PARLIAMENT STREET

partnership in policy

Policing, Caring and Treating the Effects of a Mental Health Crisis

The Effects of Mental Health on Public Services

By Danny Bowman, Head of Campaigns at Parliament Street

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Foreword

The effect of mental health disorders on public services has been increasingly noted over the past couple of years. It has been suggested from a range of sources that mental health services are experiencing increasing numbers of referrals leading to long waiting-times for treatment. In addition, the long waiting times for any psychological intervention has been linked to emerging pressures being put onto other areas of the NHS including Ambulance services and Accident and Emergency Departments. It has been acknowledged that public services outside of the NHS have also been struggling to cope with the added pressures that mental health poses including the Police.

Over the past three years (2016-2018), Parliament Street has been researching the effects of mental health on public services in a range of different ways. We have investigated waiting times for children and adolescent mental health services, accident and emergency attendances for self-harm and suicidal thinking alongside the number of incidents the police are dealing with relating to mental health.

This report paper aims to outline our findings from the research we have undertaken and provide insight into the reasoning behind the results. In addition, we will provide our recommendations to government going forward

Over the past three years (2016-2018), Parliament Street has been researching the number of incidents the police have been dealing with relating to mental health. It has been noted that the police are dealing with an increasing number of incidents labelled with the 'Mental Health' qualifier code. The latest figures received by Parliament Street suggest that the Police have dealt with over 400,000 incidents with the code in 2018.

This paper will provide mixed-methods analysis of the current relationship between public services and Mental Health in the United Kingdom.

I would like to thank everyone at Parliament Street who has supported and continues to support this project and outside individuals who have offered us vital insight into the pressures facing public services in relation to mental health.

Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service Waiting Times Research

In 2018, Parliament Street undertook research into waiting times for children and adolescent mental health services to examine how long young people were waiting to access psychological therapies and the number of young people on each waiting list.

The questions posed to NHS trusts were as follows:

Q1) How many children and adolescents are on the waiting list to access psychological therapies from your trust as of June 2018?

Q2) What is the average waiting time for children and adolescents seeking psychological therapies from your trust as of June 2018?

Summary of Findings

- **There were 6,847 children and adolescents waiting to access psychological therapies as of June 2018.**

- **The average number of children and adolescents waiting to access psychological therapies was 326.0 as of June 2018.**

- **The average waiting time for children and adolescents trying to access psychological therapies was 3.7 months as of June 2018.**

- **60.8% of trusts that responded had over 100 children and adolescents waiting for psychological therapies.**

- **39.1% of trusts that responded had a waiting time over 3 months.**

- **75% of trusts that responded last year saw a rise in 2018 in the number of children and adolescents awaiting psychological therapies.**

- **50% of trusts that responded last year saw a rise in 2018 in the waiting times for children and adolescent seeking psychological therapies.**

- **20.3% of trusts contacted said they either didn't collate the information, or it wasn't in a retrievable format.**

It was found that over 6000 children and adolescents were on waiting lists to access psychological therapies on the NHS.

The Average waiting time for children and adolescents trying to access psychological therapies was 3.7 months and the average number of children and adolescents' waiting to access psychological therapies was 326.0 as of June 2018.

In addition, 60.8% of NHS trusts that responded to our request reported having over 100 children and adolescents on their waiting lists for psychological therapy.

It was noted that 39.1% of trusts experienced waiting times of over 3 months and 50% of trusts saw a rise from the previous year in waiting times.

It was disappointing to find that 20.3% of trusts said they either didn't collate the information on waiting times for psychological therapies or the data was not in a retrievable format.

Top 10 highest number of children and adolescents on the waiting list to access psychological therapies as of June 2018 (by NHS Trust).

1. Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust **1,286**

2. Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust **1,038**

3. Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust **777**

4. South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust **723**

5. Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust **689**

6. Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust **483**

7. Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust **404**

8. Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust **279**

9. Dorset Healthcare University NHS Foundation **269**

10. Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust **148**

Top 10 highest waiting times to access psychological therapies as of June 2018 (by NHS Trust).

1. Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust **8.05 months**

2. Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust **6.5 months**

3. Solent NHS Trust **6.3 months**

4. Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust **5.6 months**

5. Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust **4.7 months**

6. Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust **3.7 months**

7. Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust **3.2 months**

8. Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust **2.8 months**

9. Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust **2.2 months**

10. Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust **2.2 months**

<u>Police and Mental Health Research (2016-2018)</u>

Over the past three years, Parliament Street has been investigating the number of incidents the police are dealing with relating to mental health. The research provided a valuable but shocking insight into the increasing pressure being placed on the police in relation to mental health.

The question asked:

> *How many incidents where mental health has been a factor have been recorded between the 01 January – 11 December (2016, 2017, 2018)?*

<u>Facts and Figures</u>

- **Police Forces in the United Kingdom heave dealt with almost 1 million incidents with the 'mental health' coding. This means that mental health was a factor in the incident. The total number of incidents with the 'mental health' coding attached between 2016 and 2018 was 999,457.**
- **In 2016, the police dealt with 296,773 incidents with the 'mental health' coding. The highest number of incidents was experienced by South Wales Police with 38,712 recorded incidents.**
- **In 2017, the number of incidents the Police was dealing with fell to 294,318 with the 'mental health' coding. The highest number of incidents was experienced by Hampshire Constabulary with 36,352 recorded incidents.**
- **In 2018, the numbers of incidents the police were dealing with rose by 27.3% from 2016 to 408,366. The highest number of incidents was experienced by Hampshire Constabulary with 34,600.**
- **We received 27/45 responses in 2016, 2017 and received 30/45 responses in 2018.**

<u>The United Kingdom</u>

It has been noted, that the police are dealing with an increasing number of incidents relating to mental health. In 2016, the number of incidents the police were dealing with relating to mental health was 296,773; in 2017 the number of incidents fell slightly to 294,318 before rising to 408,366. It must be acknowledged that the number of responses as shown below

were slightly higher in 2018 and that should be considered when making sense of these figures.

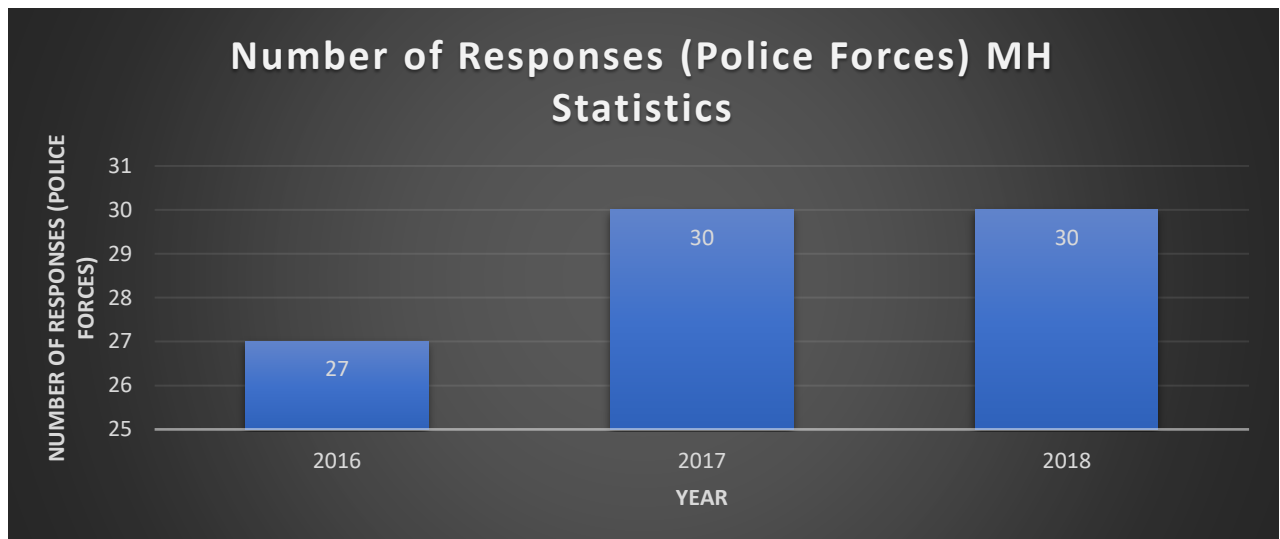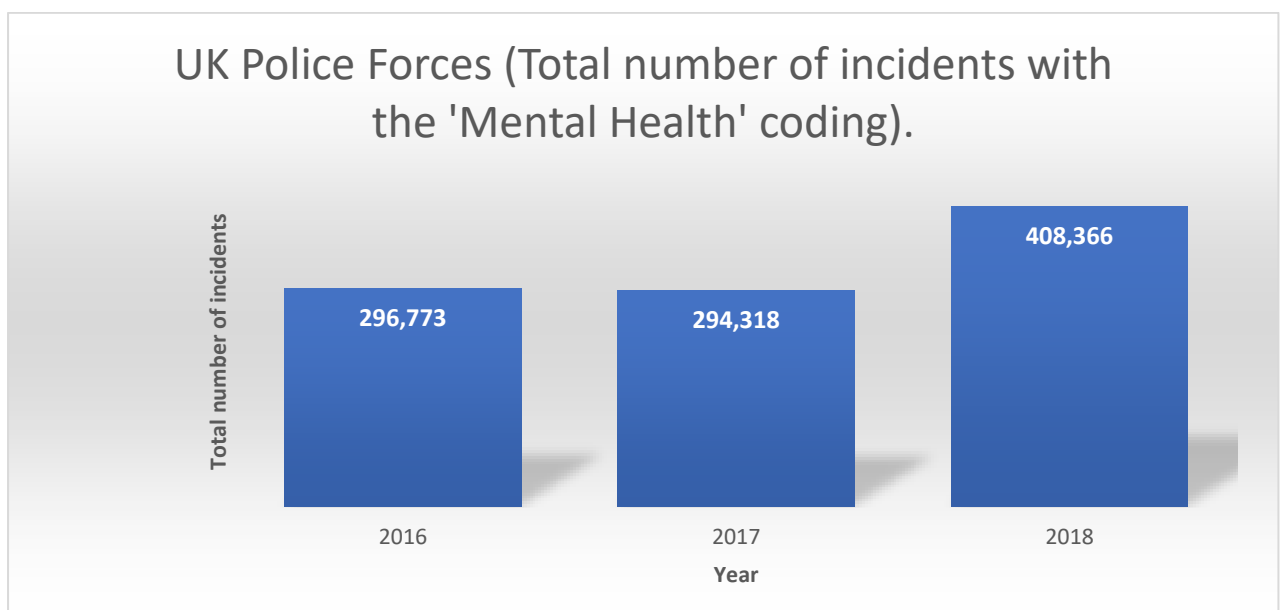*Table 1: Number of Responses (Police Forces 2016-2018) Statistics*

Table 2: UK Police Forces (Total Number of Incidents with the 'Mental Health' coding applied

The number of incidents that UK Police Forces are experiencing labelled with the 'mental health' coding has risen by 27.3% from 296,773 to 408,366 in the past two years. This illustrates a worrying trend of an increasing number of individuals experiencing mental health problems coming into contact with the police instead of the more appropriate NHS services. It could be argued that the reduction in staffing numbers and long waiting-times are leading

to individuals calling the police either in crisis or because there is no alternative health provision available at that time.

England

The number of police incidents relating to mental health (mental health coding applied) has risen between 2016 and 2018 in England (based on police forces that responded every year):
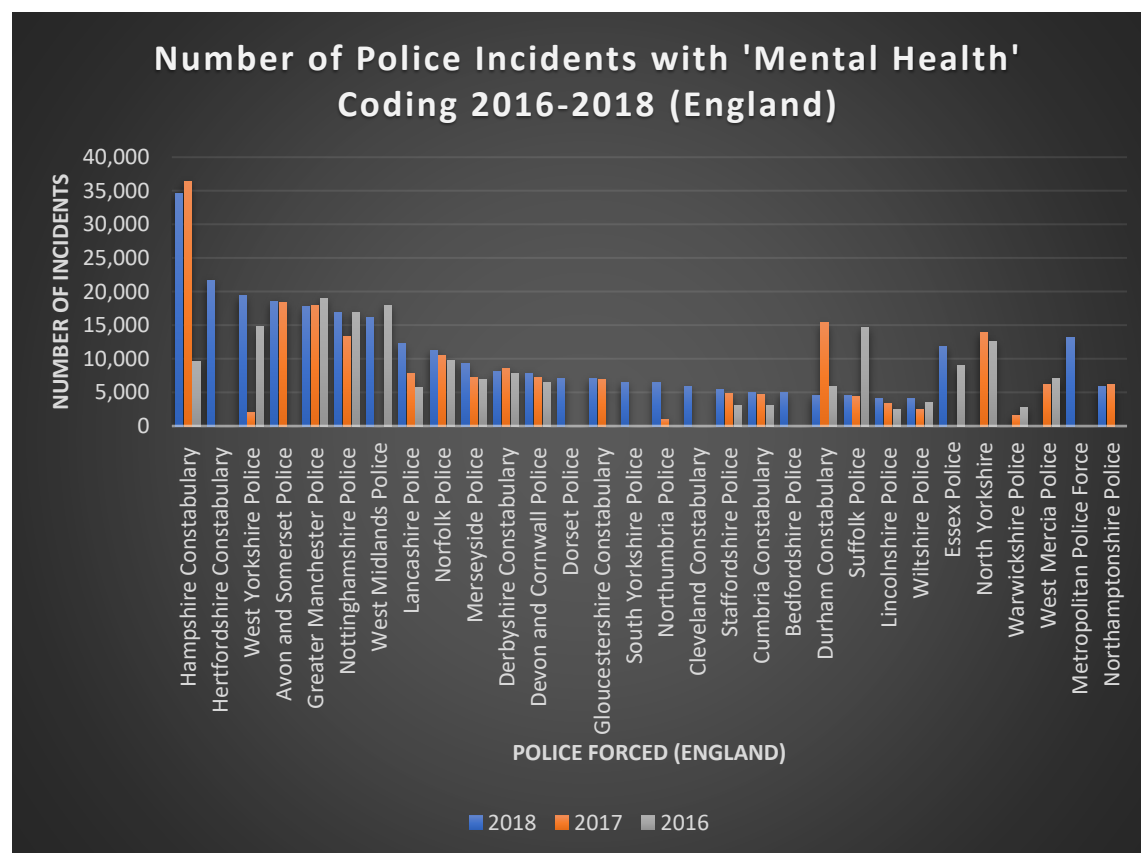
The Number of Police Incidents Relating to Mental Health (Based on Police Forces that Responded Every Year)
2016: 164,204
2017: 146,080
2018: 165,071

Figure 1:Number of Police Incidents Relating to Mental Health in England(2016-2018)

Table 3: The Number of Police Incidents with 'Mental Health' Coding 2016-2018 (England)

Out of the Police Forces that responded every year (2016, 2017, 2018) 52.9% of them have seen a rise in the number of incidents relating to mental health between 2016 and 2018. The highest rise was seen by Hampshire Constabulary with a 72.2% rise since 2016. In addition, Lancashire Constabulary have experienced a 53.3% in incidents relating to mental health since 2016 and Staffordshire Police have seen a 42.6% increase.

Hampshire Police = 72.2% rise since 2016

Lancashire Constabulary = 53.3% rise since 2016

Staffordshire Police = 42.6% rise since 2016

Lincolnshire Police = 38.9% rise since 2016

Cumbria Constabulary = 37.3% rise since 2016

Merseyside Police = 25.5% rise since 2016

West Yorkshire Police = 23.3% rise since 2016

Wiltshire Police = 15.6% rise since 2016

Norfolk Police = 13.1% rise since 2016

Wales

The results received from Wales have been patchy in places, but it can be acknowledged based on the responses received year on year (based on the three respondent forces each year) the totals are as follows;

Disclaimer: These totals are based on 3/4 police forces responding each year and should only be seen as an estimate.

The Number of Police Incidents Relating to Mental Health (Wales 2016-2018)
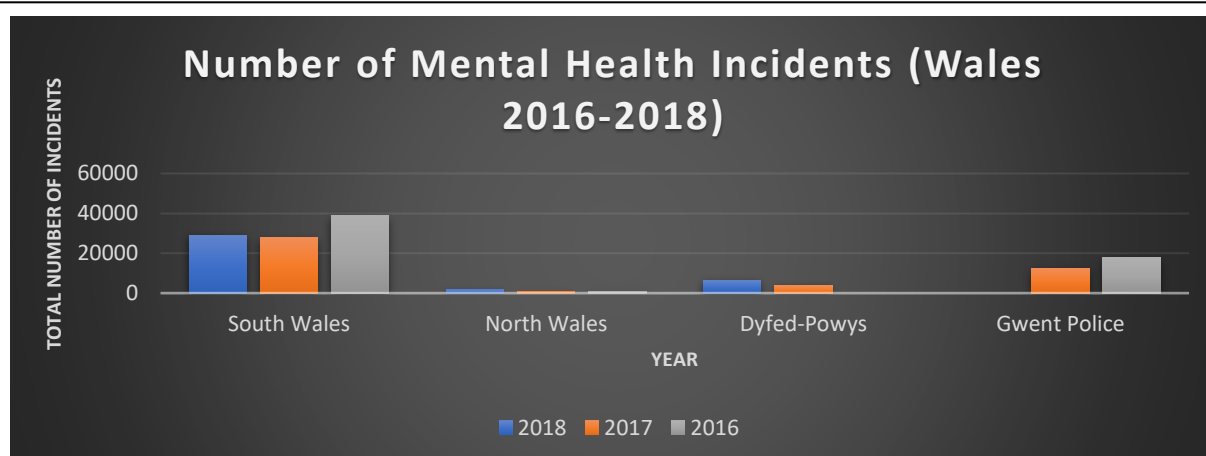
2016: 57,385

2017: 41,916

2018: 37,258

Table 4: The Number of Police Incidents with the 'Mental Health' Coding 2016-2018 (Wales)

It can be noted that South Wales have seen a decrease in the number of incidents relating to mental health between 2016-2018. South Wales Police have experienced a 24.7% reduction in incidents since 2016 which is encouraging to see.

On examining the data of Dyfed-Powys Police it must be noted that data was provided to us in 2016 but we were unable to use it due to 'dates not matching up with our request' making it hard to include in the overall research. Although, data was provided in 2017 and 2018 for the dates requested. It can be said that Dyfed-Powys Police experienced an increase in incidents relating to mental health by 39.3% from 3873 in 2017 to 6383 in 2018.

North Wales Police provided data on the number of incidents relating to mental health in 2018, 2017 and 2018. It can be acknowledged that North Wales Police saw a rise between 2016 and 2018 by 56% from 766 to 1744.

Gwent Police provided data for 2016 and 2017 but could not provide the information for 2018 due to 'Not holding the requested information.' Using the data from 2016 and 2017 it is hard to make a judgement on any meaningful change.

Scotland

The data received from Police Scotland could only be provided for 2017 and 2018. Police Scotland could not provide any information in 2016 due to 'not holding the requested information'.
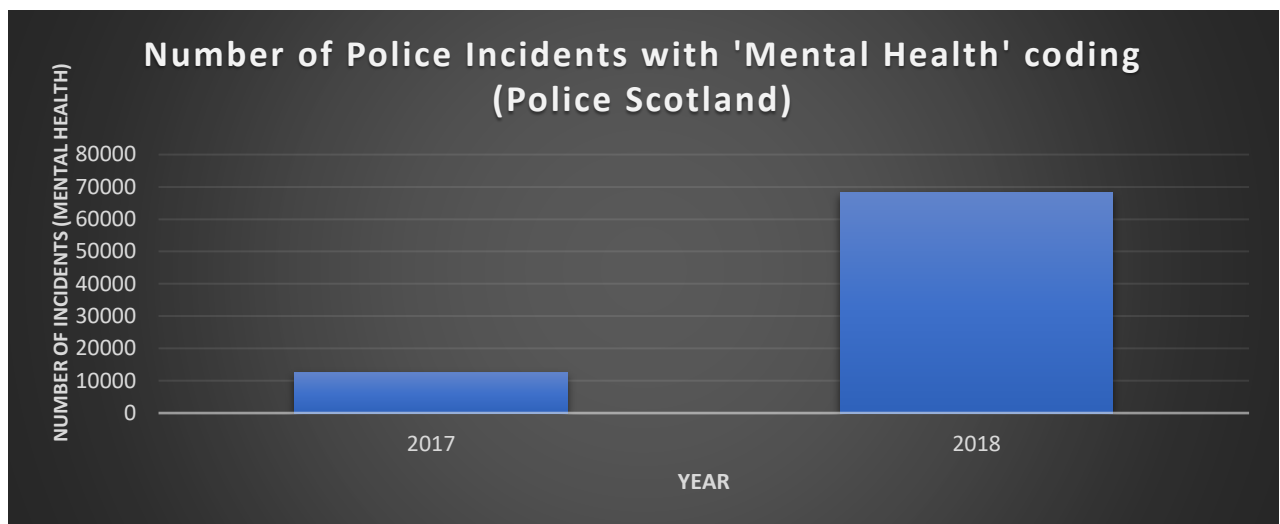
The data provided is as follows:

Number of Police Incidents Relating to Mental Health (Scotland)
2017: 12497
2018: 68166

Table 5: Number of Police Incidents with 'Mental Health' coding (Police Scotland)

Police Scotland has experienced a significant rise between 2017 and 2018 by 81.6% from 12497 to 68166. Although it must be acknowledged that this is a significant rise, the reasoning behind such a rise has not yet been found.

Northern Ireland

The data from the Police Service of Northern Ireland was provided for 2016, 2017 and 2018.
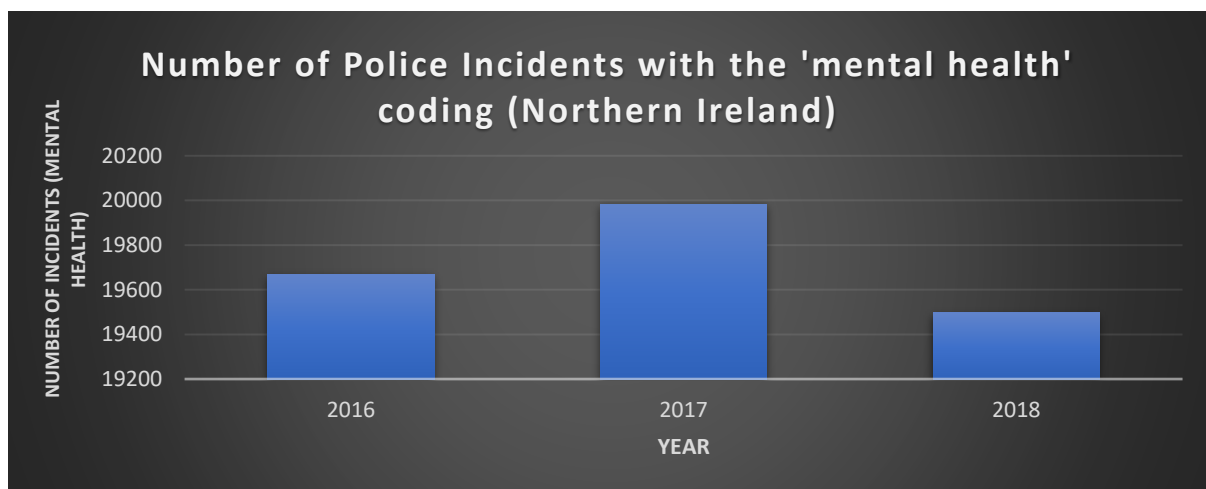
Number of Incidents Relating to Mental Health (Northern Ireland).

2016: 19668

2017: 19983

2018: 19497

Table 6: Number of Police Incidents with the 'mental health' coding (Northern Ireland).

The Police Service of Northern Ireland has experienced a reduction in incidents between 2016 and 2018. It can be acknowledged that PSNI incidents relating to mental health has reduced by 0.8% from 19668 to 19497. Although, the number of incidents has consistently remained above 19000 between 2016-2018 and there has been no significant change in the number of incidents relating to mental health.

Accident and Emergency Attendances for Self-Harm and Suicidal Thinking Research

In 2018, Parliament Street undertook research into the number of attendances for self-harm and suicidal thinking to A&E Departments in England. The research provided an interesting insight into the growing pressures being put on accident and emergency departments in England due to mental health related attendances.

The questions asked:

> *Q1: How many Accident and Emergency attendances have been recorded as self-harm as the primary/chief complaint between 1st August 2017- 31st July 2018?*
>
> *Q2): How many Accident and Emergency attendances have been recorded with suicidal thoughts as the chief complaint between 1st August 2017- 31st July 2018?*

Our research shows that the number of accident and emergency attendances recorded as self-harm and suicidal thinking has reached nearly 26000 in England.

The research shows that there have been 25,597 recorded attendances at accident and emergency departments in England. The number of self-harm cases reached 13559 and the number of cases relating to suicidal thinking reached 12038 between August 2017- 31st July 2018.

Key Findings

- **The number of accident and emergency attendances for self-harm and suicide-thinking in England (2018) was 25597.**
- **The total number of accident and emergency attendances for self-harm in England (2018) was 13559.**
- **The total number of accident and emergency attendances for suicidal-thinking in England (2018) was 12038.**
- **It was found that 35.7% of trusts that responded to our request had over 500 attendances for self-harm in 2018. In addition, 73.8% of trusts had over 100 attendances for self-harm.**
- **It was found that 18% of trusts that responded to our request had over 500 attendances for suicidal-thinking. In addition, 68% of trusts that responded had over 100 attendances for suicidal-thinking.**

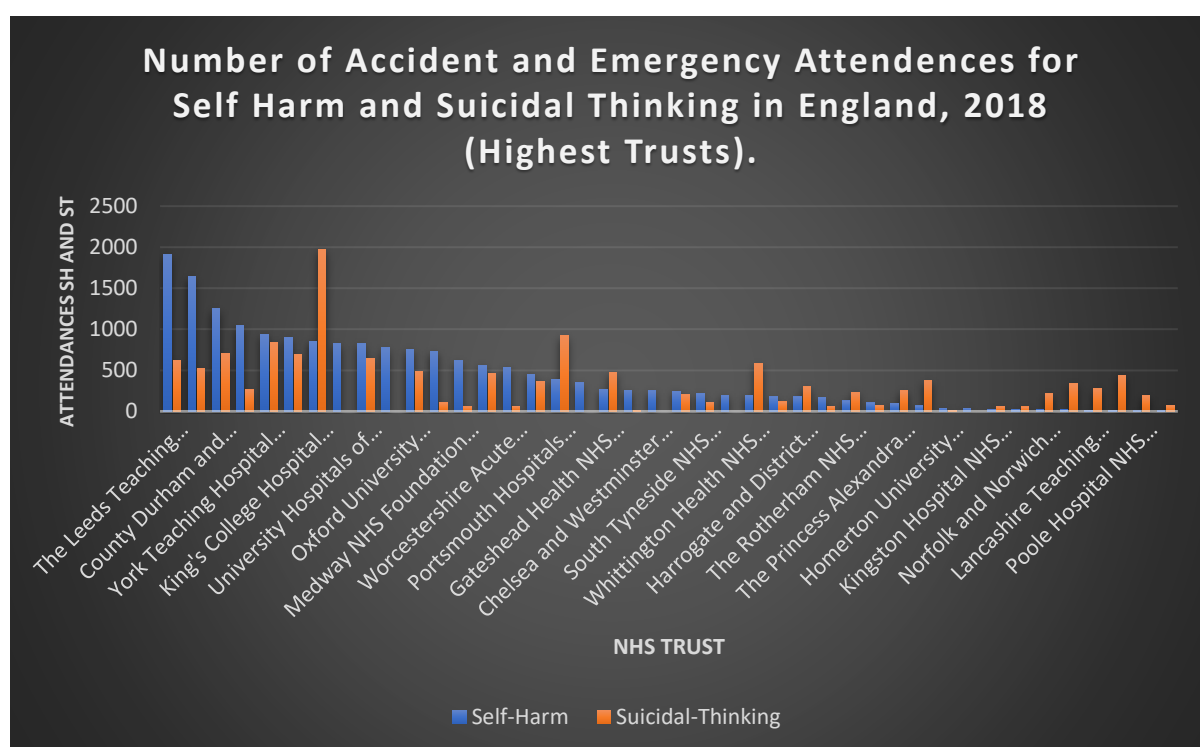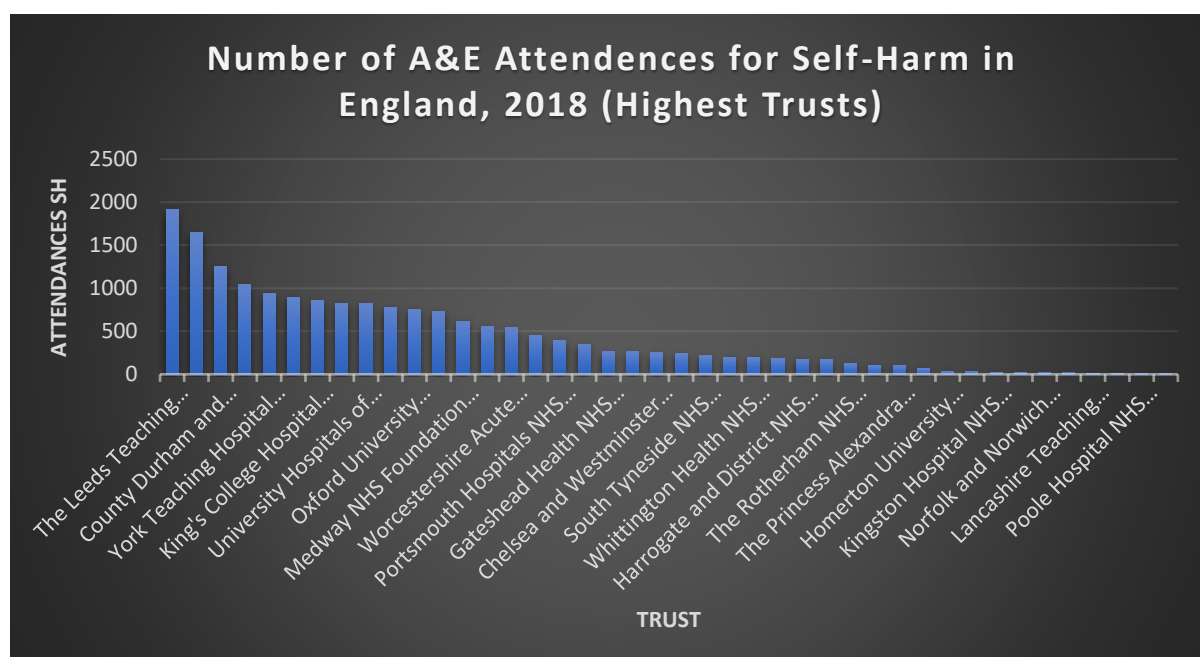*Table 7: Number of A&E Attendances for Self-Harm and Suicidal Thinking in England, 2018 (Highest Trusts)*

Table 8: Number of A&E Attendances for Self-Harm in England, 2018 (Highest Trusts).

It can be acknowledged that the highest number of both, self-harm and suicidal thinking attendances came from Kings College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust who represented 11% of all cases in England. The second highest for both, self-harm and suicidal thinking attendance to accident and emergency was Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust who represent 9.8% of all cases in England. The third highest trust for self-harm and suicidal thinking attendances to accident and emergency was Country Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust who represented 7.6% of all cases.

The three trusts with the highest number of self-harm and suicidal thoughts attendances represented overall 28.4% of all cases in England.

The highest number of self-harm attendances in accident and emergency departments in England in 2018 was experienced by Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust at 1911, second highest experienced was by Taunton and Somerset NHS Foundation Trust at 1642 and the third highest was experienced by County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust at 1252.

The three trusts with the highest number of self-harm attendances to accident and emergency departments represented 35.4% of all cases.

Table 9: Number of A&E Attendances for Suicidal Thinking in England, 2018 (Highest Trusts)
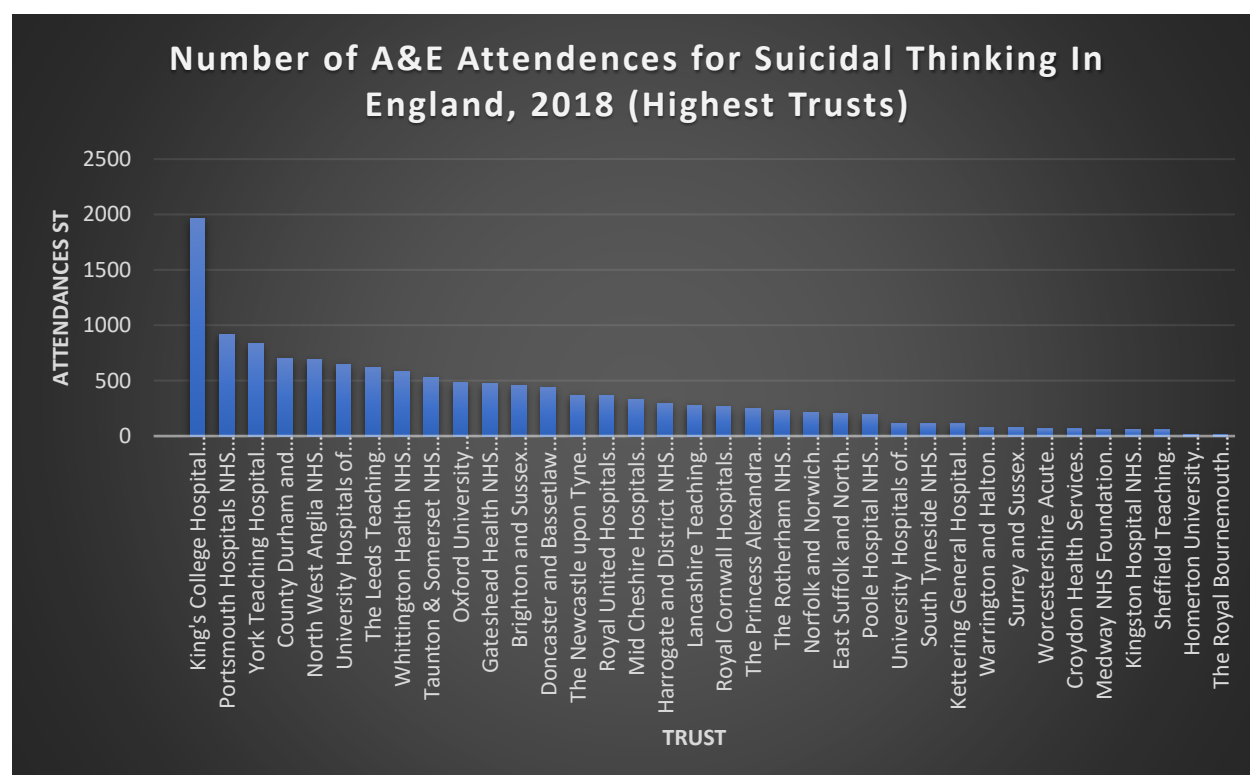
The highest number of attendances to accident and emergency departments for suicidal thinking was experienced by Kings College Hospital NHS Trust with 1968, the second highest was experienced by Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust with 921 and the third highest number of attendances for suicidal thinking was experienced by York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust with 838 cases.

The trusts with the three highest levels of attendances for suicidal thinking represented 30.9% of all cases in England.

Conclusion

It can be acknowledged from our findings that an increasing amount of pressure is being placed on public services from mental health.

The long waiting-lists to access psychological therapies in children and adolescent mental health services exemplify one potential reasoning for increasing numbers of mental health cases that the police and accident and emergency departments are dealing with.

It can be acknowledged from our research into children and adolescent mental health services that over 6000 young people are on waiting lists to access support. In addition, over 60% of NHS trusts had over 100 children and young people awaiting psychological therapy in 2018.

The number of police incidents marked with the 'mental health' coding reached over 400,000 in 2018. In adding together our research into the number of police incidents labelled with the 'mental health' coding, it can be noted that there have been almost a million cases of this nature over the past three years.

The total number of attendances at accident and emergency departments across England for self-harm and suicidal thinking reached over 25000 in 2018. The total number of accident and emergency attendances for self-harm in England was 13559 alongside 12038 for suicidal thinking in 2018.

It was discovered that 73.8% of all trusts that responded to our request had over 100 attendances of self-harm in accident and emergency. In addition, 68% of trusts that responded to our request experienced over 100 attendances for suicidal thinking in accident and emergency.

This paper does not want to make too many assumptions on why the number of mental health cases among the police and accident and emergency departments are so high. Instead, the aim of this paper is to provide an in-depth insight into the data collated through our research and act as a tool for further research to be done. Although, it can be said, that public services are experiencing an increasing amount of pressure due to the increased numbers of people presenting with mental health conditions. Additionally they are presenting to services that you would not expect to be dealing with mental health but are increasingly doing so. The increasing concern for Parliament Street is that people experiencing mental health problems are consistently not being able to access the correct channels of care, meaning that they are ending up with the police or in accident and emergency departments.

At Parliament Street we will continue to add to our findings and aim to provide an increasingly deeper insight into the effects on public services by people accessing them for a mental health condition, due to a more appropriate service not being available to them.

 Our research serves as a constant reminder of the work that still needs to be done to ensure all people experiencing mental health problems get the correct and timely support they need.