CHILD PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES - 1996

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Child psychiatric services in Malta are provided by a multidisciplinary team consisting of consultant psychiatrist, senior registrar, SHO's psychiatric nurses, psychologists, social workers, occupational therapist and special teacher.

The out-patient part of the service consists of a multidisciplinary Child Guidance Clinic based in the CDAU block of St Luke's Hospital. Apart from the main clinic on one morning, there are also other activities including a psychologist-run morning play group and two social worker-run afternoon play groups.

In addition, outside Mount Carmel Hospital is an eight bedded Young People's Unit for both male and female adolescents. The Young People's Unit has a full multidisciplinary team including the special teacher who runs a small class room.

The Unit takes conduct or emotionally disturbed youngsters and others with more severe disorder such as psychosis or anorexia nervosa. There is a very active therapeutic programme directed towards returning adolescents to the community as soon as possible and this is achieved by using a range of therapies including milieu (therapeutic environment), behavioural, psycho-therapeutic and family therapy intervention and drug treatment where necessary. The specially oriented unit class room and liaison with mainstream schools during the trainisition period is a crucial aspect of the rehabilitation process.