

Appendix A

No Health without Mental Health Mendip District Council Mental Health Policy

Background

Mental ill health currently represents 23% of the total burden of ill health in the UK and is the largest single cause of disability. Nearly 11% of England's annual secondary health budget is spent on mental health and estimates suggest the cost of treating mental health could double over the next 20 years

- The number of people in contact with mental health services in Somerset is slightly higher (2332 per 100,000) than the England rate (2176)
- The number of people with mental illness in residential nursing care in Somerset is lower at 17.8% compared to England (32.7%)
- Detentions in Somerset under the mental health act are broadly similar to the all England rate of 12% per 100,000
- The percentage of people with mental illness or disability not in settled accommodation at 42.6% is worse than for England as a whole (33.2%)
- One in six people will have a mental health problem at any one time. For some people this may be a brief episode of illness, for others, mental health problems last for many years. Conversely, people with chronic physical health often experience mental health problems.

The impact of mental health on families, communities, society as a whole and to the individual can be immense. This impact could be in social and financial cost and can perpetuate cycles of inequality through generations. The stigma attached to mental health result in many individuals being reluctant to talk about it; therefore it is certain the extent of the problem is under estimated.

Improving the mental health and wellbeing of Mendips residents of all ages and supporting individuals helps them to realise his or her own abilities, cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully and make a contribution to his or her community. This is also fundamental to an individual's physical health, relationships, education and work.

Thus, there is no health without mental health. It must be recognised that mental health problems often start in childhood and that the opportunity to intervene to promote and protect good mental health will arise through to old age. The policy therefore is to signpost the range of interventions available to Mendip District Council, its officers and members and the range of services on offer from statutory bodies and other agencies and partners.

Causation factors interact and include adverse life events, poverty, unemployment, the level of support available from networks and educational attainment. Additionally add the social environment of today's life style. The acid test is the ability of the individual to be resilient and to cope with these challenges.

Positive mental health is essential for our quality of life. It is important for thriving communities, for economic productivity and for personal relationships. Life will always have ups and downs but positive mental health helps us to deal with these more effectively.

The role of the District Council

There are ten actions to promote mental health across the spectrum recommended by H.M Government, the charity “Mind” and the Royal College of Psychiatrists for local authorities to consider. These recommendations are focused mainly for top tier or unitary authorities where there is a public health/ mental health remit. As a member of the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board we are already actively participating in a number of the actions to promote mental health and contributing to its mental health strategies (Appendix A). The Government’s Foresight Project on Mental Capital and Wellbeing saw the development of the Five Ways to Wellbeing which provides simple advice on how we can all keep take steps on a daily basis for good wellbeing (Appendix B). As an individual authority though we believe it only right that we look to utilise our networks of partners and where possible the skills within our organisation to support this work. To this end we proposed the appointment of a mental health champion who will be an elected member, with responsibility across the council for raising the awareness of mental health issues.

Our Commitment

The Council is committed to supporting its staff and communities to support them when in crisis where we can. We will also assist people to identify the signs of distress and techniques that can be used to reduce these. We will provide support to our elected members to understand the effects mental health disorders can have on people, families and communities.

Mental Health Champions

The role of champion will include the following activities:

- Advocating for mental health issues in council meetings and policy development
- Reaching out to the local community to raise awareness and challenge stigma
- Listening to people with personal experience of mental ill health to get their perspectives on local needs and priorities
- Fostering local partnerships between agencies to support people with mental health problems more effectively
- Encouraging the council to support the mental health of its own workforce and those of its contractors.

As part of its commitment the council have identified two Mental Health Champions Peter Bradshaw and Helen Sprawson-White. These champions will be supported by a Mental Health Lead. The council aims to meet the commitment statement within this policy through the following actions:

Year 1

- Council confirms its agreement to Mental Health Champions and plan of work to support them

- Identification of Mental Health officer lead
- Review current support available for staff and residents of Mendip
- Publicise support currently available in Mendip
- Identify policies to be reviewed from a mental health perspective
- Run the first Mental Health Day for Mendip
- End of year report

Year 2

- Run the second Mental health day for Mendip
- Run training and provide support information for staff around their own mental health and support available for customers.
- Run training and provide support information for members around their own mental health and support available for customers.
- End of year report

Year 3

- Run the third Mental health day for Mendip
- Work with Benefits team on the affect Mental health can have on benefits and evaluate if practice needs to be changes
- End of year report

Appendix A

Connections to other policies and strategies

- Positive Mental Health Strategy Somerset
<http://www1.somerset.gov.uk/council/board3d%5C2014%20December%2010%20Item%206%20Positive%20Mental%20Health%20Strategy%20Appendix%20A.pdf>
- Mental Health Challenge - <http://www.mentalhealthchallenge.org.uk/>
- Health and Wellbeing Board
<http://www1.somerset.gov.uk/council/boards.asp?boardnum=39>

Additional information

- Mind – Five ways to wellbeing - <http://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/taking-care-of-yourself/five-ways-to-wellbeing/>

Appendix B

Five Ways to Wellbeing – Developed by the New Economics Foundation as part of the Foresight Project

The new economics foundation suggest a “**5 a day**” action plan to maintain wellbeing.

1. Connect

- Support interventions that improve relationships, and reduce rural isolation and social isolation.
- Encourage the sense of community and social cohesion.
- Develop environments tailored for wellbeing, promoting self esteem and are non-stigmatising.
- Wellbeing in the workplace
- Reduce stigma and discrimination.

2. Be active

- Encourage travel
- Build and maintain environments that encourage physical activity.
- Provide safe green spaces, which are well maintained and accessible.
- Promote community based initiatives.
- Promote and provide a variety of exercise.

3. Take notice

- Construct and raise the concept of mindfulness.

4. Learn

- Improve academic achievement
- Provide learning and educational opportunities.
- Support being in work and develop new skills.
- Access to the arts, culture and creativity.
- Encourage financial literacy.
- Encourage the self management of long term conditions.

5. Give

Support and encourage volunteering and promote citizen participation.
Identifying problems early and supporting interventions.

- Promote awareness.
- Improve screening
- Prevent suicide
- Access to early social and psychological management.
- Involving carers that can identify mental health at an early stage and alert professionals,
- By taking a whole family approach and dealing with integrated problems such as domestic violence and alcohol abuse.

Appendix C

Other useful organisations and contact details

The NSPCC assistance for school pupils.

The NSPCC offer the following services, and can offer visits to schools.

A guide for parents, privacy controls etc

www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety

Tel 0800 800 5002

Share aware conversation starter www.nspcc.org.uk/shareaware

For advice to parents www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents.

Safe internet centre www.safeinternet.org

NSPCC helpline www.nspcc.org.uk/help

Another provider to note is Childline - Tel 0800 1111.

Facilities available within the Mendip District area and elsewhere

Health connections Mendip

Health connections Mendip is funded by GP surgeries within Mendip and operate out of three offices with 12 staff members and located at shape Mendip, Shepton Mallet, Frome and Glastonbury. They are known as Mendip surgeries.

The client base must be registered with a Mendip GP

The help provided is in the form of a Health and Wellbeing role and in a non medical environment. A person can contact Health Connections direct, or may be referred by a Doctor. The service website is www.healthconnectionsmandip.org

The information is listed under the Mendip directory link with mental health listed within the alphabetical order. Those patients not requiring any support other than being listened to or help to set targets can have six free sessions of support. Healthy eating and weight management, including physical exercise. The following links will be informative.

www.zingsomerserset.co.uk

www.nhs.uk/change4life/pages/change-for-life.aspx