to guide intervention * implement evidence-based interventions for mild anxiety and depression * plan therapy conclusion and collaboratively design relapse prevention strategies * respect individual differences and respond sensitively to diversity during intervention delivery |

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| **Course structure, teaching and learning strategies**  The diploma will be delivered over 25 days (15 classroom days and 10 work-based learning days).  Indicative taught days:  **Module 1** –To include approximately 5 teaching days, with 1 day at the HEI and 4 in the workplace.  The module employs a blend of e-learning, group discussions around problem sets, supervised clinical practice and classroom-based learning at the HEI.  E-learning from the MindEd e-portal delivers core curriculum components, tailored to support the CYP PT curricula. This content is accessible globally and is reinforced by HEI-provided learning sets conducted with fellow trainees in the workplace. These sets, grounded in clinical material, leverage problem-based learning to engage trainees and bridge theory–practice gaps.  Each workplace will designate a coordinator for its trainee group. This coordinator will organise group activities, ensure resource availability and guide trainees through e-learning materials. They will also liaise with HEI academic staff to monitor trainee progress.  **Module 2** – To include approximately 6 teaching days, with 5 days of classroom-based learning at the HEI, 1 day of workplace learning using group-based learning sets and additional private study.  Skills-based competencies will be acquired through clinical simulations in small groups with intensive supervision, peer and tutor feedback, and supervised direct patient contact in the workplace. Knowledge acquisition will involve lectures, seminars, discussion groups, guided reading and independent study. The MindEd e-portal will supplement knowledge through e-learning sessions.  E-learning sessions might cover topics such as:   * the therapeutic alliance * conducting a developmental assessment * overview of diagnostic assessment * assessing and managing risk * equality, diversity and inclusion, and co-production   **Module 3** – To include approximately14 teaching days, with 9 classroom-based days at the HEI, 5 in the workplace and additional private study.  The module emphasises skills-based learning, blending classroom instruction at the HEI, video and role play, group work with problem-based learning sets, supervised clinical practice and e-learning via the MindEd portal.  E-learning content, tailored to the CYP PT curriculum, will be reinforced by learning sets provided by the HEI, and completed with peers at the workplace. These sets, rooted in clinical material, employ problem-based learning principles to engage trainees and bridge theory and practice.  Workplace organisations, in collaboration with the HEI, will designate a coordinator for trainee groups. Ideally, coordinators will have completed or be pursuing a CYP PT postgraduate diploma or certificate, apply core skills from the training in their roles, and support trainee skill and competency development. Coordinators will organise resources, facilitate group work and monitor trainee progress, liaising with HEI academic staff.  Students will offer therapeutic interventions to children and young people with mild anxiety and depression symptoms, with sessions video-recorded and supervised by a service supervisor. A professional and reflective portfolio will document assessments, interventions, supervision and reflective practice. Clinical competence will be assessed by the service supervisor and a video recording submitted to the HEI.  While knowledge, facts, theories and approaches to problems and solutions will be taught, the course gives an equal weighting to learning through reflection on the process of supervision or of learning itself, underpinned by a peer support and coaching/mentoring process. Trainees should also be encouraged to bring tapes of their own supervision or practice to the smaller supervision of supervision groups. Tapes can be viewed remotely or in person depending on the format of the session. Each module should therefore contain a combination of direct teaching, discussion, group work and experiential learning through workshops covering relevant theory and practice. |

# Assessments

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| **Assessments** | |
| **Module 1:**  **Core Skills Module** | HEIs must ensure that assessments require consideration of and, where appropriate, a demonstration of knowledge and competence in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion.  Assessments for this module will include:   * supervisor evaluations of clinical competencies * a clinical portfolio * examinations featuring short-answer or multiple-choice questions   **Duration**  Module 1 typically spans 5 teaching days, with 1 day at the HEI and 4 in the workplace. An additional 5 days of private study is anticipated for portfolio completion, supervision preparation and reflection. |
| **Module 2:**  **Engagement and Assessment** | HEIs must ensure that assessments require consideration of and, where appropriate, a demonstration of knowledge and competence in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion.  Assessments for this module will include:   * a video recording of an assessment session, accompanied by a 1,000-word reflective analysis * a clinical outcomes portfolio, with competencies endorsed by the service supervisor; students must submit this to the university, ensuring that all treatment strategies taught meet a minimum 40% competency level   **Duration**  Module 2 involves 6 teaching days, with 5 days of classroom-based learning at the HEI, 1 day of workplace learning and normally 5 days of additional private study. |
| **Module 3:**  **Evidence-Informed Interventions** | HEIs must ensure that assessments require consideration of and, where appropriate, a demonstration of knowledge and competence in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion.  Assessments for this module will include:   * a video recording of an intervention session showcasing clinical competence * supervisor assessment of clinical competencies * a professional and reflective treatment portfolio * short-answer questions under examination conditions * assessment must include elements of equality, diversity and inclusion principles   **Duration**  Module 3 involves 14 teaching days, with 9 classroom-based at the HEI, 5 in the workplace and additional private study. |
| **Supervision and supervisor training** | CYP MH practitioners’ clinical work will be overseen by staff who have completed or are pursuing the Senior Wellbeing Practitioner course, the postgraduate certificate in Supervising Evidenced-Based Psychological Therapies course, or a 5-day outreach generic supervisor training course. Supervisors will attend 2 additional training days at the course’s onset, enhancing their skills in case management and clinical skills supervision. They will be responsible for assessing trainees’ competency achievements.  Some supervision may also be provided by the HEI to support skill development within the training programme. This, combined with supervisor training, will foster sustainable supervision practices within services. |