

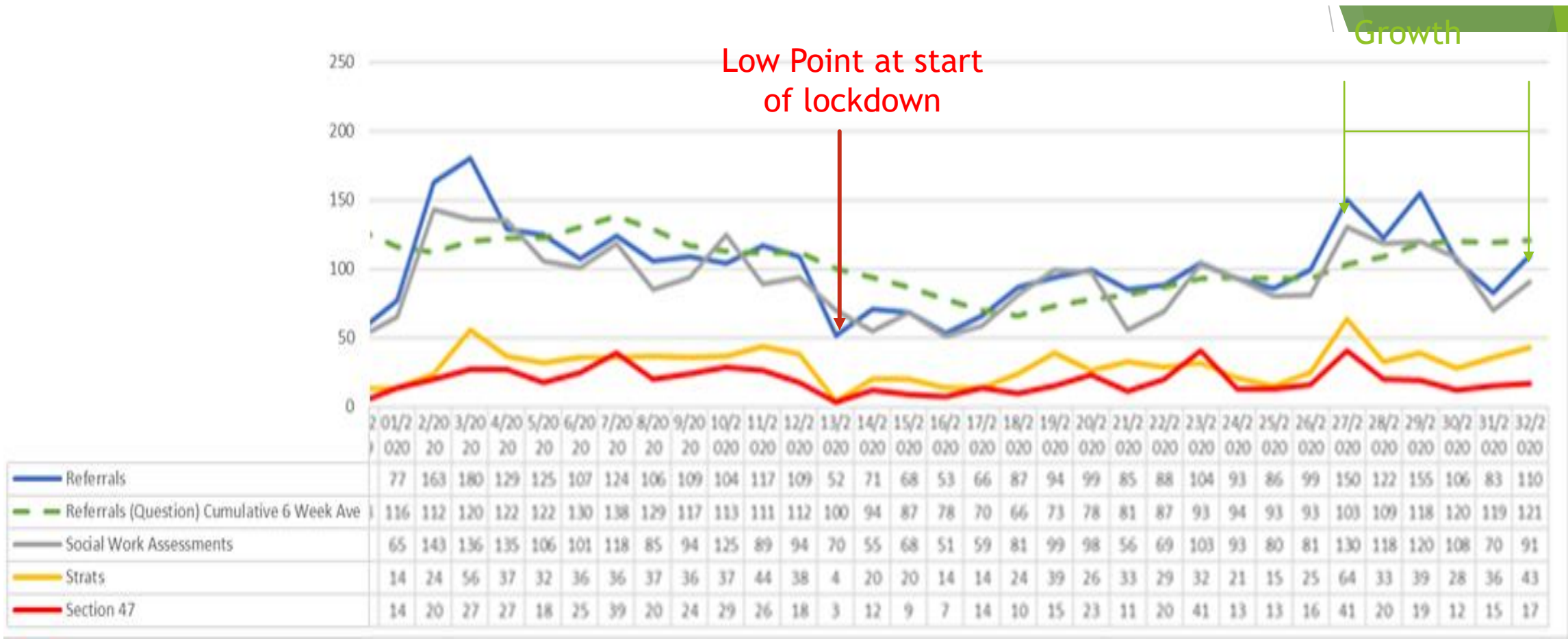


Norfolk Children's Services

Surge & Demand

19th August 2020

Referrals to social care reduced during lockdown but have since recovered

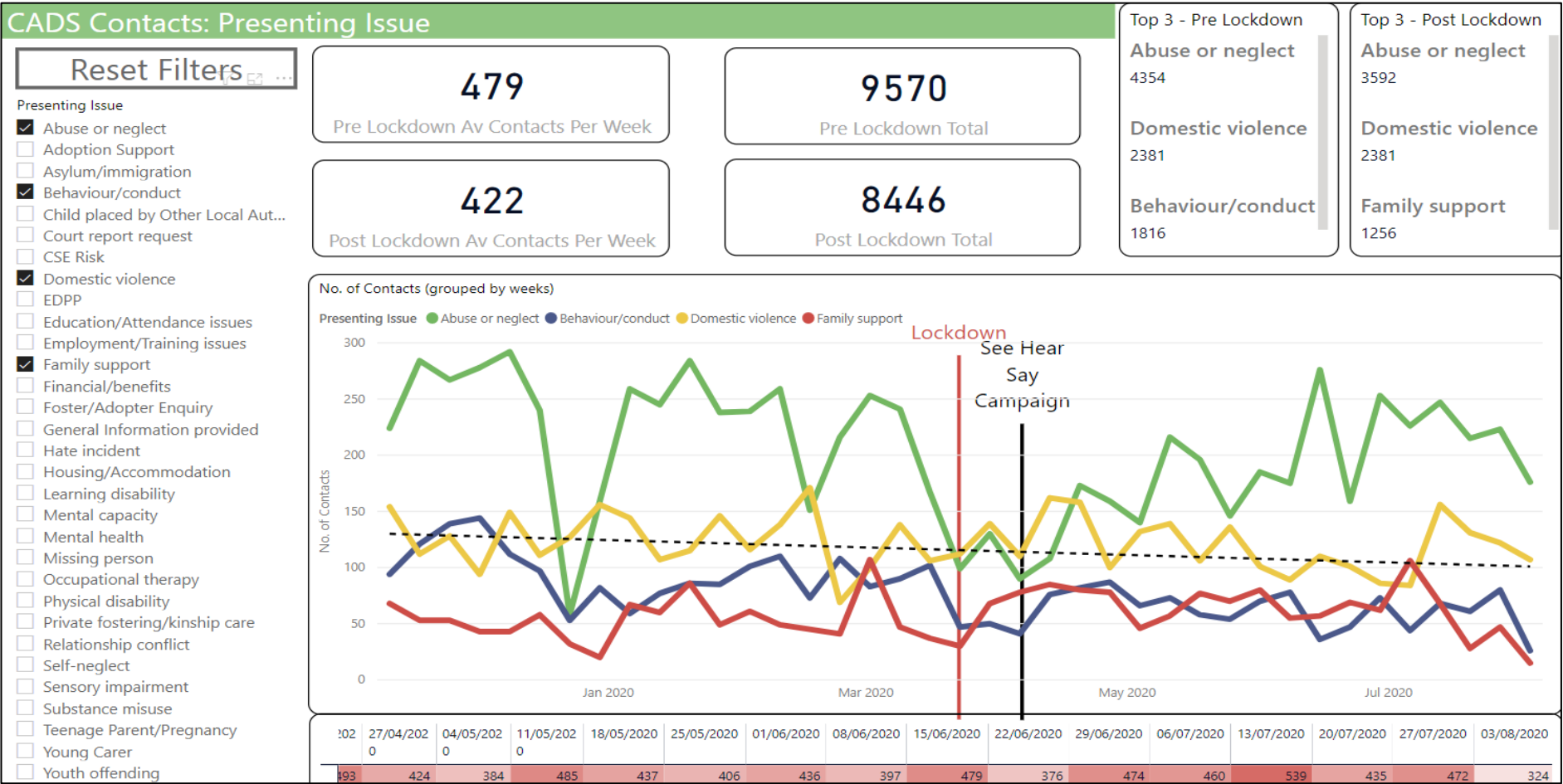


Referrals numbers into social care were significantly reduced during lockdown to a low of 52 in the last week of March - this is less than 50% of normal rates

In recent weeks (from the end of June) there has been a growth of referrals returning to close to normal levels prior to the end of the school term

However over the period as a whole there is a substantial quantity of ‘missed demand’

The nature of referrals has also changed - with fewer for abuse or neglect but more for domestic violence



Note: Pre-Lockdown is calculated to incorporate the same number of weeks from last week to lockdown as lockdown backwards

The trend of issues coming to CADs has changed over time with for example Abuse or neglect cases heavily impacted in lockdown. This potentially means there is unmet need that we need to plan for

In the latest few weeks the trend is for an increase in Domestic Abuse and Behaviour/Conduct as presenting issues showing a return to a pre-lockdown top 3 issues as society has opened up

Predicted Demand - anticipating an increase of less than 15% - but could be as much as 50%

Average contacts per month = 3711
 Average referrals to Social Work (SW) per month = 634
 Average referrals to Family Support (FS) per month = 141
 Current Child in Need cases open to Social Work = 1999
 Current Family Support cases open = 1796

| Scenario 1 | Scenario 2 | Scenario 3 |
|---|--|---|
| <i>An early surge in the summer</i> | <i>A surge in September</i> | <i>A slower growth over a longer period</i> |
| Most likely could see an increase: of contacts to 4742 p/m of referrals to SW to 1066 p/m of referrals to FS to 237 p/m in August & September | Most likely could see an increase: of contacts to 4603 p/m of referrals to SW to 1142 p/m of referrals to FS to 276 p/m in September, October & November | Most likely could see an increase: of contacts tapered from 3000 to 4035 p/m of referrals to SW tapered from 476 to 755 p/m of referrals to FS tapered from 180 to 242 p/m from July through to January |
| Most likely no. of cases increase estimate: 1066 in assessment an increase of 432 cases 2228 increase in CIN of 11% | Most likely no. of cases increase estimate: 1142 in assessment an increase of 508 cases 2268 increase in CIN of 13% | Most likely no. of cases increase estimate: 755 in assessment an increase of 121 cases 2063 increase in CIN of 3% |
| In a worse case this could see a 52% (3030) increase in cases for a period | In a worse case this could see a 45% (2891) increase in cases for a period | In a worse case this could see a 16% (2323) increase in cases for a period |

Responding to a surge

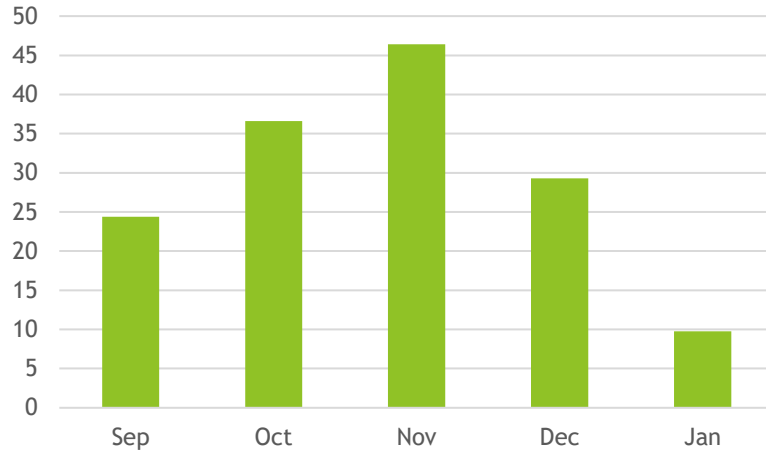
- 1) The Children's Advice and Duty Service (front door) are able to work with the projections within existing staffing levels, but can call upon Pathway advisors for aid in recording.
- 2) There is scope for some increase in Social Work caseloads for this period – impacting on timeliness and quality
- 3) Staff have already been identified within the Quality Assurance, Independent Reviewing Services, Adoption and Fostering functions who have already supported the FAST service. There are sufficient qualified staff further across these services to meet the identified demand in most scenarios
- 4) Family Support can call upon staff in ISS Service, but this will result in Primary Impact risk
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It is likely that we will take a combination of approaches 2-4 in the FAST and Family Support Teams to mitigate each risk

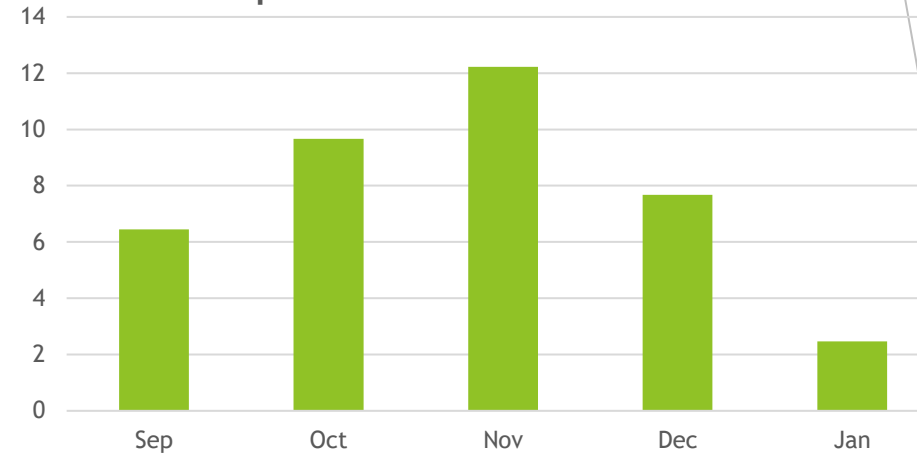
- 5) Should the above not be sufficient, we could look to cease non-statutory intervention, or seek DfE exemption of specific activity – but this is currently considered unlikely

Capacity of Social Care to respond to a surge

Additional FTE Social Work Family Intervention required



Additional FTE Family Support required



Primary impact risk:

- 1) There would be a proportionate degradation of the services from which staff are redeployed, or a proportionate degradation of quality of social work intervention should the normal scope of intervention be amended
- 2) Potential of increase in sickness rates through increasing case-loads of existing staff, thereby exacerbating the already building pressure on staff

Conclusions

It is very likely that demand will increase in the Autumn

The most likely scenario is a surge when schools return and safeguarding concerns are raised

For the increase in contacts the Children's Advice and Duty Service has the ability to respond within existing structures

In order to respond to increase demand in Social Work Family Assessment and Safeguarding Teams would need to re-deploy from elsewhere in support teams - but we should have sufficient capacity to manage that in the most likely scenarios

The increased demand will not only be to Social care but to the wider system, including partners

Potentially there are further implications of a surge and increase of referrals as a result of additional socio economic factors

One longer term impact could be an increase in the Looked After Children population

Final Point - this is uncharted territory and no authority can know with full certainty what will happen in the future. The situation will be monitored very closely and members updated if the reality deviates substantially from the modelling