

Delivering and Using Services Report

Newessays.co.uk Sample

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to critically assess and examine a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) provided by Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Board (2012). The specific sections of the JSNA that are the focus of the report centre on the perceived health and wellbeing of children and young people in Birmingham. Thus, issues relating to health assessment, in addition to wider demographic factors are provided full expression through reference to key indicators provided by policy formulations (Department of Health, 2007; Department of Health, 2008; NHS Confederation, 2011). The report concludes that in terms of empirical and evidential support, the JSNA provided is credible and effective.

2. Discussion

2.1 The General Assessment of Health and Wellbeing

The focus on children and young people is a credible one as in recent years an increasing emphasis has been placed on the importance of establishing practice frameworks that take account of the diverse health and social needs of children and young people (HM Treasury, 2003; Bradshaw, 2016). However, it is important to note that health and social policy dilemmas with regards to children and young people do not operate in isolation from the rest of the health and social care policy dimension. In this sense, it is sensible for policies aimed at supporting the health and wellbeing of this service user group to be undertaken within the broader framework of policy provision. The JSNA provided by Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Board (2012) is effective in that it attempts to place the health and

wellbeing of children within a wider policy framework that seeks to understand causal factors that lead to poor health and development among children and adolescents. The profile provided by Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Board (2012) provides some detailed analysis of the underlying health concerns that affect the wider population in Birmingham. This includes developments such as population growth, which indicates a likelihood that increasing pressures will be placed on local commissioning services (Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Board, 2012). In addition, the initial profile offered in the JSNA highlights the degree to which Birmingham is affected by issues relating to deprivation. The wider healthcare context is therefore outlined and although it might be credible to suggest that a more detailed exposition of the general state of affairs could have been provided, particularly with regards to actual service provision, the background assessment is useful and broadly effective.

2.2 Children and Young People: the overview

As pointed out previously, the need to focus on commissioning and wider service provision for children and young people represents a consistent focus of health and social care policy (Bradshaw, 2017). The preeminent focus placed on children and adolescents with the JSNA provided by Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Board (2012) is therefore conducive with the wider policy context. Nonetheless, the provision of statistics which highlight the current trends of health and wellbeing among children and adolescents in Birmingham is clearly vital given the nature of these statistics. The JSNA therefore outlines in some detail the degree to which the healthcare and wellbeing indicators of children and adolescents in Birmingham give rise to some concern. Statistics which indicate higher levels of infant mortality than the national average, higher levels of smoking during pregnancy, low birth weights

and a poor percentage of breastfeeding take-up indicates that there does exist serious problems in the general health care of children in Birmingham (Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Board, 2012). This evidential support is then augmented by similar statistical data with regards to adolescents. Specific focus is placed on issues relating to obesity among children and the fact that children in Birmingham are less likely to engage in sporting activities than is the case with children nationally. In this sense, the urgency of the policy context is outlined in the JSNA in particular detail. The clear urgency that exists in terms of service provision for this service user group is therefore supported through reference to the evidential support outlined above. The JSNA offered by Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Board (2012) is therefore effective in the sense that it emphasises the essential nature of policy provision and the extent to which children and young people in Birmingham have particularly high levels of need in terms of developing in a healthy manner. The focus placed on children and young people within the JSNA is therefore credible, not only because of the wider national healthcare policy context which has focused heavily on children, but also because of specific features of health and well being in Birmingham. In terms of critical evaluation, the need for a JSNA to effectively judge the level of need and offer an appraisal of current healthcare standards is essential (Department of Health, 2008). Moreover, JSNA's also require the provision of empirical and statistical evidence in order to support the policy approaches being proposed or adopted (Department of Health, 2007). In this sense, the wider evidential and empirical support provided by Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Board (2012) is effective with regards to highlighting a vital area of need and the urgency of enhancing service provision within this area.

2.3 Children and Young People: specific issues and approaches

As a consequence of the empirical data outlined previously, the JSNA goes on to assess the current health and social wellbeing of children in Birmingham. Many of the issues raised above are subject to further assessment in terms of outlining statistics that indicate healthcare issues with regards to children and young people. Problems relating to the use of drugs, in addition to sexual health and provided full expression (Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Board, 2012). Above all, such evidential and statistical support ensures that the JSNA is equipped with an effective empirical account of the health issues that are impacting upon the lives of children and young people in Birmingham. In terms of proactive policy agendas, the JSNA offers an approach that is rooted in the idea of individual agency on the part of children and young people and therefore seeks to offer guidance as to this service user group can increase levels of empowerment. This is broadly useful as the need to enhance empowerment among disadvantaged people is a key area of policy and practice in social work and wider health and social care (Covell & Howe, 2007; Mason & Fattore, 2005). Nonetheless, the consistent emphasis placed on ensuring that children are able to “maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives” does raise questions as to the effectiveness of any service innovations proposed in order to respond to the perceived challenges (Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Board, 2012: 17). In particular, the JSNA offered seems to focus very heavily on providing a detailed account of the health and social issues that affect children and young people in Birmingham, however the heavy focus placed on ideas of empowerment lead one to feel that there is a lack of focus on service conditions and the need for service provision to be dramatically improved. This potential failing could be due to the fact that wider funding pressures currently being faced by

Primary Care Trusts (PCT's) mean that dramatic interventions, innovations and service enhancement are difficult to achieve.

2.4 Overall Assessment

Nonetheless, despite the fact that the JSNA suffers from a deficit in terms of outlining some detailed practical alterations that could impact positively on the service user group in question, the assessment offered nonetheless accounts for the health and wellbeing of children and young people through reference to key demographic factors. In particular, the JSNA outlines the importance of understanding the cultural and ethnic diversity that personifies Birmingham and the degree to which this diversity has direct implications for the health and wellbeing of children and young people (Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Board, 2012). The fact that children and young people in Birmingham are more likely to suffer poor health if they are from an ethnic minority background is credible. Research indicates the degree to which ethnic minority status has direct connotations with problems relating to poor health and therefore, in this sense, the JSNA is effective in terms of offering guidance and policy advice on the basis of detailed and supportable empirical processes (Platt, 2009; Lansley & Mack, 2015).

3. Conclusion

Above all, the assessment of the JSNA offered with regards to Birmingham has empathised the degree to which specific health issues affect children and young people in the area. The JSNA is very effective in terms of providing statistical data which highlights poor health among children and young people compared to national averages. Specific problems relating to drug use are provided, in addition to a sound assessment of how ethnic minority status interacts with issues relating to health and

wellbeing among this service user group. In terms of meeting the objectives of an empirically-based assessment, the JSNA that has been assessed in this work is therefore very effective. The emphasis placed on empowerment is credible and conforms with wider trends in social work theory and practice, however, greater emphasis on practical policy moves to address the highlighted health dilemmas is recommended.

Newessays.co.uk Sample

References

Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Board. (2012) *An Overview of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Birmingham*. Birmingham: Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Board.

Bradshaw, J. (2016) *The Wellbeing of Children in the UK*. London: Policy Press.

Covell, K & Howe, R.B. (2007) *Empowering Children*. London: Policy Press.

Department of Health. (2008) *The JSNA Core Dataset*. London: Department of Health.

Department of Health. (2007). *Guidance on Joint Strategic Needs Assessment*. London: Department of Health.

HM Treasury. (2003) 'Every Child Matters', *HM Treasury*, [online], date accessed, 09/03/17; available at; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/every-child-matters>.

Lansley, S & Mack, J. (2015) *Breadline Britain: the rise of mass poverty*. London: Oneworld Productions.

Mason, J & Fattore, T. (2005) *Children Taken Seriously: in theory, policy and practice*. London: Jessica Kingsley.

NHS Confederation. (2011) *The joint strategic needs assessment: a vital tool to guide commissioning*. London: NHS Confederation.

Platt, L. (2009) *Ethnicity and Child Poverty*. London: Department for Work and Pensions.

Newessays.co.uk Sample