

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

5 NOVEMBER 2019

“HEALTHY MINDS, HEALTHY PEOPLE: WELLBEING ACROSS THE LIFE COURSE IN MEDWAY” DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH’S ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19

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Summary

Directors of Public Health (DsPH) have a statutory requirement to produce public health reports. These reports are the DsPH’s professional statement about the health of the local community.

The 2018-19 report focuses on mental wellbeing across the life course in Medway. The report sets out:

- Key information about what is known about the wellbeing of Medway’s residents at different stages in the life course (young people, adults of working age and older people).
- Information about services, support and community assets in Medway that support residents to achieve and maintain good mental wellbeing.
- Ways in which local people, communities, schools, workplaces and health and care professionals can improve their mental wellbeing.
- Recommendations for future actions for partners to further improve mental wellbeing among Medway’s population.
- An update on progress against recommendations in the 2017-19 Director of Public Health’s Annual Report on Health Protection.

The main focus of the report is mental wellbeing (mental health promotion at a population level) rather than mental illness and its treatment. Further information about broader mental health needs and support can be found in the mental health chapters of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment at <http://www.medwayjsna.info/>.

The Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered this report on 15 October 2019. The comments of this Committee are set out in section 5 of the report. This report will be presented to the Cabinet on 17 December 2019.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1 Improving the population's mental health and wellbeing is an identified priority for Medway Council reflected in the Council Plan (2016/17 to 2020/21) ambition; Making Medway a place to be proud of: improving environmental conditions, raising self-esteem and improving mental and physical health.
- 1.2 Theme 4 of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2018 to 2023 includes a requirement to improve the mental and physical health and well-being of the population.

2. Background

- 2.1 Directors of Public Health have a duty to write an Annual Public Health Report (APHR). The aim of Annual Public Health Report is to identify issues that are currently, or have the potential to impact on the health or wellbeing of the local authority's population. Directors of Public Health are tasked with making recommendations to address identified issues.
- 2.2 Improving population mental wellbeing to prevent clinical or significant episodes of mental illness is of significant importance to Medway Council. The focus is often placed on the consequences of poor mental health for example, family breakdowns, increased used of prescribed or non-prescribed medication, hospitalisations due to individuals not being able to cope with the challenges that life presents.
- 2.3 This report provides an analysis of mental wellbeing through the life course (birth to old age). It looks at the tools available within Medway that people can use to cope with the stress and strains of life and local resources that are in place to help them.
- 2.4 There are significant health and societal benefits that can be gained by focussing on mental wellbeing. For example, every £1 invested in the social and emotional development of children results in estimated savings to society of more than £5 (over 3 years). For every £1 invested in workplace wellbeing programmes, there is an estimated saving to society of over £2. By investing in promoting good mental wellbeing among our communities, we improve physical health, reduce costs associated with the treatment of mental illness and develop resilient and vibrant communities.

3. Options

- 3.1 Publishing an Annual Public Health Report is a requirement of the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The report provides a focus on earlier intervention and prevention at scale, which will enable more local people to improve their mental wellbeing.

4. Advice and Analysis

- 4.1 The Annual Public Health Report sets out a number of recommendations to improve partnership working and collaboration between organisations working in Medway and build community resilience. These include:

Awareness Campaigns- Increasing the skills and knowledge of individuals and our population to recognise signs and symptoms and take action to improve mental wellbeing.

Workforce development- Fostering good practice within the workplace, to support employees to deal with the challenge of the modern workplace.

Young people and schools- Working with young people and schools to build resilience in our children and young people

Commissioning- Use the collective strength of our commissioning to build good practice into contracts and services so issues that impact on mental health are addressed.

5. Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 15 October 2019

- 5.1 The Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered this report on 15 October 2019. The Committee commented as follows:

- 5.2 It was noted that 83% of people experienced anxiety, low mood or sleeplessness at some point in their lives. The Annual Report had tried to focus on wellness rather than illness. In Medway, 79% of people aged 16+ had high life satisfaction compared to an England average of 82%. The figure for having a sense of wellbeing was 73% for Medway compared to 75% nationally. It was acknowledged that Medway would want to improve these figures. People in the 45 – 59 year old age group could face particular challenges that could impact on their mental wellbeing as this cohort often had the challenge of managing their own lives while also having children and older relatives who may need support. Public Health was developing approaches for employers to help support staff facing challenges that could impact on their mental wellbeing. Medway had won a national award for its suicide prevention work and had been shortlisted for a health service journal award. There was a need to build community capacity, including within the voluntary sector, in order to support people to be able to do more for themselves.

- 5.3 The following issues were discussed:

- 5.3.1 **Mental health and support for middle aged renters** – A Member raised concern about the length of wait for children to access CAMHS services and that it was difficult to obtain a referral. The Member was also concerned that many people of late middle age who privately rented became unable to afford their rent as their income reduced due to working less or retiring. She highlighted that renting property had been identified as a cause of mental stress and that this was an issue that needed to be addressed. The Member referenced a case where a resident with serious mental health challenges had

had enforcement action taken against them by the Council's Planning department. She felt that consideration should be given as to the potential impact on mental health and had highlighted the case to promote cross departmental working on mental health issues.

5.3.2 The Assistant Director of Adult Social Care said that the latter concern would be raised at the Mental Health Steering Group. The Director of People – Children and Adults requested that the Member provide further details so that the case could be investigated. The Director had attended meetings with the Chief Nurse of Medway NHS Clinical Commissioning Group to express concern about the slow rate of improvement in terms of timeliness of access to emotional health and wellbeing services for young people. The issue had been discussed at the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the Committee having requested that Medway Community Healthcare and NELFT attend the Committee to provide an update. There was also concern about waiting times for looked after children. The Director of Public Health said that there was a need to commission services to achieve outcomes rather than just outputs and that supporting vulnerable people into work had a positive impact for the individual and could also help to reduce the likelihood of them needing more intensive support in the future.

5.3.3 **Social Isolation** – In response to a Member concern about how social isolation would be tackled, the Director of Public Health advised that work to implement recommendations from the Social Isolation Task Group was ongoing. There was a need to consider how to take this work forward as part of Medway's City of Culture bid.

5.3.4 **Voluntary Sector involvement and other issues** – A Committee Member highlighted the need to involve the voluntary sector in overcoming the challenges highlighted and for strengthened joint working as voluntary organisations were struggling to cope with demand. The Member considered that there were not enough bereavement services available and was concerned about the number of people using food banks in Medway. The Director of Public Health said that there was a need to engage the whole community, including the voluntary sector and to use resources effectively to reduce the likelihood of people needing to use treatment services.

5.3.5 The Committee noted the report, findings and recommendations.

6. Risk Management

6.2 Risk management is an integral part of good governance. The Council has a responsibility to identify and manage threats and risks to achieve its strategic objectives and enhance the value of services it provides to the community.

| Risk | Description | Action to avoid or mitigate risk | Risk rating |
|---|--|---|-------------|
| People are not supported to improve their mental wellbeing. | Not adhering to the recommendations within the APHR could lead to increased costs related to hospitalisation for mental health crisis. Treatment costs increase associated with managing people in mental health crisis. Increased social care costs associated with family breakdowns and more people requiring support to address drug and or alcohol dependence | Adopt the recommendations set out in the report | D2 |

7. Consultation

7.1 Consultation has taken place with children and young people and other stakeholders in relation to this report.

8. Financial implications

8.1 Any resources required to deliver ambitions set out in this report will be found through existing service or organisational budgets.

9. Legal implications

9.1 The Annual Public Health Report is an independent report of the Director of Public Health as set out in Section 73B(5) & (6) of the NHS Act 2006, inserted by section 31 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012. Local Authorities are required to publish the Director of Public Health Annual Report.

10. Recommendation

10.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to:

10.1.1 note the comments of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee set out at section 5 of the report; and

10.1.2 note the Annual Public Health Report, including its findings and recommendations.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Annual Public Health Report 2018/19

Background Papers

None

