

Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health

Report of the Chief Officer for Communities, Public Health, Environment and Prosperity

Recommendation: That the Health and Wellbeing Board support work to develop an action plan through their constituent organisations, and sign-up to the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health.

1. Context

1.1 Poor mental health and wellbeing has a considerable impact on the quality of life and is a major contributor to premature death. This is highlighted in 'Healthy and Happy Communities', Devon's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for 2020-25, which sets a priority to focus on mental health and build good emotional health and wellbeing, happiness and resilience.

1.2 The Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health was developed by Public Health England as a mechanism for promoting good mental health and providing a focus for cross-sector action to increase the adoption of public mental health approaches.

2. Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health

2.1 Public mental health is fundamental to public health in general, because mental health is both a cause and consequence of physical health as well as a resource for living. A public mental health approach is concerned with promoting mental wellbeing, preventing future mental health problems and recovery from mental health problems.

2.2 Everyone, irrespective of where they live, has the potential to achieve good mental health and wellbeing, including communities facing the greatest barriers and those people who have overcome greater disadvantages. This includes those living with and recovering from mental illness.

2.3 The Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health Programme aims to:

- Galvanise local and national action around the prevention of mental health problems and promotion of good mental health;
- Facilitate every local area to put in place effective prevention planning arrangements led by health and wellbeing boards, clinical commissioning groups, and local authorities;
- Enable every area to use the best data available to plan and commission the right mix of provision to meet local needs, increase equity and reduce health inequalities.

The work covers prevention in the widest sense covering the full range of activity from the promotion of good mental health through to living well with mental health problems.


2.4 The Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health is underpinned by an understanding that taking a prevention-focused approach to improving the public's mental health is shown to make a valuable contribution to achieving a fairer and more equitable society. The Concordat promotes evidence-based planning and commissioning to increase the impact on reducing health inequalities. The sustainability and cost effectiveness of this approach will be enhanced by the inclusion of action that impacts on the wider determinants of mental health and wellbeing.

2.5 Local organisations or bodies intending to sign up to the Concordat are required to complete an action plan template to highlight their commitment to undertake specific actions on the prevention of mental health problems and promotion of good mental health. These local action plans are signed by a chief executive or senior leader, and then submitted to Public Health England for review and approval.

2.6 Whilst upper tier/unitary local authorities are the most common signatories of the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health, eight Health and Wellbeing Boards are also signatories (Doncaster, Dudley, Norfolk, Nottinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Suffolk, Thurrock and Warwickshire), representing the cross-sector focus of this work. In Oxfordshire, NHS organisations, local Healthwatch, district councils and other local organisations are also signatories.

2.7 Figure 1 sets out some of the main aspects of a local framework for action around public mental health, highlighting elements required for a local action plan.

Figure 1, Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health, planning overview for local areas



Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health: Prevention planning resource for local areas

Why? The case for action:

1 in 10 children experience a mental health problem

1 in 6 adults have had a common mental health problem in the last week


1 in 5 adults has considered taking their life at one point

9 in 10 people with mental health problems experience stigma and discrimination


Good mental health is a vital asset for **dealing with** the different **stresses** (physical and mental) and problems in life

Good mental health is associated with better **physical health, increased productivity** in education and at work and **better relationships** at home and in our community


What good looks like: A five domain framework for local action

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Needs and asset assessment - effective use of data and intelligence

 - analyse quantitative and qualitative data
 - analyse and understand key risk and protective factors
 - engage with the community to map useful and available assets
 - agree the priority areas
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Partnership and alignment

 - form a local multi-agency mental health prevention group
 - establish opportunities to bring mental health professionals from wider networks together
 - involve members of the community with lived experiences in the planning
 - pool resources together and share benefits
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Translating need into deliverable commitments

 - modify existing plans to include mental health
 - determine the approach that best meets local need
 - provide varying approaches in the action plan
 - ensure a community centred approach to delivery
 - reinforce actions with existing and new Partnership plans
 - use the human rights-based approach
 - regularly invite feedback
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Defining success outcomes

 - map out who the interventions work with and why, as well as recognising inputs and outputs
 - identify 5-10 measures from already available data sources which most closely resemble what success looks like
 - develop a measurement, evaluation and improvement strategy to:
 - a) identify the impact
 - b) highlight areas for development
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Leadership and accountability

 - delegate a leader
 - work is linked and aligned to other strategic priorities
 - develop a clear accountability structure

Consider **How** to support mental health across:

Whole population approaches

- strengthening individuals eg mental health literacy
- strengthening communities and healthy places eg housing, social networks
- addressing wider determinants eg mentally healthy policy

Life course approaches

- family, children and young people
- working age
- older people

Targeted prevention approaches

- groups facing higher risk eg criminal justice
- individuals with signs and symptoms eg suicidal behaviour
- people with mental health problems eg recovery

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3. Conclusions and Next Steps

3.1 In light of the mental health challenges highlighted in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Report, and the prioritisation of mental health in the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, adopting the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health in Devon should provide a local focus to local partnership work on preventive approaches to mental health. Following the precedent set by others, sign-up by the Health and Wellbeing Board could be useful in encouraging a cross-sector approach.

3.2 It is recommended that the Health and Wellbeing Board support work to develop an action plan through their constituent organisations, and sign-up to the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health.

4. Risk Management Considerations

Not applicable.

5. Options/Alternatives

Not applicable.

6. Public Health Impact

Poor mental health is a major public health issue, and work to develop a more preventive approach and promote good mental health should have a positive impact.

Dr Virginia Pearson

**CHIEF OFFICER FOR COMMUNITIES, PUBLIC HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT AND PROSPERITY
DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL**

Electoral Divisions: All

Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health Services: Councillor A Leadbetter and Cabinet Member for Community, Public Health, Transportation and Environmental Services: Councillor R Croad

Contact for enquiries: Simon Chant, Room 148, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter. EX2 4QD
Tel No: (01392) 386371

Background Papers: Nil