

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF ADULT CARE AND HEALTH SERVICES

TO:	HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD		
DATE:	6 OCTOBER 2017	AGENDA ITEM:	7
TITLE:	SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMME UPDATE		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR HOSKIN	PORTFOLIO:	HEALTH
SERVICE:	MENTAL HEALTH	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	JANETTE SEARLE	TEL:	0118 937 3753
JOB TITLE:	PREVENTATIVE SERVICES MANAGER	E-MAIL:	Janette.Searle@reading.gov.uk /

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report presents an update on delivery against the Health and Wellbeing Action Plan Priority 4 - Reducing Deaths by Suicide. It includes an overview of performance and progress towards achieving suicide prevention goals and upcoming activities to support suicide prevention strategy objectives.
- 1.2 This is one of several progress reports presented to this meeting by way of addressing the meeting's theme of 'emotional wellbeing'. This theme has been selected by the Board to facilitate a review of local plans against the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health, and in recognition of World Mental Health Day on 10th October.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 That the Health and Wellbeing Board:

Notes the progress to date against the 2017-20 Reading Health and Wellbeing Strategy Action Plan, Priority 4.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 A cross-Government National Suicide Prevention Strategy for England was published in 2012. This included commitments to tackling suicide in six key areas:
 - Reducing the risk of suicide in high risk groups;
 - Tailoring approaches to improve mental health in specific groups;

- Reducing access to means of suicide;
 - Providing better information and support to those bereaved or affected by suicide;
 - Supporting the media in delivering sensitive approaches to suicide and suicidal behaviour; and
 - Supporting research, data collection and monitoring.
- 3.2 In 2016, an independent Mental Health Taskforce presented a report - The Five Year Forward View for Mental Health - to the NHS in England. The Taskforce recommended setting a national ambition to reduce the suicide rate in England by 10 per cent by 2020-21, and that every local area should have in place a multi-agency suicide prevention plan. These local plans are expected to align with local Crisis Care Concordat action plans, and to reflect local ambitions for prevention planning.
- 3.3 Suicide prevention work is part of promoting good mental health more broadly, and there is an increasing focus on mental health as a vital part of overall wellbeing. On 30 August 2017, Public Health England published the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health. This describes a shared commitment to work together to prevent mental health problems and to promote good mental health. The Concordat's signatories include NHS England, the Local Government Association, NICE, the Faculty of Public Health and Association of Directors of Public Health together with eleven national voluntary community and social enterprise organisations.
- 3.4 In Berkshire, the development of a strategic approach to suicide prevention has been coordinated by a multi-agency group which has overseen the preparation of a county-wide strategy and action plan, complemented by local action plans responding to the unique needs and circumstances of each of the six local authorities in Berkshire. The Berkshire strategy includes a 'stretch' target to reduce the suicide rate by 25% by 2020.
- 3.5 Reading's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-20 includes 'reducing deaths by suicide' as one of its eight priorities, with a further two priorities complementing this very closely:
- Promoting positive mental health and wellbeing in children and young people
 - Reducing loneliness and social isolation

4. PROGRESS TO DATE AGAINST THE SUICIDE PREVENTION ACTION PLAN

- 4.1 A Reading Mental Wellbeing Group has been formed which is a multi-agency group that brings together stakeholders who oversee the local development of evidence-based support for mental wellbeing. This group provides strategic direction for the implementation of the Reading Suicide Prevention Plan.
- 4.2 Work is ongoing to raise public awareness on suicide risk and support available. The Wellbeing team has recently launched a Suicide Prevention Page on the Reading Services Guide which supports residents to make links with national and local support services for those at risk of death by suicide, including people bereaved through suicide.

- 4.3 The formal launch of the Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy - on 17th October - provides an opportunity to raise the profile of suicide risk and suicide support through media coverage and partner engagement. The launch event will take the form of a mini conference in the Town Hall, Wokingham, with guest speakers and workshop sessions. Reading's Wellbeing team is co-ordinating a local event on 9th October 2017 to mark Older People's Day with the theme of Emotional Wellbeing in Later Life. This year's guest speaker, Jean, suffered mental health problems and has now written a book on how to live well. The event will include a range of workshops, demonstrations and information stalls promoting mental health and wellbeing.
- 4.4 Prior experience of mental illness is a known risk factor for suicide, and the local suicide prevention action plan includes promoting services which support groups particularly vulnerable to mental ill health or those who need tailored approaches. This includes children and young people - as described in the separate 'Future in Mind' update presented to the Board today - as well as survivors of domestic abuse or sexual abuse. Trust House in Reading provides specialist support to those affected by rape and sexual abuse as well as training to other agencies and will be facilitating a workshop at the Suicide Prevention Strategy launch.
- 4.5 Reading's Recovery College (Compass) uses an educational approach to enable people with experience of mental health difficulties to become experts in their own healthcare. The College builds on people's strengths and helps them to develop skills and confidence to manage their recovery journey. Now in its second year, Compass's new website will be launched on World Mental Health Day (10th October).
- 4.6 Reading Your Way offers peer led support for mental health recovery, including entering education, returning to work, finding new hobbies and social activities, solving housing issues, making friends, organising finances and helping people to avoid or manage crises. Reading Your Way will host an Open Coffee Morning to mark World Mental Health Day.
- 4.7 People suffering from substance misuse are also at higher risk of death by suicide and the Reading Drug and Alcohol commissioner has reviewed contracts to ensure suicide prevention strategy objectives are set up with all our providers.
- 4.8 Reading hosted a media event jointly organised by Public Health Berkshire, BBC Berkshire and the Samaritans on 11th September (the closest working day to World Suicide Prevention Day on 10th September 2017). The objectives of the session were to highlight the role of media in shaping public perception of suicide, to educate Berkshire's media community on responsible suicide reporting and to promote the forthcoming Suicide Prevention Strategy launch. The event covered sessions on the Strategy, an overview of the importance of sensitive reporting by the Samaritans and IPOS (Independent Press Standards Organisation). Participants included editors, journalists, feature writers and broadcasters who were informed about important suicide prevention work taking place across Berkshire and how they could work in partnership to address this issue.

- 4.9 In accordance with the local Suicide Prevention Action Plan, the Reading Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) module on suicide and self-harm has also been updated. The Mental Health JSNA module is now in the process of being refreshed.
- 4.10 Delivery against all of the Health and Wellbeing strategic priorities is expected to take into account and be founded on the three 'foundation' issues, i.e. carer recognition, safeguarding and a co-ordinated approach to wellbeing information. Local suicide prevention work is grounded in keeping vulnerable people safe, and raising awareness of support. Carers are recognised as a group vulnerable to stress and ill health and so needing to have tailored support or access in order to maintain good mental health.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 The Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy, and complementary sections of the Reading Health and Wellbeing Strategy, support the Council's Corporate Plan priority to 'safeguard and protect those that are most vulnerable.' Similarly, these support the Reading Clinical Commission Groups' aim per the Berkshire West Strategic Plan 2014-19 to 'give mental health parity of esteem with physical health through the commissioning of high quality evidence-based mental health services which reflect the national mental health strategy and other key guidance'.
- 5.2 The Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy is an important public health strategy which seeks to save lives lost to suicide through its prevention, and to improve the health and wellbeing of those bereaved by suicide. It also includes more general whole-population actions aimed at improving mental health and wellbeing as contributing factors that prevent suicide. The strategy highlights and action plans prioritise certain population groups which have greater risk factors for suicide, and thus contributes to narrowing inequalities.

6. COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- 6.1 During a public consultation on Reading's draft Health and Wellbeing strategy for 2017-20, local residents commented that there was a need for a more explicit reference to adult mental health and emotional wellbeing in order for the Strategy to set the basis of a properly holistic approach. It was in direct response to this feedback that suicide reduction was added as a priority in the final (adopted) version of the strategy, and the final strategy made more explicit that the priority on reducing loneliness and social isolation incorporates developing personal resilience.
- 6.2 The Reading Mental Wellbeing Group, which oversees the local suicide prevention action plan, is a multi agency forum which bring together service users, carers and partners across sectors.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 The contents of this report do not trigger the need to complete an equality impact assessment.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no new financial implications arising from this report.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Reading Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-20

Reading Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2017-20

Reading Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2017-20: Progress Report July 2017