



Report of Anna Lynch, Director of Public Health County Durham, Durham County Council

1. Purpose of the Report

This report aims to present the Public Mental Health Strategy to the Health and Wellbeing Board. The primary purpose of the strategy is to reduce the number of people developing mental health problems through promotion of mental health, prevention of mental ill-health and improving the quality of life for those with poor mental health through early identification and recovery. This forms a key strand of the County Durham Mental Health Framework which will come to the Health and Wellbeing Board at a later date.

2. Background

The Public Mental Health Strategy for County Durham was developed by the Public Mental Health Strategy Development Group over the last year consisting of key partners, service users and carers. It is based on comprehensive identification of needs and evidence based practice to promote good mental health.

Public mental health encompasses both mental health improvement and suicide prevention, recognising that mental health improvement is a vital tool in the prevention of suicide. This strategy outlines the implications for public mental health in light of the recent mental health strategy, *No Health Without Mental Health* and *Preventing Suicide in England, A Cross Government Strategy to Save Lives*. Taking a life course approach, it recognises that the foundations for lifelong wellbeing are being laid down before birth. It aims to prevent mental ill health, intervene early when it occurs and improve the quality of life for people with mental health problems and their families. It is for people of all ages – children and young people, working age adults as well as older people.

3. Mental Health Profile

Mental illness has a range of significant impacts with 20% of the total burden of disease in the UK attributable to mental illness (including suicide), compared with 17% for cardiovascular diseases and 16% for cancer. This burden is due to the fact that mental illness is not uncommon. Levels of mental illness are projected to increase. By 2026, the number of people in England who experience a mental illness is projected to increase by 14%,

from 8.65 million in 2007 to 9.88 million. However, this does not take account of the current economic climate which may increase prevalence.

4. Public Mental Health Strategy: Vision and Objectives

The vision: Individuals, families and communities within County Durham to be supported to achieve their optimum mental wellbeing.

Key Objectives

Promoting Mental Health

- Objective 1: Improve mental health and wellbeing of individuals through engagement, information, activities, access to services and education

Prevention of Mental Ill-Health

- Objective 2: Prevention of mental illness and dementia through targeted interventions for groups at high risk
- Objective 3: Reduce the suicide and self-harm rate for County Durham
- Objective 4: Improve physical health of people with poor mental health through integration of mental health into existing programmes and targeted approach to those experiencing mental ill-health
- Objective 5: Reduce stigma and discrimination towards people who experience mental health problems by raising awareness amongst the general public, workplaces and other settings
- Objective 6: Prevent violence and abuse through interventions which promote mental health and target interventions for those in high risk groups.

Early Identification of those at risk of Mental Ill-Health

- Objective 7: Improve early detection and intervention for mental ill-health across lifespan
- Objective 8: Promote mental health and prevent mental ill-health through targeted intervention for individuals with mild symptoms
- Objective 9: Increase early recognition of mental ill-health through improved detection by screening and training the workforce

Recovery from Mental Ill-Health

- Objective 10: Improve recovery through early provision of a range of interventions including supported employment, housing support and debt advice.

5. Key Points

A key action of the Public Mental Health strategy is reducing social isolation and loneliness. There are a number of population groups vulnerable to social isolation and loneliness, (e.g., young care-leavers, refugees and those with mental health problems). Older people (as individuals as well as carers) have specific vulnerabilities owing to loss of friends and family, loss of mobility or loss of income. Perhaps not surprisingly, social isolation and loneliness impact on quality of life and wellbeing, with demonstrable negative health effects including lonely individuals having higher blood pressure than their less lonely peers.

Durham County Council has a key role in implementing No Health Without Mental Health and improving the mental health and wellbeing within local communities. Part of this commitment includes the recent identification of an elected member, Councillor Hovvels, as mental health champion whose role will include promoting wellbeing and initiating and supporting action on public mental health.

6. Strategic Framework

The County Durham Mental Health Partnership Board has agreed to lead the development of a strategic framework for County Durham to ensure the local implementation of *No Health Without Mental Health*. The Mental Health framework will include all key strands including the need to intervene early, involve people with mental health problems and their carers in service design and delivery, ensuring access to evidence based treatments which are high quality. The mental health framework will provide a structure for related strategies and plans including the Dementia strategy and the Children's and Young People's Resilience strategy.

The Public Mental Health Strategy group is accountable to the County Durham Mental Health Partnership Board. Progress on delivery of the strategic objectives and action plan will be reported on a six monthly basis.

The Public Mental Health Strategy Group considers a quarterly performance report which contains a range of indicators which can be found in Appendix 1 of the strategy document. The Public Mental Health Strategy Group maintains an action plan appropriate to the issues raised from the performance report. Any key issues are escalated to the County Durham Mental Health Partnership Board.

7. Recommendations

The Health & Wellbeing Board is asked to:

- note the current and projected mental health needs within County Durham.
- note that the County Durham Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy specifies a strategic action to develop and implement a multi-agency Public Mental Health Strategy including Suicide Prevention for County Durham
- note that the Public Mental Health Strategy will form a key strand on the Mental Health Framework for the County
- note that the Public Mental Health Strategy has been developed by a multi-agency group that involved stakeholders service users and carers
- endorse the County Durham Public Mental Health Strategy
- note that there is a detailed action plan, with timescales and named leads to ensure implementation of the strategy.

Contact: Catherine Richardson, Public Health Portfolio Lead

Email: Catherine.richardson@durham.gov.uk Tel: 03000 267667

Background papers:

Public Mental Health Strategy

Public Mental Health Executive Summary

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

Services which impact on public mental health are commissioned through CCG's and local authority

Staffing

There is a wider workforce implication for the delivery of the strategy to ensure a quality, safe workforce in place.

Risk

Improving mental health and wellbeing is likely to reduce the rate of suicide and self-harm

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Impact on protected groups who are more likely to experience poor mental health. Mental health is a protected factor under legislation. Equality impact assessment completed.

Accommodation

No

Crime and Disorder

No

Human Rights

Impact on protected groups

Consultation

Key partners, service users and carers have been members of the strategy development group.

Procurement

No impact

Disability Issues

Impact on protected groups

Legal Implications

Mental health is a protected factor under legislation