

Medical Needs In Schools

Year 2 Report

Summary:

The Medical Needs In Schools (MNIS) project is a three-year collaboration between Oxfordshire Hospital School (OHS) and Children's Psychological Medicine (CPM) – Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. The project's principal aim is to provide support for Oxfordshire schools in the management of medical needs within the education environment, in compliance with statutory and best practice guidance. This aim is achieved through:

- Training, consultation and practical support for Oxfordshire schools on the statutory and best practice guidance
- Improved links with and knowledge of local service pathways and resources
- Developing and providing excellent clinical support pathways for children with medical needs who are struggling with education in Oxfordshire through OHS, CPM and linking with other appropriate services.
- Improving knowledge of the statutory and best practice guidance within wider networks who are stakeholders in supporting children with medical needs – the acute hospitals, local mental health services, local authority.

The MNIS team aims to disseminate knowledge and learning beyond Oxfordshire, to ensure that good practice developed by the project is available to other organisations sharing similar aims, across the country. This will be achieved by fostering high quality relationships with local and national stakeholders.

Year 2 Overview of Activity:

- Successful inaugural conference held on 29th November 2018
- The project was rebranded as 'Medical Needs In Schools' (MNIS) to reflect the broader variety of work being undertaken
- MNIS website was updated to reflect the changes to the project and updated resources
- Several articles promoting best practice in schools for children with medical conditions were published
- MNIS recognised at the Paediatric Psychology Network UK conference by winning the delegate's choice award for best poster presentation
- MNIS was a key part of OHS' nomination for the TES Community and Collaboration award
- Training and information on the statutory guidance for supporting children with medical needs and related topics has been provided to schools, OHS, and other important stakeholders

- Increased network and liaison with key groups such as CAMHS, School Health Nursing, Inclusion teams
- Developing a direct pathway into CPM for children with medical needs who are having difficulties within education, to improve accessibility to psychology and to integrate psychology into the use of Individual Healthcare Plans
- Developing the support of clinical psychology to OHS directly, to aid with assessment processes, liaison with appropriate external agencies, and provision of training and consultation, within the remit of the psychologist's role
- A self-evaluation and review tool was developed and piloted for schools to evaluate their provision for children with medical needs.
- The project also experienced some staffing changes, with Guinevere Webster replacing Dimitri Gavrilloff in January 2019, and Daniel Lawrence replacing Jackie Wheatley in November 2019.

Year 2 Activity

Profile, awareness and networking:

The MNIS team continue to promote awareness of the MNIS project at a local and national level. The underpinnings of the MNIS project – to support and develop best practice for children with medical conditions in schools – continue to be promoted through MNIS activity

- MNIS was rebranded from the previous title (Medical Needs Inreach Project) to 'Medical Needs In Schools', reflecting the broader work undertaken by the project in year 2 with an increasingly national focus, and the aim for this work to create a lasting legacy
- The MNIS website was updated in line with this rebranding, with a greater emphasis on provision of resources to support others wishing to access guidance and support
- MNIS now has a Twitter account, to foster collaboration and networking developed online
- Locally, excellent links are being developed with the Local Authority and other stakeholders. For example, closer links to the school nursing are being developed service via the local school nursing lead and SAPHNA, to ensure effective partnership working between MNIS and our school nurse colleagues. Update training on the MNIS project has also been offered to school governors in the county.
- An article promoting best practice in schools for children with medical conditions was published in the June edition of SecEd journal, republished in Headteacher Update, and was also submitted to the British Journal of School Nursing. In addition, an article describing the drivers behind the MNIS project appeared in the Times Educational Supplement 2019. This aimed to highlight the need for greater awareness of best practice for supporting children with medical conditions in schools
- MNIS team members have been working with the Paediatric Psychology Network and the British Psychological Society on ensuring that children with medical conditions are represented in the wider mental health agenda. This has led to influencing the content of the BPS response to the Ofsted Inspection Framework, ensuring the promotion of the

statutory guidance through national bodies, and meetings with MPs to discuss ensuring this is on the national agenda

- MNIS have collaborated with hospital schools across the country to share best practice and collaborate further on projects. The National Association of Hospital Education and Cath Kitchen, National Leader for Hospital Education and Headteacher at the Northampton Hospital and Outreach Education Service have been particular allies in this respect.
- MNIS was shortlisted for the Times Educational Supplement Community and Collaboration award for its work supporting schools locally and more widely with meeting the needs of pupils with medical conditions.
- MNIS headteacher Steve Lowe has been invited to join the board of the Health Conditions in Schools Alliance as a representative of NAHE, and will develop closer links at a national level with the Alliance, which shares many of MNIS' key aims.
- MNIS attended the Oxfordshire SEND conference in July 2019 with a stall and display to raise awareness of the project with local schools and SEND colleagues.
- Liaison with the local CAMHS team (Getting Help) occurred throughout the year. This included discussion about the possibility of a training event on mental health, however it was felt that this was covered through other CAMHS initiatives. MNIS has promoted the work of the CAMHS schools inreach project and encouraged schools to contact the appropriate team for direct input from them.
- MNIS teachers hosted two teachers from Southampton Hospital School, sharing resources and practice.

Provision of Training:

The Year 1 3 day training package was condensed into a one half day training workshop, to provide a basic overview of the statutory guidance on supporting children with medical conditions in schools. This was provided to both schools and other relevant stakeholders.

Schools: A one-day training for schools was provided on 29th April 2019. Nine teachers from different primary schools attended. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, indicating that teachers found the workshop informative, useful, and welcomed the medical team's awareness of the educational context for teaching staff. In addition an hour-long individual session was provided to the SENCO of a school who was unable to attend this training on 22nd May.

Healthcare: A half-hour training session for Oxford Children's Hospital paediatricians was provided on 27th March 2019; this introduced the MNIS project and covered information on IHPs and the kind of medical information required by schools. A one-day training event for paediatric clinical psychologists was provided on 3rd July 2019. This was attended by 25 Clinical Psychologists from around the country and was very well received, with all 22 participants who completed feedback forms rating the training as good or excellent. Feedback also highlighted that the day had inspired participants to implement the approach in their local areas, and that they valued the take-home resources. Training was also provided to Paediatric Clinical Psychology teams who wish to take forward the ideas in more depth – visits were made to Southampton, Norwich and Northampton teams.

Provision of Consultation:

Consultation and training requests were offered throughout the duration of Year 2 from the MNIS team to education and healthcare professionals.

Schools: We offered professional support to 3 schools (2 primary, 1 secondary) for a total of 5 pupils via the OHS Professional Support Pathway. The work involved thinking about each case with the home school to explore the provision that the school was able to make for each of their pupils, reviewing the effectiveness of current plans and finding other ways forward. Conditions experienced by the pupils involved included anxiety, selective mutism, repeated infections and post-surgery mobility problems. All schools were offered support regarding what they needed to do to comply with the statutory guidance regarding children with medical needs. For one school this involved supporting the adoption of a policy; for all schools support was offered to develop the use of IHPS for individuals and as a school-wide system. Quality assured general information about the particular medical need and its likely impact in school was also supplied in all cases, for use with the wider school staff where appropriate. Schools were also signposted to other useful resources to develop their practice further more generally. Additional training and support was offered where it was felt to be appropriate.

Support was also offered to one case in which CPM was involved, where there were difficulties in the home school, with advice given about the statutory guidance, IHPs and the EHCP process.

School visits, observations, and consultation on drafting IHPs were provided to seven schools by the MNIS clinical psychologist as part of the MNIS clinical pathway. This aimed to build schools' general capacity and competence in providing for children with medical needs while also addressing the needs of specific young people.

Healthcare: Consultation was provided throughout the year to the CPM team and wider hospital team, such as consultants and clinical nurse specialists. Hospital consultants are now beginning to contact the MNIS team to discuss specific cases and request support with individual healthcare plans. Psychologists within CPM are now beginning to initiate the wider use of IHPs with the schools of children they have on their caseload.

Additional Supports for Education Professionals:

A self-evaluation and review tool was developed for schools to evaluate their provision for children with medical needs. This was then piloted with a school in the city, working with their Medical Needs Lead. The school was provided with the self-evaluation and review tool, then offered a meeting to work through this with an MNIS representative. Following this the school was provided with a detailed report highlighting strengths and areas for development, and a certificate acknowledging participation in the self-evaluation. Feedback from the school was sought via questionnaire and discussion, and was overwhelmingly positive about the process. This tool will be formally launched at the Year 2 conference and made available to schools throughout the county.

Additional Clinical Support Tools:

- Communication Passports: following feedback from schools, communication passports have been developed to support communication between schools, family and healthcare

professionals. These could be used to support IHPs or as a standalone tool. These are currently being piloted.

- Toolkits: as a follow on from the anxiety toolkit provided in year 1, an OCD toolkit for schools has been completed, and toolkits about chronic pain and chronic fatigue are in development.

Direct Input into OHS:

- Weekly attendance of the MNIS clinical psychologist at OHS referrals meeting, in order to provide a psychological perspective on the young person's difficulties and on wider systemic factors. This has identified children who have been referred to OHS who would also benefit from provision of a service from CPM, and has facilitated communication between OHS and CPM when there has already been a clinical psychologist involved.
- Provision of CBT training for OHS's INSET day in April 2019 with a view to supporting the team to understand CBT principles as they relate to education.
- Facilitation of a support and discussion group for HLTAs working with young people on reintegration to school. This aims to support the HLTAs in this work by facilitating their ability to share good practice with each other, providing psychological formulation and consultation regarding particular cases, and identifying wider themes that could be addressed at an organisational level. It has been well received by the HLTAs involved; so far the group has met three times with further meetings planned. There are plans to take forward a project to look at young people's engagement in planning goals for OHS intervention, which has arisen from discussion in this group.

CPM Clinical Pathway:

This service was provided to 26 children and young people, and their parents/carers, with a total of 71 face-to-face sessions, 10 telephone reviews, and 5 school visits held. (The range of face-to-face sessions was 1 to 12 sessions per family, depending on need.) Additional telephone and email consultation was also provided to families and schools as needed.

Pathways into the CPM in general have been streamlined, so that OHS staff can refer any children eligible for a service directly into the MNIS Psychologist. Referrals from assessments undertaken in CPM were also directed to the psychologist within MNIS where the difficulties pertain primarily to school-related problems. This has improved accessibility to psychological support for children with medical needs and educational issues, responding to demand for a rapid access service where the medical condition and associated psychological needs significantly impacted on education.

Children and young people were assessed using the Children's Psychological Medicine routine outcome measures, with the addition of data on school attendance and level of medical usage where possible.

The focus during Year 2 has shifted from taking individual referrals to supporting the wider team to understand the legislation and guidance for supporting children with medical conditions in schools, and how this can complement clinical practice.

Research:

The evaluation and outcomes from the training days were written up and have been submitted for publication in a peer reviewed journal. This research evaluated the training days provided to schools to assess changes in teachers' self-perceived awareness and confidence. Teaching staff from 20 local schools participated (nine primary schools, eight secondary schools and three special schools). Changes in teachers' awareness and confidence across six domains were measured using a self-report pre and post questionnaire. Data-analysis was done using visual displays of data for the schools for whom data was available at all time points ($n = 12$). Participants reported increases in their awareness and confidence across all six domains, which had persisted and continued at follow-up. This research highlighted that paediatric psychologists and hospital school teachers are in a unique position to bridge the gap between health and education for children with medical needs. The MNIS Partnership School Training Programme increased teachers' confidence and awareness in supporting these children.

These findings were also presented as a poster presentation at the Paediatric Psychology Network UK national conference in June 2019, where the poster won the 'people's choice' award.

Funding is continuing to be sourced to trial a feasibility study looking at a manualised intervention for children with medical conditions in schools, incorporating the use of IHPs.

Conference:

The inaugural MNIS annual conference took place on Thursday 29th November 2018. This was an opportunity for all interested stakeholders to attend a high quality event entitled: Integration and Inclusion for Children with Medical Conditions in School: A Conference for Professionals working with Children with Physical and Mental Health Needs. Key aims of the conference were to further raise the profile of key guidance on supporting children with medical needs in schools, showcase local examples of good practice, outline the evidence base and theory behind key concepts and interventions, and provide an opportunity for networking. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with 45 of the 50 participants who completed feedback forms rating the conference as excellent and the remaining 5 rating it as good quality. Participants especially appreciated the multi-disciplinary nature of the day and the mix of different presenters including expert clinical specialists, teaching and health service staff presenting examples of good practice, and people with lived experience.

Impact Assessment

The MNIS project's aims are as follows:

- To provide a robust training programme for Oxfordshire schools on the statutory and best practice guidance

- To provide support on implementing the guidance, through consultation, further training, and improved knowledge of local service pathways
- To develop and provide excellent clinical support pathways for children with medical needs who are struggling with education in Oxfordshire
- To improve knowledge of the statutory and best practice guidance within wider networks who are stakeholders in supporting children with medical needs – the acute hospitals, local mental health services, local authority
- To robustly evaluate and disseminate the learning from project activity, to inform educators, decision and policy makers at a local and national level

In its second year, the MNIS project has had a number of key impacts, as assessed by informal verbal feedback, structured evaluation and outcome measures:

- Increased awareness and confidence within county schools regarding implementing statutory and best practice guidance to meet the needs of children with medical conditions in educational settings.
- Increased awareness in educational and health stakeholders both county-wide and nationally regarding the importance of joined up services for children with medical needs.
- Increased understanding within CPM and paediatric psychology nationally about the statutory legislation concerning children with medical needs.
- Reduced waiting times for psychological services for children with an impact of their medical need on their education.

Looking Ahead: Year 3 Action Plan

The MNIS team looks to collaborate more widely with other local services, such as provision of teaching to the county school nurses, county school governors, and the SENCO training programme at Oxford Brookes University, and presenting at the March 2020 conference organised by Oxford Brookes University in association with SEBDA.

Additionally, a stronger national profile through continued collaborations with the Health Conditions in Schools Alliance, Paediatric Psychology Network, British Psychological Society, National Association for Hospital Education, SEBDA and SAPHNA will help support the dissemination of MNIS aims.

- Input to the Department for Education's revision of the statutory guidance on children with medical conditions in schools.
- Growth of MNIS through collaborations with other regions wanting to roll out a similar project (e.g. MNIS Suffolk)
- Continued support of local schools through training and consultation
- The next MNIS annual conference will take place on 6th November 2019, with the theme 'Successful Partnerships in Practice – Working with professionals and families'. Further details can be found here: <https://ohs.oxon.sch.uk/mnis-medical-needs-in-schools-project/>

- Survey of provision of hospital school services nationally – this will be undertaken to benchmark the kinds of services and provision provided, with a view to developing a sense of what aspects of the service are required to provide a gold standard service, and forging closer links with other hospital schools and NAHE.

Enquiries relating to the MNIS project should be sent to mnis@ohs.oxon.sch.uk

Further details of the MNIS project's work can be found at <https://ohs.oxon.sch.uk/mnis-medical-needs-in-schools-project/>

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Appendix A

Condensed one-day training for schools

Welcome and aims of the programme

Medical Needs and Psychological Wellbeing: An overview

Individual Healthcare Plans: Statutory guidance and key responsibilities

IHPs: Clinical applications

What gets in the way? Identifying and problem-solving barriers

Case studies and writing IHPs

What the MNIS project can offer ongoing