



Learning from Across the Border: Housing First in Greater Manchester

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Housing First in the Liverpool City Region

Housing
First



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Session Outline

Part	Overview	Content
1	Programme approaches	Overview of operational delivery in Greater Manchester and Liverpool City region
2	Housing Supply	Approaches to tackling housing supply and key learning
3	Partnerships	Service integration at locality level and within the wider system
4	Co-production	How lived experience has been integrated in programme delivery
5	Integrated Health Offer	Overview of health offers within Housing First service delivery
6	Research findings	Key findings from MHCLG evaluation and wider research

Strategic Context

MHCLG funded National Pilots

3 Metro city regions:

West Midland Combined Authority

Liverpool City Region

Greater Manchester Combined Authority

**Separate evaluation
commissioned by MHCLG**

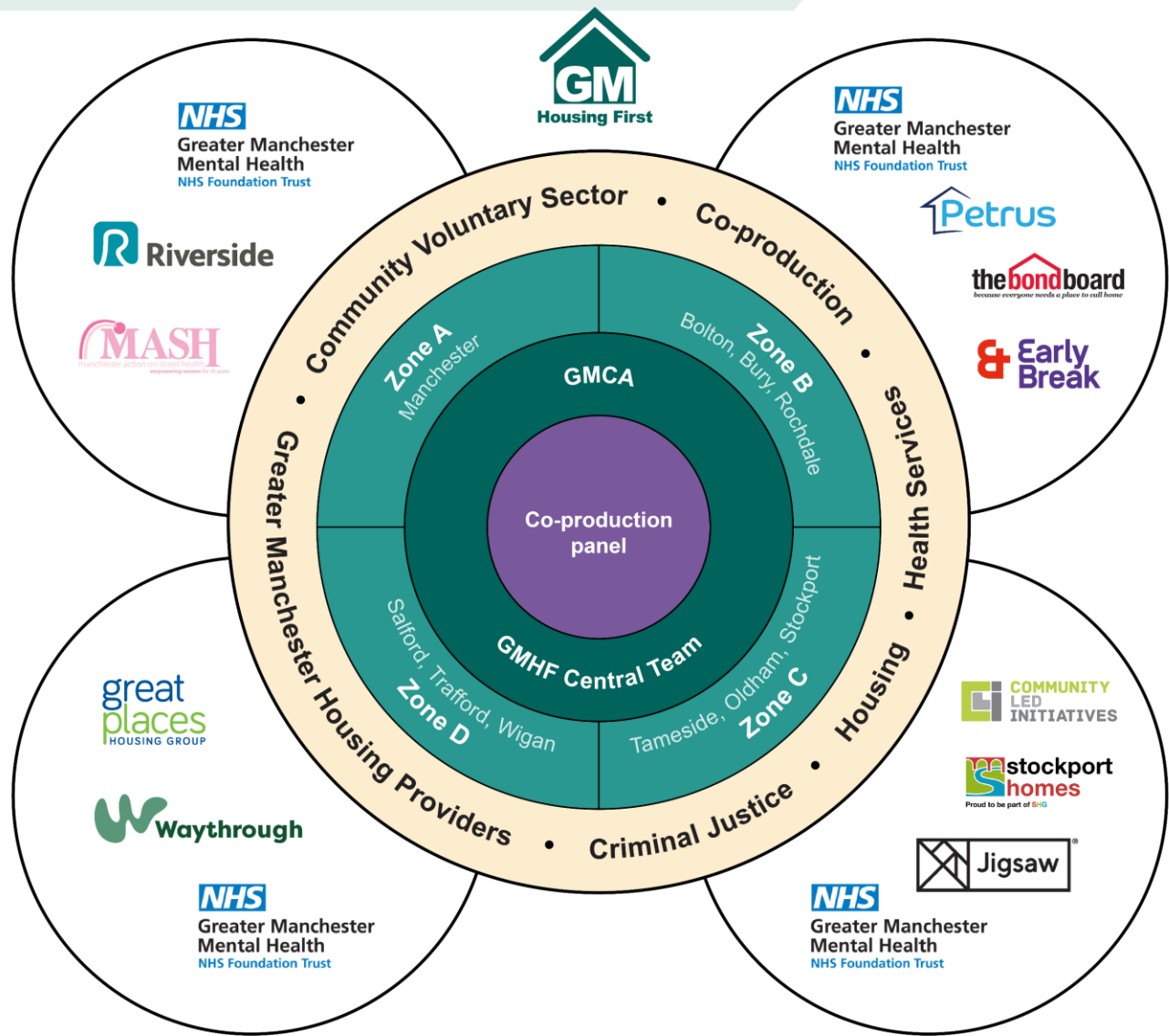
**First time in England delivering
Housing First intervention at
scale**

**GMCA- 1 head contract
partnership approach**

**GMHF Successfully re-tendered 2
times to continue delivery regional
HF programme to June 29**

**Regional context – Andy Burnham
manifesto for GM to be the first
'Housing First City Region'**

The GMHF partnership



Cross sectoral

Partnership incorporating housing, health services, the community and voluntary sector and people with lived experience.

Equitable

An open and fair service that treats the people we support, colleagues, and partners as equals.

Local capacity building

Good practice sharing, training and continuous improvement culture, commissioning local VCSE partners.

Co-produced

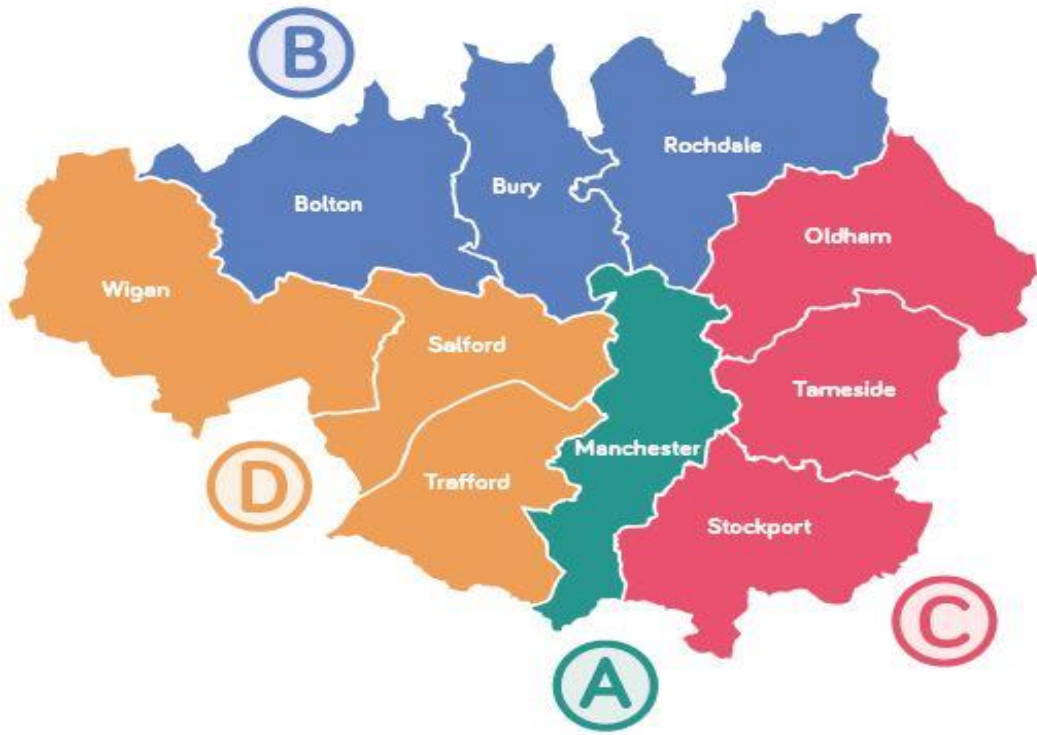
People with lived experience at the heart of model design and will continue to lead its development

High Fidelity

Aligned to the seven Housing First principles ensuring improved outcomes for people.

Delivery Approach

GMHF STAFFING INFORMATION



Zone A

Staffing compliment: 16 Housing First Workers, 2 Team Leaders, 1 Dual Diagnosis Practitioner

Zone Lead: Riverside (13 HFW + 2 TL)

Support: MASH (3 HFW), GMMH (1 DDP)



Zone B

Staffing compliment: 12 Housing First Workers, 2 Team Leaders, 1 Dual Diagnosis Practitioner

Zone Lead: Petrus (4 HFW + 1 TL)

Support: Bond Board (5 HFW + 1 TL), Early Break (3 HFW), GMMH (1 DDP)



Zone C

Staffing compliment: 12 Housing First Workers, 2 Team Leaders, 1 Dual Diagnosis Practitioner

Zone Lead: Jigsaw (7 HFW + 2 TL)

Support: Stockport Homes (2 HFW), Community Led Initiatives (3 HFW), GMMH (1 DDP)



Zone D

Staffing compliment: 13 Housing First Workers, 2 Team Leaders, 1 Dual Diagnosis Practitioner

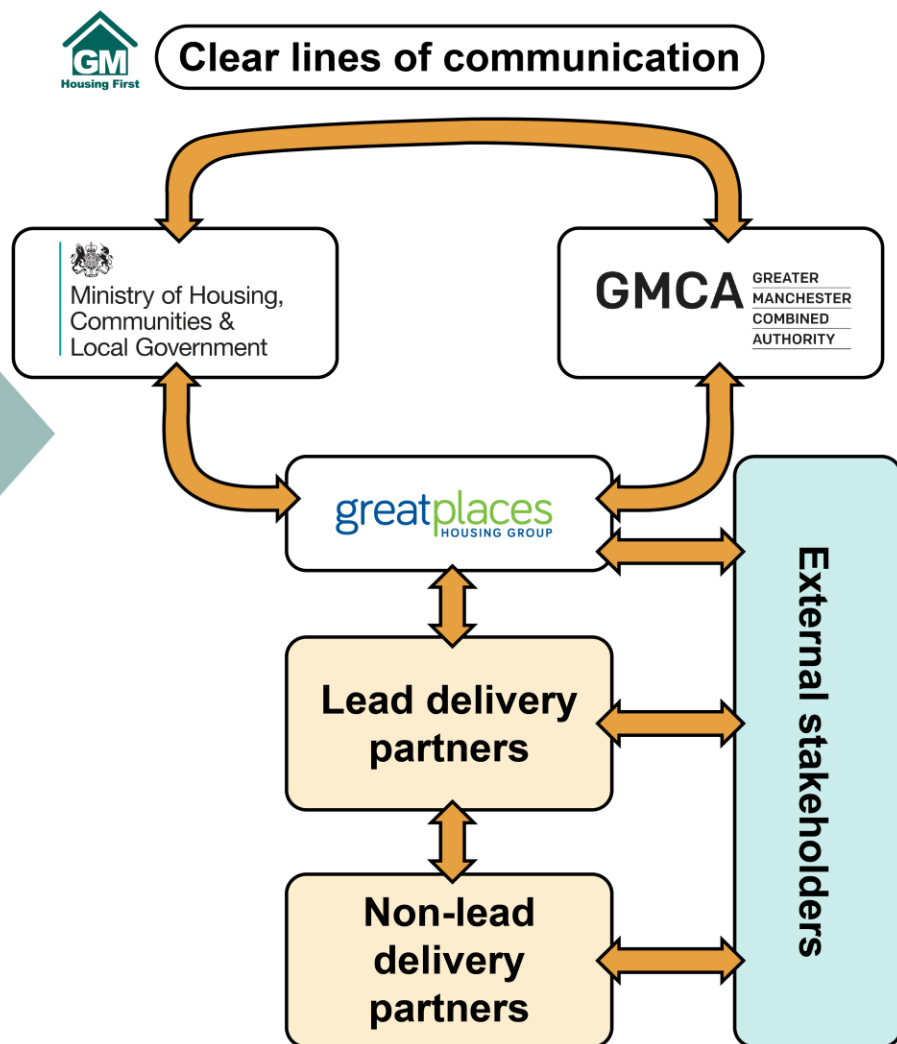
Zone Lead: Great Places (10 HFW + 2 TL)

Support: Humankind (3 HFW), GMMH (1 DDP)



The staff ratio equates to one Housing First Worker has a maximum of seven cases.
One Team Leader manages a maximum of eight Housing First Workers.

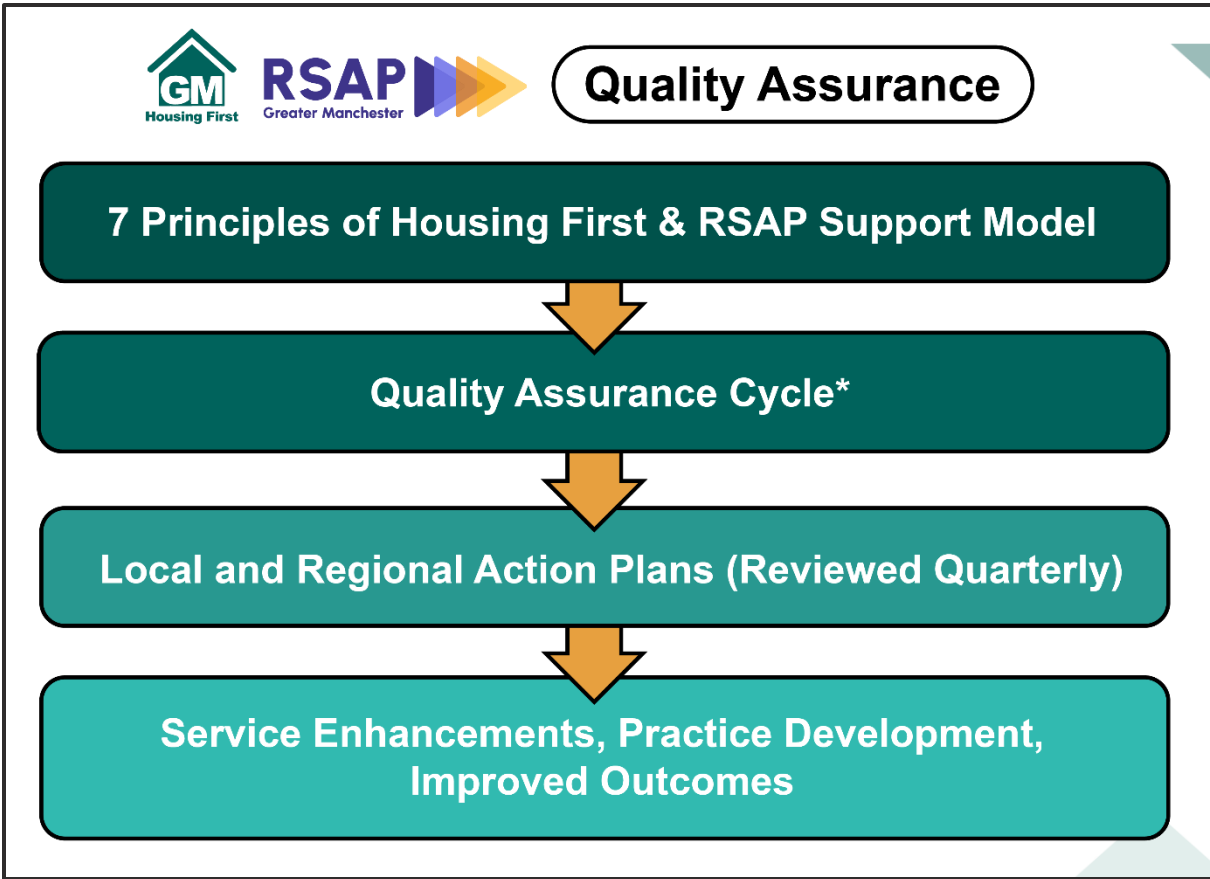
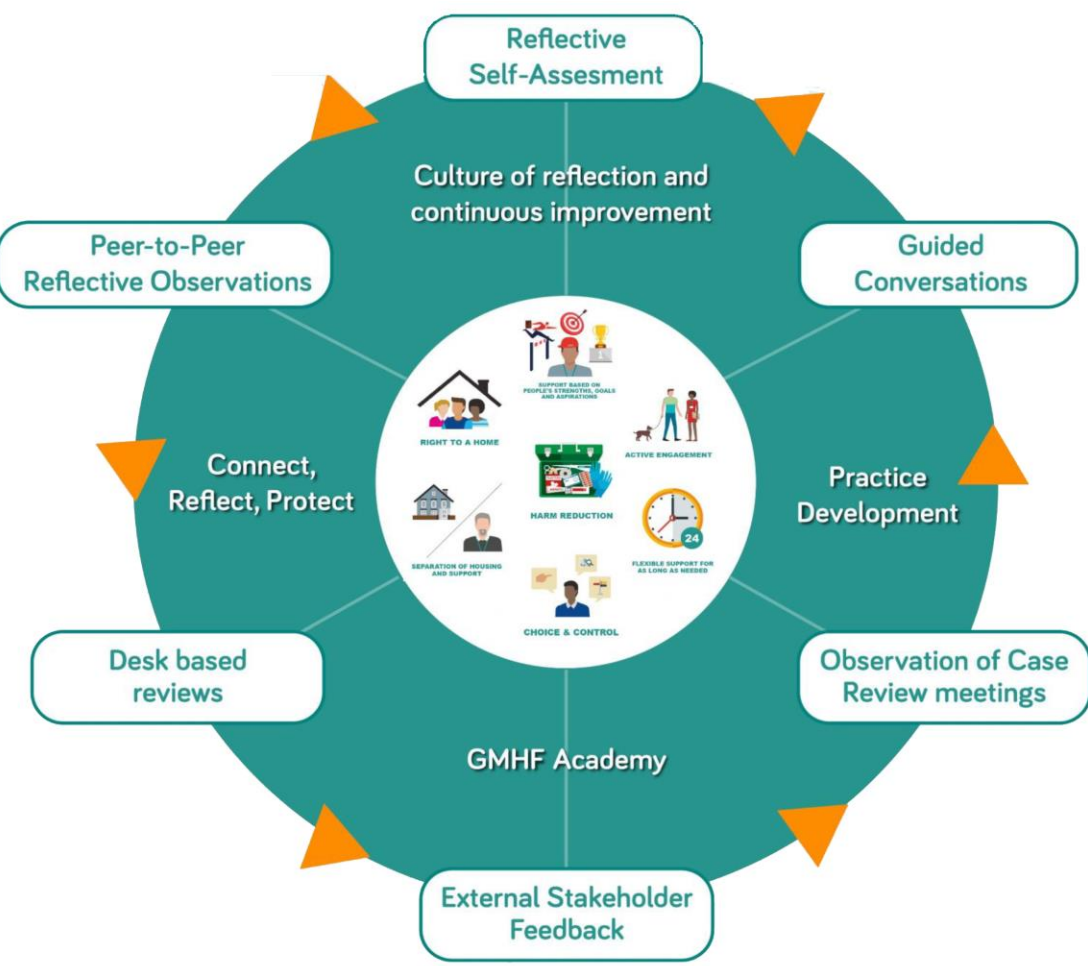
Partnership Infrastructure



Governance

- Assurance & Learning meetings
- Partnership Steering board
- Key meetings:
 - Zone Leads meeting
 - Team Leaders
 - Whole partnership
- Common case management system GM Think
- Partnership working framework

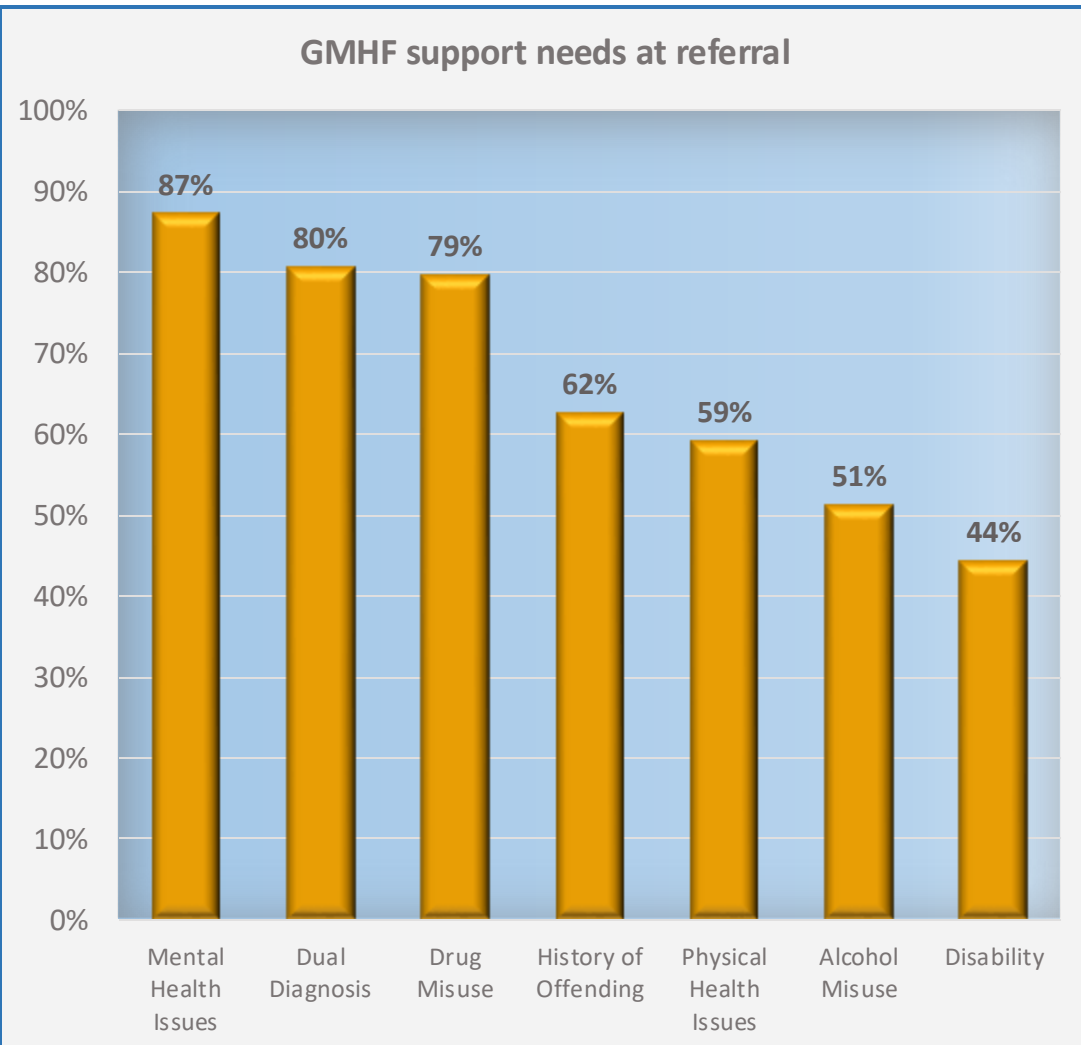
Ensuring Fidelity



How fidelity feels

Principle	Supported people quotations 'They/Them/She' = GMHF Workers
People have a right to a home	"I wanted to be in a certain area and they made it happen." "They didn't make me jump through hoops."
Flexible support provided for as long as is needed	"She backs me up all the time. She was at the police station with me for five hours." "One week before I have a depot, I become anxious and upset. I have PTSD after my father's death. But I know I can reach out to them."
Housing and support are separated	"I only lasted four weeks somewhere in the past, but they got me somewhere new."
Individuals have choice and control	She gives scenarios and outcomes but lets me decide." "They gave me two choices on my house. The first one I didn't want but I took the second."

Programme Current position

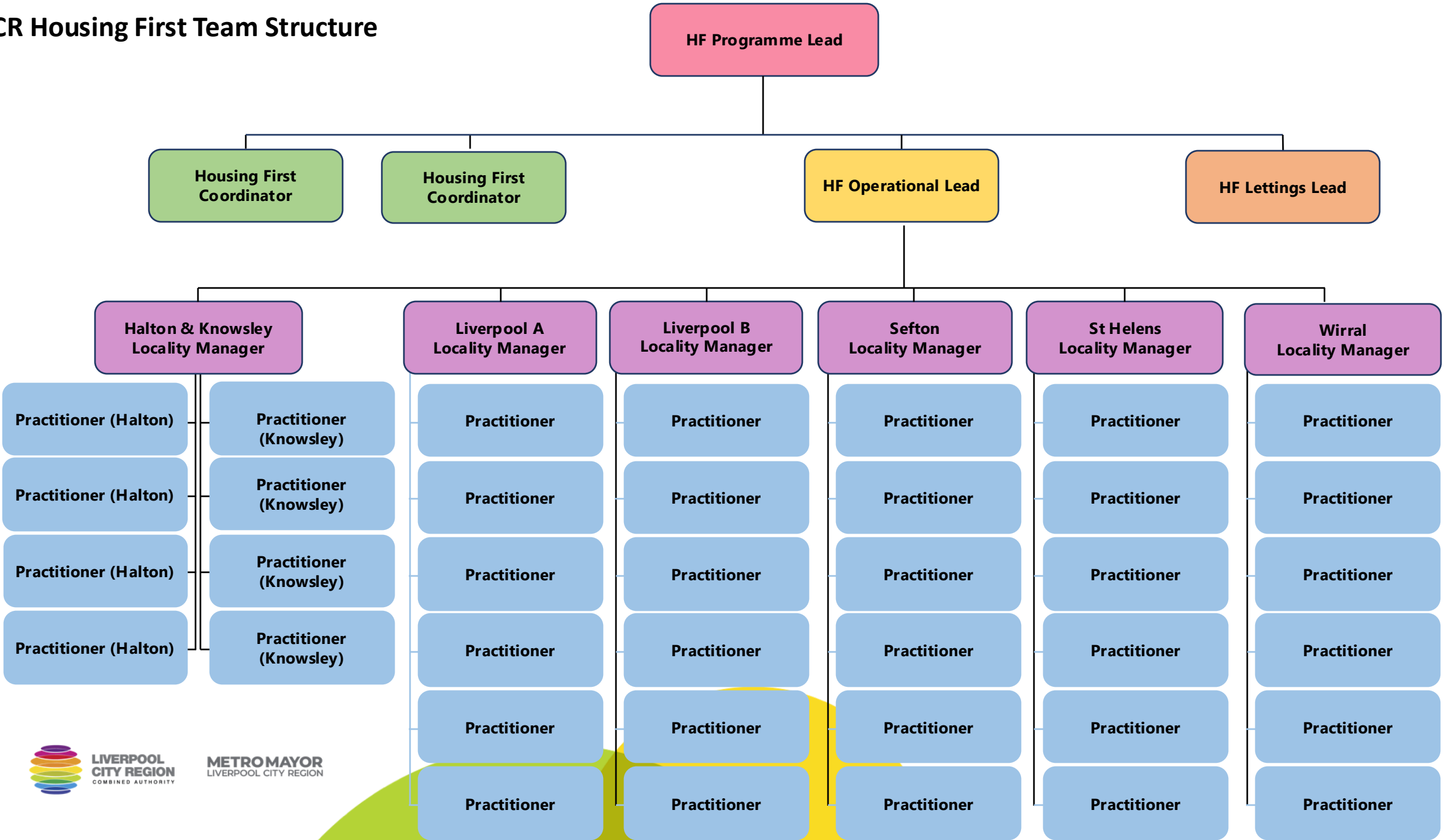


- **621** Referrals
- 276 people on programme
- **457** people cumulatively housed.
- **80 %** 18 mnth Tenancy Sustainment
- **600 +** property offers.
- **150** Additional Managed moves and Re-housings.
- **134** people housed over 3 years.
- **54** people assisted to access alternative pathways
- **33** graduations

Overview of LCR Housing First

- Launching in 2018, the CA was awarded funding from MHCLG to deliver a pilot Housing First programme. Funding has now been secured to March 2029.
- Rather than commissioning the service out, the Combined Authority decided that it would deliver the Housing First Programme directly.
- The programme had a difficult start with initial design and operational challenges. The initial region-wide model proved inefficient, leading to a shift to locality teams.
- Locality-Based Delivery Model
 - Small local teams offer intensive, person-centred support with strong partnerships across sectors.
 - The model sees a Locality Manager oversee a team of Practitioners who each provide intensive support to 6 Service Users, totalling 228 across the city region.
- Evaluations show strong tenancy sustainment and wellbeing improvements despite systemic challenges.
- Ongoing challenges include housing supply, system integration and long-term sustainability issues.

LCR Housing First Team Structure



Successes of the Delivery Model

- Locality-Based Delivery Model

Locally embedded teams improved operational effectiveness and responsiveness to individual Housing First participant needs.

- Balance of Central and Local Roles

Central coordination adds value through specialisms and quality assurance, while local teams retain autonomy adapting to contexts.

- Multi-Agency Collaboration

Multi-agency panels and MDT approaches have strengthened referrals, risk-sharing, and coordinated complex needs responses.

- Strong Outcomes and high Fidelity

High tenancy sustainment and improved engagement reflect success of intensive, relationship-based Housing First support.

Challenges within the Delivery Model

- Resource-intensive and workforce-dependent on stand alone team with no wider specialist workforce in support
- Can feel isolated from both third sector and statutory sector
- Tension between centralisation and local flexibility
- Not fully integrated with statutory systems
- Reliant on partnerships rather than formalised structures
- Still evolving in co-production and consistency
- Delays and inefficiency in referrals and housing access
- Structural barriers (health/social care, housing supply) reduce effectiveness

Current LCR data

- Programme Reach and Support
455 individuals received tailored, intensive support addressing complex housing and intersecting support needs.
- Housing Outcomes and Tenancies
315 tenancies created, providing long-term housing solutions
- Transfers and Managed Moves
92 managed moves illustrate programme flexibility ensuring sustained housing stability through supportive transitions.
- Graduations and Independence
82 graduations reflect increased independence with reduced need for intensive Housing First support.
- Tenancy Sustainment Rate
Sustainment consistently above **70%**, demonstrating strong long-term success of housing placements.





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Housing Supply



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Accommodation Strategy

- GMHP is a unique partnership of housing providers working together to make a positive difference to people and communities across Greater Manchester. 24 RPs
- GMHF endorsed by GMHP – housing led partnership
- Tripartite Agreement
- Direct let allocations
- Flexible working
- Property pledges
- Regular reporting to RP CEO'
- Robust support offer to RP's



- 621 property offers made to date



Key learning

- In 2024, shift from pledge-based support to **'Active Tenancies'**.
- Aimed to prevent attrition rate and ensure replacement for lost active tenancies – not the same property
- RP's confirm easier to understand and sets them clear targets to reach.
- In the first 6 months, 41 property offers vs 27 in the same period the year before.
- Total target of 308 active tenancies committed.
- Re-enforces the need for a long-term commitment to people that have experienced significant trauma and faced multiple exclusion – not just a one-off pledge.
- Importance of relationships at every level top down – bottom-up approach – KPI for at least monthly contact between HFW's and Housing Officers. Regular reports sent to CEO's on performance to active tenancies.

Approach to PRS

Approach

- Commissioned The Bond Board additionally to HF delivery to access PRS
- Funding for Bonds provided
- 1 focussed Worker
- Utilising existing relationships with PRS landlords
- Small works grants
- No rent 'top-up's' properties needed to be at LHA rates

Learning

- Lack of 'Elastic Tolerance'
- Tendency to move to exclusion quickly
- Lack of affordable properties within LHA rates
- Cost claims on Bonds
- Return on investment in time and money is poor
- Limited success 30 housed to 1
- Reviewing approach now with RRA

Property Supply to the LCR Housing First Programme

Social Housing Partnership

- Housing Associations

Initial commitment from 13 HAs, with 10 signing Service Level Agreements (SLAs). Over time, most have reduced offers, especially as funding became uncertain.

- Allocation Process

Developed a bespoke process for Housing First, including ID verification, removal of upfront rent/credit checks, and harm reduction approaches.

Housing Associations have slowly moved away from these agreed ways of working especially since it was agreed that Housing First service users would be allocated band A status in Property Pool Plus review.

- Choice-Based Lettings

Recent reforms to the housing registers (Property Pool Plus and Under One Roof) aimed to improve access, but this has not increased offers for HF service users and challenges remain—Band A is crowded, and many Housing First applicants are “skipped” for properties.

Data & Trends

- Offers of Accommodation: Peaked during the pandemic (“Everyone In” initiative) but have since declined and are not keeping pace with demand.
- Waiting Times: Average wait for a property has increased across all boroughs, with Liverpool service users waiting up to 1.5 years.

The impact of the Allocations Policy Review

- Changes to Property Pool Plus were implemented in November 2023.
- Housing First applicants are exempt from qualification criteria, meaning they can register and bid for properties.* (They must have the capacity to hold a tenancy).
- Service users are granted Band A status** for the locality in which they will be receiving support. This allows flexibility, as they may currently reside elsewhere.
- The LCRCA ID Verification Letter has been accepted in the absence of other paperwork, which speeds up the process.
- In the event of service users being skipped for properties, there is a clear Appeals Process through PPP.



*They must have the capacity to hold a tenancy.

**If they are already suitably housed and seeking to transfer, a lesser band may apply. Likewise, if they have a medical requirement.

Successes with Property Supply

- Housing First have seen a major shift in how properties are sourced for the programme with PPP allocations becoming the primary route for property supply in the localities it covers.
- The majority of service users who previously would have been excluded from applying for the scheme, have now been able to register and start bidding.
- Some of our service users have embraced the use of PPP and have taken ownership of their application and bidding each week.
- In some localities it has sped up the rate at which properties are sourced.
- Some Housing associations have adopted trauma-informed approaches and updated policies on risk and evictions to support tenants effectively.

Challenges with Property Supply

- Low Demand Market: LCR has a shortage of 1-bed properties, limited affordable shared housing for under-35s, and risk-averse allocation policies.
- System Barriers: Exclusions from Choice-Based Lettings (CBL), lack of furniture/appliances, and economic pressures (austerity, housing crisis, unaffordable private rents, mortgage barriers).
- Private Rented Sector (PRS): Very limited success—only 8 PRS tenancies since 2019, with affordability, landlord reluctance, insurance, and tenancy insecurity as key barriers.
- Resonance Programme: Social investor partnership to buy 1-bed homes for Housing First and LA use but struggled to meet targets due to rising costs and supply issues.

Things to consider.....



When was the CBL Scheme for your area last reviewed?

Lobby / request an Allocations Policy Review

Engage with Housing Partners:

Seek buy in at a senior level, but engage through the front line: those who **deliver** the service are your best advocates

Consider establishing a Working Group:

Keep dialogue open, be willing to flex processes as needed. Be honest about what isn't working.

Don't underestimate the level of training / briefings required:

Keep momentum going and be visible to housing partners, engage through available forums

Develop documentation to support your processes:

Training guides / FAQs / Clear processes: information on agreed processes is helpful!

Consider a pilot:

Start small, trial a process with one landlord and then use that to advocate for what can be achieved / for it to be adopted more widely

Support your team:

Navigating a housing partnership is tricky! There are lots of competing priorities. Manage the expectations of your team as well as housing partners.





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Partnerships

Local Authority and wider services



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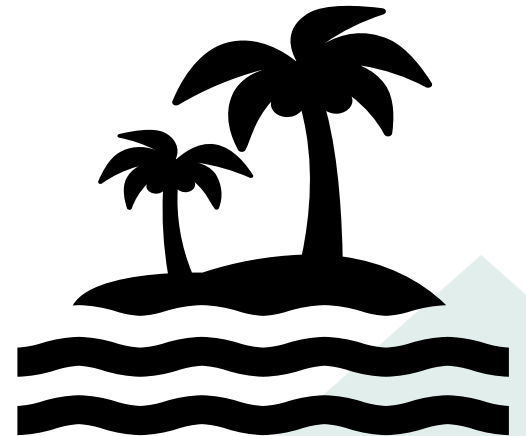
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Local Authorities

- **Oversee all referrals onto the programme**
- **Regular meetings with delivery teams – case discussions**
- **Attendance at LA homelessness forums**
- **Assurance & Learning meetings – LA attendance for delivery teams in area**
- **LA participation in self reflection programme fidelity review**
- **Quarterly programme updates regarding delivery in localities**
- **Stakeholder survey**
- **GMCA communication – HNG**
- **Clear escalation routes**
- **Current Task & Finish group reviewing aspects of delivery**

Wider services

- Multi-agency panels for referral discussions
- **Adult Social Care**
- Data input to Horizon tool
- Presentations at key forums
- Integration of Care Act Assessments into referral process
- **GMMH role in Mental Health Integration**
- Key contacts in DWP
- Cross – sectoral partnership
- HF is not an island! - challenge of HF V rest of the system



Successes with Local Authority Engagement

- Strong Local Authority Buy-In

Local authorities have embraced Housing First, embedding it within broader homelessness and rough sleeping pathways

- Enhanced Multi-Agency Coordination

Shared panels and governance structures improve coordination among housing, health, justice, and voluntary sectors.

- Combined Authority Leadership

The Combined Authority provides strategic leadership, fostering shared learning and consistent homelessness responses regionally.

Challenges with Local Authority Engagement

- Inconsistent Engagement Challenges

Local authorities struggle with consistent engagement, especially in adult social care and mental health services due to capacity and risk management issues.

- Variation in Local Support

Differences in local priorities and resources create uneven Housing First support and integration across regions.

- Need for Strategic Alignment

Stronger political leadership and integration with care systems are essential to align housing, health, and care services effectively.

- Future Solutions and Leadership

New roles and mechanisms to broker statutory service access are needed to realise Housing First's potential for systemic change.



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Co-production

Integrating Live Experience into
programme delivery

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Our Co-production Journey

Panel established by GMCA in 2018 – involved in initial commissioning of our programme.

Co-production Lead contracted by GMCA

Panel comprised of people with experience of Homelessness, Criminal Justice, Mental Health, D&A Services

Core partnership principle – Co-production

The involvement of the co-production panel has been invaluable to the pilot and should be replicated in the design and delivery of any future homeless services'

Initial work focused on:

- ❖ Outcomes framework
- ❖ Development of Processes and procedures
- ❖ Our Quality Assurance approach - Guided Conversations
- ❖ Training for frontline staff
- ❖ Commissioning of new delivery partners in Year 2
- ❖ Recruitment

Journey - Continued

- **Legislative Theatre** opportunity - Involvement of people supported by HF in panel
- **Monthly panel meetings** with programme lead/QA manager
- Focus on consultation to other programmes, research and initiatives and using **collective voice to bring change**.
- **Programme development** – Transitions Framework, pre-tenancy guide, graduation approach, Involvement Framework
- **Campaigns** – Prison Release Film, Stigma and Judgement song, Child Removal Legislative Theatre play.

<https://youtu.be/rZCA-LuAi90>



Successes in LCR's Co-production work

- Service design

Lived experience is embedded within the team through input the Lived Experience Group, a Lived Experience staff network and Peer Practitioner roles

- Meaningful Lived Experience Involvement

Lived Experience Group shaped governance and practice, contributing to recruitment, policy, and service design.

- Culture Change and Person-centred Approach

Lived experience input reinforced trauma-informed, person-centred care and challenged negative homelessness narratives.

- Strategic Leadership Role

The Lived Experience role has expanded to further programmes at LCRCA



Challenges in LCR's Co-production work

- Broadening Lived Experience

Involving more individuals with direct Housing First tenancy experience enhances insight relevance, especially for long-term tenancy and recovery.

- Varied Engagement Capacity

Participants have different abilities to engage due to trauma and instability; flexible approaches are essential to include all voices.

- Sustaining Co-production Efforts

Long-term funding and organisational commitment are vital to protect meaningful lived experience involvement from budget or policy changes.



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Integrated Health Offer



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GMMH – key partner

The service primarily consists of two core elements:

1. Clinical:

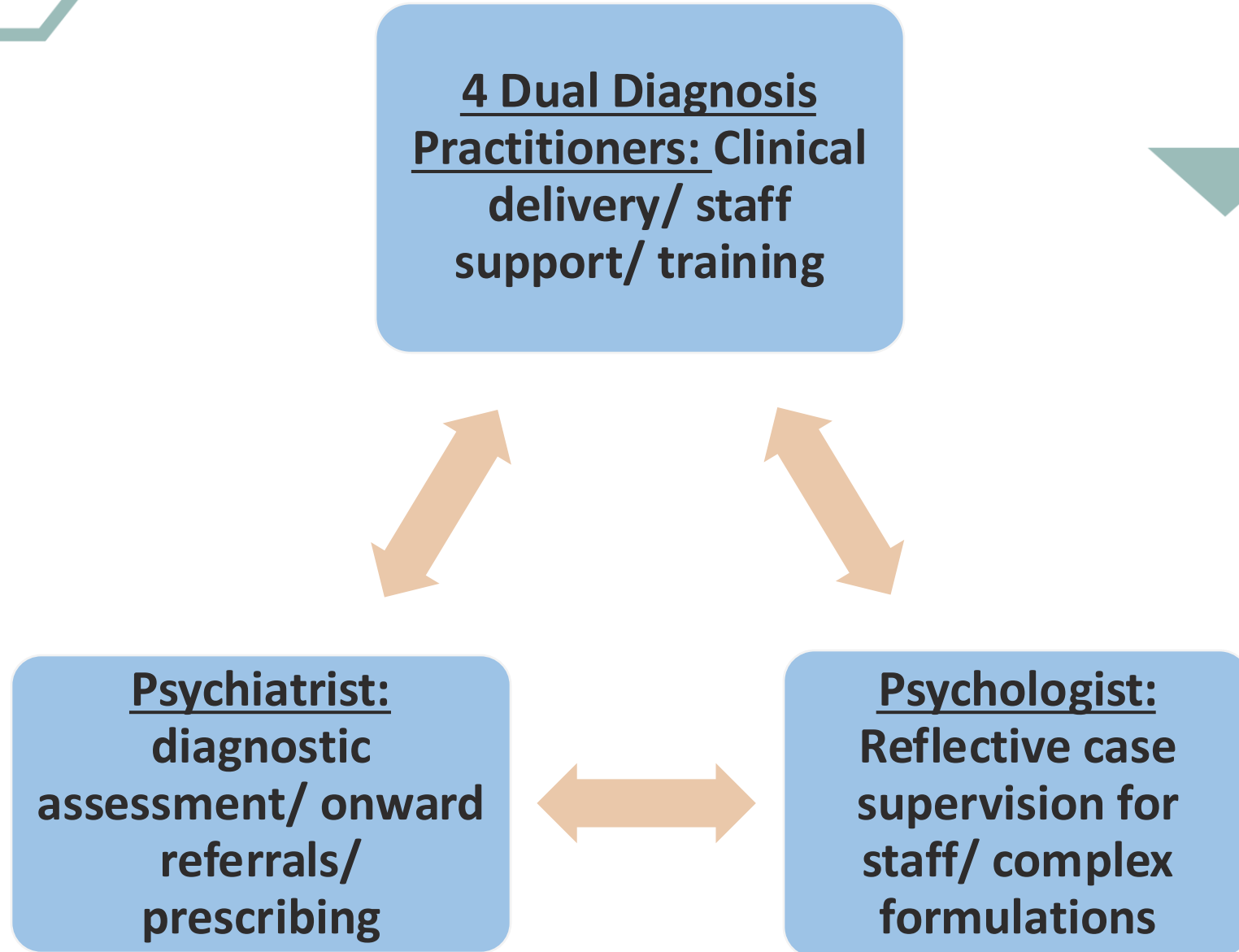
- Appropriate clinical resource integrated into the Housing First Service. This resource will either negate the need for people to access wider services or will enable swifter access into existing services.

2. Training/Capacity Building:

- The focus of this is on supporting the wider Housing First staff through the delivery of training and reflective practice to support decision making, enabling greater capacity building. This equips the wider staff team with skills and knowledge to best meet the needs of people with dual diagnosis on a day-to-day, non-clinical basis.

Operational Model

- Development of offer over time
- Inclusion Health agenda
- Transition service'
- Assertive Outreach to re-engage
- Harm reduction initiatives
- Clinical resource integrated into delivery team
- RSI & HF offer combined
- Regional health offer not programmatic



Health Integration

The LCRC commissions a Psychology service which is integrated into the Housing First programme. It is delivered by Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

A team of 2 psychologists work across the service to:

- Provide specialist psychological support through direct or indirect interventions
- Support the teams to develop and implement psychologically informed tools and strategies with individuals
- Provide regular team case-based reflective practice, and clinical supervision for individual team members if required
- Use expertise and experience to develop bespoke informed toolkits and training for staff to create a legacy of learning
- Sit in case review meetings to help staff to greater support service users with complex mental health issues, offering advice in practice
- Provide specialist advice in crisis situations where support staff require expert advice
- Attend MDT meetings to support the team to advocate for our service users and provide specialist knowledge and formulations



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Research

Key Findings

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MHCLG Evaluation

MHCLG outcome reports showed:

- Significant positive shift in people's wellbeing & health
- Very significant drop in interactions with Justice system
- Full benefit of original pilots expected to be £15,880 per year per person
- This is a 2:1 cost benefit ratio, which was expected to increase over longer time periods

GM Local evaluation – Learning & Recommendations

- **HF addresses clear gap in homelessness services**
- **Clear need for continuation and expansion**
- **Low caseloads**
- **Involvement of Co-production invaluable**
- **Input of mental health services into GMHF essential for widening access- current arrangement viewed as a strong model**
- **Balance struck to maximise benefits through both regional and locality –based working**

Local Impact in LCR

- Numerous evaluation work (Beyond Better, Campbell Tickell, ICF) has proven both the demand, impact, and economic benefits in the city region to local authorities and the public purse.
- Housing First clients are **3.5** times more likely to sustain a tenancy than those without it.
- Housing First is **twice** as cost effective compared to other homeless solutions in sustaining tenancies.
- Housing First is **68%** more successful than a comparator group without support in helping individuals engage with other services such as drug and alcohol support.
- One recent external evaluation of the LCR programme shows considerable savings to public services, with one example finding approximately **£60,000** is saved for one person supported on the programme over the course of a year.

Thank You



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