

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

29 JULY 2014

Title:	Closing the Gap: Priorities for essential change in mental health		
Report of the Mental Health Sub-Group			
Open Report	For Information		
Wards Affected: All	Key Decision: No		
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Sponsor: Jacqui Van Rossum, Executive Director, NELFT			
Summary: <p>In its mental health strategy, <i>No Health Without Mental Health</i>, the Government stated that mental health must have equal priority with physical health, that discrimination associated with mental health problems must end and that everyone who needs mental health care should get the right support, at the right time. It was recognised that more needed to be done to prevent mental ill health and promote mental wellbeing.</p> <p>Two years on, whilst there have been many positive changes, it is apparent still more needs to be done. Nationally, people who use mental health services, and those caring for them, continue to report gaps in provision and long waits for services. There is still an enormous gap in physical health outcomes for those with mental health problems.</p> <p>The Closing The Gap report (Department of Health, February 2014) challenges the health and social care economies to go further and faster to transform the support and care available to people with mental health problems, both children and adults, further, it challenges Public Health to give greater attention to mental health and wellbeing promotion and prevention.</p> <p>A presentation summarising the Closing the Gap report will be given at the July Health and Wellbeing Board meeting.</p>			
Recommendation(s) <p>The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) The 25 recommendations highlighted within the Closing the Gap report.(ii) That the Mental Health Sub-Group members are undertaking a benchmarking audit within their respective organisations to establish the level of services commissioned and provided within Barking and Dagenham against the 25 priorities.(iii) That an implementation plan will be presented to the October Health and Wellbeing Board outlining the actions to be taken for local services to meet the report recommendations.			

Reason(s)

Mental health and wellbeing is a central focus for the Health and Wellbeing Board and its member organisations. The Closing the Gap report challenges the Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure that mental health provision and commissioning in Barking and Dagenham is robust, is given parity of esteem with physical health, and that people with mental health problems are given the right care and support at the right time.

1. Background and Introduction

- 1.1 In January 2014, the Department of Health published its priorities for bridging the gap between its long term ambitions for mental health and shorter term actions. The Government's strategy was originally set out in 2011 in the document 'No health without mental health' followed by its 2012 implementation framework and suicide prevention strategy.
- 1.2 These earlier papers had a long term population focus, whereas the Closing the Gap report seeks to show how changes in local service planning and delivery will make a difference in the next two to three years, to the lives of people with mental health problems.

2. Proposal and Issues

- 2.1 Closing the Gap covers 25 areas where the most immediate change and improvement is expected.
- 2.2 The 25 priorities are set out under four key themes and are a clear restatement by the Government of its commitment to the provision of high quality mental health services, placed on a par with acute hospital services. The measures, strategies and ambitions contained within the document have the potential to deliver improved patient care outcomes not only in mental health but across the entire health and social care system.
- 2.3 The four key themes are:
 - Increasing access to mental health services
 - Integrating physical and mental health care
 - Starting early to promote mental wellbeing and prevent mental health problems
 - Improving the quality of life of people with mental health problems
- 2.4 The Board will receive a presentation at their July meeting which will summarise the Closing the Gap report. A summary of the report, produced by the Local Government Information Unit, can be found at Appendix 1.
- 2.5 The full 'Closing the Gap' report can be accessed by visiting:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/281250/Closing_the_gap_V2_-_17_Feb_2014.pdf
- 2.6 It should be noted that recent studies have shown that funding for mental health services in England has been reduced by 2% in real terms over the past two years. Additionally, there appears to be no provision for enhanced mental health services and standards arising from the priorities set out in the NHS Mandate.

3. Consultation

- 3.1 Members of the Mental Health Sub-Group have been asked to undertake an audit within their constituent agencies to benchmark service commissioning and provision against the 25 priorities. This will be aided by the Mental Health Needs Assessment which has been recently undertaken by Public Health. The outcome of the agency audit will be reviewed by the sub-group and will be utilised to inform an action plan aimed at achieving these priorities.

4. Mandatory Implications

4.1. Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

Strategies to address mental wellbeing need to follow the life course approach set out in our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and be directed at promoting mental wellbeing as well as effective management of mental illness. Improved mental health and wellbeing is associated with a range of better outcomes for people of all ages and backgrounds. These include improved physical health and life expectancy, better educational achievement, increased skills, reduced health risk behaviours such as smoking and alcohol misuse, reduced risk of mental health problems and suicide, improved employment rates and productivity, reduced anti-social behaviour and criminality, and higher levels of social interaction and participation.

4.2. Health and Wellbeing Strategy

The public's mental health and well-being is a complex area of policy. It demands our attention because focusing more on mental well-being and improving people's mental health is the right way to go. This report shows that improving mental well-being is a significant and growing priority for local authorities and the NHS in spite of, and because of, the poor economic situation we find ourselves in. It is clear that building community resilience and improving mental well-being will improve social, health and economic outcomes. The Board will need to be assured in the pending refresh of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Board that the 25 priorities set out under the four key themes have the appropriate prominence to deliver improved patient care outcomes not only in mental health but across the entire health and social care system.

4.3. Integration

The implications for integration are highlighted in the report. Constituent organisations of the Health and Wellbeing Board have been asked to undertake an audit of service provision to identify gaps against the 25 priorities. The Mental Health Sub Group will be leading on the audit on behalf of the Health and Wellbeing Board and will ensure that a multi-agency action plan is put in place following the audit to ensure that the priorities are met.

4.4. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications directly arising from the recommendations in this report. However, a further report will be presented to the October Health and Wellbeing Board on actions proposed to be taken by local services to meet the recommendations in the "Closing the Gap" report.

The October report will need to set out which of the recommendations in “Closing the Gap” need additional investment locally, and whether this is to be from health or the local authority. Within limited and reducing resources, it may be necessary to consider reshaping current services for support and care available to people with mental health problems in order to deliver the recommendations.

Implications completed by: Roger Hampson, Group Manager Finance (Adults and Community Services) LBBD

4.5 Legal Implications

As this report is for noting only, there are no legal implications at this stage. The report notes appropriate consultation before an implementation plan is to be considered in October when decisions will be made.

Implications completed by: Chris Pickering, Principal Solicitor, LBBD

5. Background Papers Used in Preparation of the Report:

- ‘Closing the Gap: Priorities for essential change in mental health’, Department of Health, January 2014

6. List of Appendices:

- Appendix 1: Local Government Information Unit Policy Briefing, February 2014