

## **Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

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**Date of Meeting:** 05 July 2018

**Report Title:** Mental Health Awareness Week 2018 at Cheshire East Council

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Liz Wardlaw (Portfolio Holder for Health)

**Senior Officer:** Fiona Reynolds Director of Public Health

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### **1. Report Summary**

- 1.1. Every year, one in four of us in the UK are affected by a mental health problem. Mental illness is unfortunately common. It affects thousands of people in the UK, and their friends, families, work colleagues and society in general. In fact, poor mental health affects more people every year than cancer or heart disease. Over the last eighteen years Mental Health Awareness Week has highlighted the many different ways in which we can all contribute to improving our mental health. Past Mental Health Awareness Weeks have drawn attention to sleep, physical exercise, relationships, mindfulness and doing good to help make a difference. This year's theme was focussed on stress. Research has shown that two thirds of us experience a mental health problem in our lifetimes, and stress is a key factor in this. By tackling stress, we can go a long way to tackle mental health problems such as anxiety and depression, and, in some instances, self-harm and suicide.
- 1.2. Mental health problems cost the UK economy an estimated £70-100 billion each year. Yet public spending is focussed almost entirely on coping with crisis, with only insignificant investment in prevention. The Mental Health Foundation's Strategy 'A New Way Forward' (2015- 2020) sets out the case for a fresh emphasis on prevention including understanding the causation and development of mental health problems, and the patterns of risks and prevalence across different individuals and groups. We recognise that the factors impacting mental health are complex, and that our social and physical environments are key determinants.
- 1.3. The most significant step we can take in the UK is to reduce the mental health problems so many experience by taking action to prevent these upstream. This can be achieved, through raising awareness in order for more

individuals and communities to understand and recognise the circumstances that increase the risk of mental health problems and how to tackle these problems individually and collectively.

Most people who experience mental health problems recover fully, or are able to live with and manage them, especially if they get help early on. But even though so many people are affected, there is a strong social stigma attached to mental ill health, and people with mental health problems can experience discrimination in all aspects of their lives. Many people's problems are made worse by the stigma and discrimination they experience from society, but also from families, friends and employers. Nearly nine out of ten people with mental health problems say that stigma and discrimination have a negative effect on their lives.

Therefore it is critically important that national and local campaigns like the one we have developed this year exist and are supported in order to challenge, educate and change public attitudes towards mental illness.

We know the importance of the role of Local Government in the promotion and prevention agenda and this programme of work contributes to Outcome 2 (Improving the mental health and wellbeing of people living and working in Cheshire East) of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2018-2021), and in particular aligns with the NHS Five Year Forward View for Mental Health.

2. **Recommendation** – That the Mental Health awareness week initiative be received

### 3. Background

- 3.1. This report is to provide an overview to the scrutiny committee on the progress of this initiative, (Mental Health Awareness Week 2018) as requested. It will also describe the approach to a collaborative campaign and the lessons learned which can be used for the next campaign, Know Your Numbers, (Blood Pressure) in September.
- 3.2. A Wellbeing Networking Group has been developed operating on the Cheshire East foot print and with partners from Cheshire East Council, Eastern Cheshire CCG, South Cheshire CCG, East Cheshire NHS Trust, Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, Everybody Sport and Recreation, Peaks and Plains Housing Trust, Plus Dane Housing Trust and CVS. There have been several meetings since November 2017 and there is a good commitment to work together to improve wellbeing.

One of the key pieces of work was to review the current wellbeing campaigns we are all undertaking and to agree a joint campaign each quarter that we will work on together.

This summary shows the campaigns and the rationale for selecting them and the aim is that we all align our communications and actions during the week or month long campaigns for maximum impact across the population.

- Dry January (Jan-March 2019)
- Mental Health Awareness Week (April-June 2018)
- Know Your Numbers Week (July –Sept 2018)
- Stay Well This Winter (Oct-Dec 2018)

The four campaigns were identified and will be promoted within each organisation creating a larger impact and a more co-ordinated approach. Resources will be shared with partners and joint working/support will improve the campaigns reach to wider audiences.

A small task and finish group was approved to plan the campaigns and ensure effective coverage with Communications leads for each organisation. It was agreed that each organisation will actively be involved with the dissemination of information, sharing resources and delivering activities which promote the theme.

#### **4. Reasons for Recommendation/s**

##### **Mental Health Awareness Week Activity**

- 4.1. Each partner organisation was responsible for drafting up and promoting their own activities to both staff in the workplace and residents in the community. However there were some key activities that the group agreed we would all promote. These included the 'make a pledge' activity, use of the developed hash tag for raising awareness online and the 'wear it green Wednesday'. Outside of those, activities differed only slightly between the partner organisations but they all were grouped using the evidence-based Five Ways to Wellbeing model and were aimed at reducing stress, this year's theme for Mental Health Awareness Week.

Below is a table of the activities from Cheshire East Council, followed by a plan of promotion which demonstrates how the activities were promoted to our audiences.

**Table 1** - Activities for Mental Health Awareness Week at Cheshire East Council

Date		5 Ways to Wellbeing	Activity	Location	Time	Audience
4 <sup>th</sup> May	Daily global staff communication (see plan below)	Connect	<b>Church of the Resurrection Event</b> – Residents and Cllr Janet Clowes in attendance. Over 40 pledges made.	Upton Priory, Macclesfield	4 <sup>th</sup> May	Residents
14-18 <sup>th</sup> May		Give	<b>Pledge Board/Make a pledge</b> to reduce your stress We had over 90 pledges across our Cheshire East activities which created a good visual impact to the campaign.	Macclesfield Town Hall Westfields Delamere House Municipal Buildings Connected Community Centres Partner Organisations	14-18 <sup>th</sup> May	Staff & Residents
14-18 <sup>th</sup> May		Connect	<b>#GoodMentalHealth4Cheshire</b> on Facebook & Twitter to raise awareness and share key messages and photos during the week. These posts stimulated an above average engagement rate for both the Council's Twitter and Facebook pages.	Online	14-18 <sup>th</sup> May	Staff & Residents
14-18 <sup>th</sup> May		Connect	<b>Be aware of your Mental Health First Aiders</b> – Details of staff members who are trained in Mental Health First Aid were promoted to staff	Posters in Macclesfield Town Hall Westfields Delamere House Municipal Buildings	14-18 <sup>th</sup> May	Staff
14-18 <sup>th</sup> May		Be Active	<b>Free 1 day Leisure Passes</b> available to those who made a pledge to reduce their stress	Macclesfield Town Hall, Westfields & Delamere House Partner Organisations	14-18 <sup>th</sup> May	Staff & Residents
14 <sup>th</sup> May		Keep Learning	<b>Lunch and Learn Session on Stress</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Included how to spot the signs &amp; symptoms</li> <li>How to approach someone who is</li> </ul>	East Committee Suite, Municipal Buildings, Crewe	11.30-12.30	Staff

			<p>stressed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How to seek help if you're stressed</li> </ul>			
15 <sup>th</sup> May		<p><b>Give</b> <b>Take Notice</b> <b>Keep</b> <b>Learning</b></p>	<p><b>Free Mental Health Signposting/Resources &amp; Blood Pressure Check Event</b> – Over 30 conversations and 15 blood pressure checks with residents</p>	Crewe Lifestyle Centre Public Health & Everybody Sport & Recreation	10.00-14.00	Residents
16 <sup>th</sup> May		<p><b>Take Notice</b></p>	<p><b>Wear Green Wednesday</b> – Staff actively took part in and showed their support for Wear Green Wednesday</p>	All Cheshire East Council office locations Partner Organisations	All Day	Staff & Residents
16 <sup>th</sup> May		<p><b>Be Active</b></p>	<p><b>Vinyasa Flow Yoga Classes</b> – To demonstrate the importance of being active for the mind, good feedback received and 10 pledges made</p>	Macclesfield Old Town Hall Assembly Room	12.00-1.00 16.00-17.00	Staff
16 <sup>th</sup> May		<p><b>Keep Learning</b></p>	<p><b>4 Mindfulness Taster Sessions</b> – A mind-body based approach that helps people to manage their thoughts and feelings and mental health. Received excellent feedback along with stories of staff taking up Mindfulness outside of work as a result.</p>	Municipal Buildings, S6, Crewe	1.00-3.00	Staff
17 <sup>th</sup> May		<p><b>Keep Learning</b></p>	<p><b>Lunch and Learn Session on Stress</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Included how to spot the signs &amp; symptoms</li> <li>How to approach someone who is stressed</li> <li>How to seek help if you're stressed</li> </ul>	Executive Suite 1, Macclesfield Town Hall	12.30-1.30	Staff
18 <sup>th</sup> May		<p><b>Connect</b></p>	<p><b>Young Persons Mental Health Event</b> - Over 100 young people and families attended this multi-agency event. Case study - "a teenager felt comfortable and</p>	Crewe Lifestyle Centre	18.00-20.00	Residents

			confident enough during the event to report their experience of recent cyber trolling”			
18 <sup>th</sup> May		<b>Connect</b>	<b>Connected Communities Centre Opening</b> - 13 pledges were made at the opening, varying from pledging to walk to school, to trying a sports team etc. A Youth Officer comments “All in all it seemed to go down well and the young people really enjoyed having an opportunity to share - so thank you for involving them!”	United Reformed Church, Wilmslow	AM	Residents
18 <sup>th</sup> May		<b>Keep Learning</b>	<b>4 Mindfulness Taster Sessions</b> – A mind-body based approach that helps people to manage their thoughts and feelings and mental health. Received excellent feedback with staff interested in having regular mindfulness sessions in the workplace.	Westfields, G4	12.00-2.00	Staff

**Table 2** – Promotion of Activities at Cheshire East Council

Date	Key Message	Method
30 <sup>th</sup> April-11 <sup>th</sup> May <i>Raise awareness</i>	What/why/theme - Mental Health Awareness Week Collaborative working (Mental Wellbeing and Task Finish Group)  Dates/times of planned activities & communications  5 Ways to Wellbeing and mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Press Release</li> <li>- Global Email</li> <li>- Team Voice</li> <li>- Wellbeing in Work Newsletter</li> <li>- Centranet/Hot Topics</li> <li>- Posters</li> <li>- Facebook</li> <li>- Twitter</li> </ul>
14 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> May <i>Reminder of activities</i>	Reminder of activities <b>Learning</b> something new & mental health – signpost to local colleges/groups Signposting to support services (internal & external) French Lessons, Book Club, Mental Health Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Team Voice</li> <li>- Building Email</li> <li>- Centranet/Hot Topics</li> <li>- Posters</li> </ul>
14 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> May <i>Reminder of activities</i>	Reminder of activities <b>Giving</b> & mental health – promote local volunteering opportunities Signposting to support services (internal & external)	
14 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> May <i>Reminder of activities</i>	Reminder of activities <b>Being active</b> & mental health – gym discounts/local sport opportunities Signposting to support services (internal & external)	
14 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> May <i>Reminder of activities</i>	Reminder of activities <b>Taking Notice</b> & mental health - promote local walking/gardening opportunities Signposting to support services (internal & external)	
14 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> May <i>Reminder of activities</i>	Reminder of activities <b>Connect</b> & mental health - promote local mental health support groups Inspirational Quote / video Signposting to support services (internal & external)	

4.2. A Communication and Engagement Plan was developed and shared with the task and finish group so that messages were kept consistent and to reduce the time of each of the eight organisations each preparing their own communication plan.

Each organisation used their internal newsletters to promote activities and key messages during the week. For example, here at Cheshire East Council Mental Health Awareness articles went in Team Voice which reached over 2,000 staff on both occasions; in particular the wellbeing activity list had over 250 'clicks'. This was useful for us and resulted in staff making enquiries and bookings for the activities.

The Task and Finish group agreed on a hashtag which we could all use, #GoodMentalHealth4CheshireEast, to engage communities in discussion and highlight Mental Health Awareness Week online. The collaborative group agreed to use the social media platforms Twitter and Facebook to promote the key messages and to share photos of activities. These posts stimulated an above average engagement rate for both the Council's Twitter and Facebook pages. Although there were a few posts in particular that helped to raise that average.

All partners agreed to have a pledge board where staff and residents could pledge to improve their wellbeing and reduce their stress. The pledge boards were promoted through the newsletters and emails. Upon making a pledge you could receive a free one day leisure pass in return, at Cheshire East Council there were just over ninety pledges made during the week.

The Group agreed that we would all promote 'Wear it Green Wednesday' for *Mental Health Awareness Week*. We decided that it would work best to promote green (the colour of mental health awareness) on just one day during the week to increase the impact. This provided plenty of photo opportunities to share online and internally which helped increase awareness and highlight the work of the group.

Through sharing resources within the group collaboration, we arranged a Workforce Wellbeing Practitioner from Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust to offer eight free Mindfulness Taster Sessions for staff at Cheshire East Council with a total of twenty-four staff attending across two days at Municipal Buildings in Crewe and Westfields in Sandbach. We also put on two Vinyasa Flow Yoga classes for staff within the workplace with twenty staff attending those two sessions at Macclesfield Old Town Hall.



Lunch and Learn sessions on stress management were delivered to staff at Cheshire East Council, in total we had twenty-two staff attend across two sessions.

Just fewer than thirty staff at Cheshire East Council have now qualified in Mental Health First Aid during 2018 and these staff were promoted within the organisation during Mental Health Awareness Week via the Equality and Diversity Group as part of the Brighter Future Together programme.

Public Health partnered with Everybody Sport & Recreation Trust to offer residents free resources and signposting information and free blood pressure checks at Crewe Lifestyle Centre. Over thirty conversations and fifteen residents had blood pressure checks in one morning.

Colleagues from the Communities & Partnerships team at the council organised two public events during the week including a Mental Health Young Persons event at Crewe Lifestyle Centre where 100 young people and families attended and at the Connected Communities Centre opening event at United Reformed Church in Wilmslow where thirteen pledges were made.

A media release was sent out a week before Mental Health Awareness Week to highlight this new collaborative approach to the week, raise awareness of this year's theme which was stress and to list the activities that the public can get involved in.

### **Mental Health Awareness Week Learning**

- 4.3. The pledge boards were very well received in our council buildings, however not everyone was happy to have their photo taken with their pledge. The pledge boards contained everyone's logos and it was difficult to get the right, colour, format etc. without organisational bias.

Feedback from those who took up the taster mindfulness sessions was very positive. Many staff enquired afterwards regarding the possibility of long-term sessions for staff in the workplace and some have even joined classes in the community as a result.

After conversations with other people, the enthusiasm grew and others went away and contributed to the campaign. For example, the campaign was promoted at the Crewe Mental Wellbeing in Young People Event on 18th May 5pm – 8pm in Crewe Town Centre. Other Housing Association which didn't attend the Wellbeing Network Group wanted to be involved with the campaign.

4.4. A key recommendation from the learning gathered so far, which will inform our future campaign work, will be to involve communications personnel from each organisation earlier in the planning phase. This potentially should allow more time for agreeing news articles /press releases and to ensure signoffs between all partners. It will also enable communication leads to input earlier on our activity ideas like the developed hash tag #GoodMentalHealth4Cheshire which was used for this campaign, given their expertise in this area of work.

The opportunity to work collaboratively enabled all the organisations to save money, time and improve communication through sharing resources and facilities, knowledge and contacts. For example, Public Health joined up with a lifestyle coach from Everybody Sport and Recreation (ESAR) to offer a free signposting event during the week. This event was held in Crewe Lifestyle Centre and ESAR provided free blood pressure checks with no charge for venue or staff time.

Officers saved valuable time in the planning phase of the campaign by sharing different tasks to different partner organisations to enable a quicker development of the initiative. This will be something that will be implemented again in future campaign work.

A major benefit learned from working together was the improved communication between partner organisations which was an important objective at the formation of this task and finish group. This improved communication led to partnering organisations sharing officer time, knowledge and resources at events and to lead activities like the Mindfulness taster sessions.

4.5. Overall Cheshire partners involved in this campaign have demonstrated their commitment to support the mental wellbeing agenda and work collaboratively to create a successful Mental Health Awareness Week 2018.

## **5. Implications of the Recommendations**

5.1. **Health Implications:** This programme of work contributes to Outcome 2 (Improving the mental health and wellbeing of people living and working in Cheshire East) of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2018-2021) and supports Public Health England's Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health. This initiative also complements the Sticky Change and the Brighter Future Transformation Programme by supporting the workplace culture of the council. It also supports the council's Wellbeing in Work programme.

## **5.2. Legal Implications**

5.2.1. There are no legal implications.

## **5.3. Finance Implications**

5.3.1. There are no finance implications.

## **5.4. Policy Implications**

5.4.1. There are no policy implications.

## **5.5. Equality Implications**

5.5.1. There are no equality implications.

## **5.6. Human Resources Implications**

5.6.1. There are no Human Resources implications.

## **5.7. Risk Management Implications**

5.7.1. There are no risk management implications.

## **5.8. Rural Communities Implications**

5.8.1. There are no direct implications for rural communities.

## **5.9. Implications for Children & Young People**

5.9.1. There are no direct implications for children and young people.

## **5.10. Public Health Implications**

5.10.1. There are no direct implications for public health.

## **6. Ward Members Affected**

6.1. N/A

## **7. Consultation & Engagement**

7.1. N/A

## **8. Access to Information**

8.1. N/A

## **9. Contact Information**

9.1. Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

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