
Redbridge Concern for Mental Health consultation response

Draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2012-2015

“Mental illness is the largest single source of burden of disease in the UK. No other health condition matches mental illness in the combined extent of prevalence, persistence and breadth of impact. Mental illness is consistently associated with deprivation, low income, unemployment, poor education, poorer physical health and increased health-risk behaviour.”

Centre for Mental Health (2010) The Economic and Social Costs of Mental Health Problems

10th October 2012



Redbridge Concern for Mental Health

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Introduction

Redbridge Concern for Mental Health welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy, 2012-2015. We fully endorse the decision to base the strategy on the 'Marmot principles' and to tackle the health inequalities in Redbridge and to improve the health and well-being of the residents. **However, we are concerned that two of the Marmot priorities are missing from the strategy** and we are unclear as to the evidence base for doing so.

Sir Michael Marmot's report on the root causes of inequality in health rightly calls for concerted action to break the link between ill health, poverty and social exclusion. We are encouraged, therefore, by the fact that the strategy clearly lays out that it is the responsibility of a wide range of stakeholders including the NHS, Redbridge Council, employers, police, schools, and the third sector to achieve sustained improvements in the health and well-being of all Redbridge residents.

Redbridge residents in order to enjoy good mental and physical health and the opportunity to lead flourishing and meaningful lives require: "decent housing, nice neighbours, good friends, not feeling isolated, enough money, places to go, being able to do things and people to turn to in times of trouble."¹

In the current economic climate as public services are cut – we strongly believe - that fairness matters more than ever. It is incumbent on the Redbridge Shadow Health and Well Being Board to ensure that we improve the quality of life for everyone who lives and works in Redbridge, making it a fairer place.

We trust that the Shadow Health and Well Being Board will ensure that services and support for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of our community are maintained, developed and improved to ensure that they have the same opportunities and choices as other citizens.

Study after study clearly demonstrates that it is not possible to improve the community's general health or respond effectively to the challenge of long term conditions without tackling mental health issues. Councils have a vital role in tackling the contributory factors to poor mental health such as poverty, isolation and stigma and in improving treatment through early intervention and peer support.

Mental ill health is widespread, increasing, very painful, disabling, and life threatening. Mental suffering is as insidious, widespread and growing as obesity only less visible. Young people are particularly vulnerable²

¹ Health Education Agency

² Avner Offer, The Challenge of Affluence Self-Control and Well-Being in the United States and Britain since 1950:

Mental Illness in Redbridge

“The cost of failing to deal with mental ill health vastly outweighs what we currently spend on mental health care. The NHS alone spends some £8bn extra treating long-term physical conditions among people with co-occurring mental health problems and another £3bn on treating people with ‘medically unexplained symptoms’, many of whom may have an underlying psychological need. Mental ill health among the NHS workforce costs the service another £1bn.”

Prevalence

- ✓ At least one third of all families (including parents and their children) include someone who is currently mentally ill.³
- ✓ If we focus on individual adults, the figure is 17%, and for children it is 10%
- ✓ This compares with over a third of adults suffering from long-term physical conditions such as cardiovascular disease (including blood pressure), respiratory disease, musculoskeletal problems or diabetes⁴.

Morbidity

- ✓ **“Mental illness accounts for nearly 40% of morbidity, compared with for example 2% due to diabetes.**

Working Age Mental Illness

- ✓ Taking together all ages up to 65, **mental illness accounts for nearly as much morbidity as all physical illnesses put together** It is by far the most important illness for people of working age.⁵

Childhood

- ✓ Some 50% of mentally ill adults were mentally ill before the age of 15. And 30% of all crime (costing society some £20 billion a year) is committed by people who had a clinically diagnosable conduct disorder in childhood or adolescence.
- ✓ In terms of cost to the government a child with conduct disorder at 10 subsequently costs the government roughly £100,000 more than other children. And none of these estimates includes the devastating cost of mental illness to the families affected.⁶

³ HOW MENTAL ILLNESS LOSES OUT IN THE NHS a report by The Centre for Economic Performance’s Mental Health Policy Group

⁴ Ibid

⁵ ibid

⁶ ibid

Recommendation 1- Mental health has 'parity of esteem' with physical health within the health and care system

- ✓ **A clear statement in the Health and Well Being strategy reflecting the fact** that The Health and Social Care Act, 2012 places an explicit duty on the Secretary of State to promote parity of esteem between mental and physical health services.
- ✓ **Appoint a mental health sub-committee, or a board member to be a 'mental health champion'**. This will help ensure mental health receives priority equality to that of physical health, across the Board's work.
- ✓ Ensure local mental health needs are properly assessed and a comprehensive analysis of mental health provision, prevalence and incidence benchmarked nationally.
- ✓ **Ensure those needs assessed above are given equal with physical health needs**
- ✓ The Shadow Health and Well Being Board to develop clear plans for public mental health, to ensure they integrate mental health and wellbeing into all aspects of their work, and to provide local leadership in supporting better mental health for all. To ensure local policy integrates mental health from the start, and takes into account how physical and mental health are interconnected.
- ✓ All organisations – across the public, private and third sector recognise the value of promoting good mental health and that the Shadow Health and Well Being Board has appropriate policies and procedures in place with police, probation and so on. This approach support the Government's approach to tackling multiple disadvantage outlined in **Social Justice: Transforming Lives, 2012**⁷
- ✓ The Board to ensure the development and implementation of an action plan to tackle stigma and improve attitudes to mental health across the whole of Redbridge – including local services, businesses, schools, faith groups and communities
- ✓ Mental health and wellbeing is made integral to the work of CCGs
- ✓ Better information to be collected and used to measure inequalities in mental health and the life chances of people with mental health problems

⁷ **Social Justice: Transforming Lives**

Recommendation 2 – The Shadow Health and Well Being Board take on IAPT as one of its high priority projects

- ✓ A report from the London School of Economics (LSE) published says the NHS in England is failing millions of adults and hundreds of thousands of children with common mental health problems such as anxiety and depression.
- ✓ It claims that only a fraction of people suffering from mental illness have access to treatments, primarily psychological therapies, which would improve their lives and save the taxpayer billions of pounds every year.
- ✓ Waiting times for therapies remain long in many parts of Redbridge
- ✓ Evidence in Redbridge suggests that there are too many people who could benefit from a talking therapy for the current provision to cope.
- ✓ New evidence suggests that the impact of the economic recession over the past four years has been to significantly increase levels of anxiety and depression in the population, adding to pressures on services
- ✓ **Recommendation: A comprehensive analysis of available treatments, waiting times and demand for talking therapies across Redbridge provided on an annual basis to the Shadow Health and Well Being Board**
- ✓ **We need to increase the number of people accessing support for depression and anxiety, particularly with levels of unemployment rising and increasing financial hardship which has and will increase mental ill-health in the borough**

Recommendation 3 – Mental health and Recession

"People with mental health problems are too often denied the same chances as everyone else in education and employment. Having a severe mental illness can cut your life expectancy by some 10 years. And people from disadvantaged families and communities face a disproportionate risk of having mental health problems. This is as big a public health issue as smoking or obesity"⁸

Dr Bob Gove, Centre for Mental Health

The Shadow Health and Well Being Board to assess the impact of the recession on the health and well-being of Redbridge residents.

For example:

- The economic downturn is causing a rise in unemployment, a fall in income for many households, which in turn may cause housing problems for those who experience lower incomes.
- There is a shortage of affordable homes in London. The number of homeless people and those living in overcrowded homes has risen.
- Unemployment, low incomes and poor housing contribute to worse health
- These problems are more likely to occur among particular groups within the population and among those already on low incomes.
- A lack of affordable childcare is a serious barrier to parents returning to work

What we need to do

- ✓ Tackling overcrowding needs to be a top priority in Redbridge
- ✓ **Increasing the supply of decent, affordable homes is essential**
- ✓ Employment for Redbridge's residents is the best way to tackle poverty in the borough
- ✓ No one in Redbridge should do a hard day's work for less they can live on. Employers in Redbridge should pay all their directly employed staff as a minimum the London Living Wage. Employers should also review their procurement, contract and best value policies to ensure that as far as possible within UK and EU law, the London Living Wage is the minimum paid to all their contracted staff as well
- ✓ Employers in Redbridge should do more to support young people who are at risk of falling into a cycle of poverty.
- ✓ Programmes to tackle debt
- ✓ Maximise uptake of benefits

Recommendation 4 – To include the 2 missing Marmot priorities

From the Marmot Review of Health Inequalities there are six high level policy objectives for improving health and reducing inequalities. The evidence base is very clear and we are puzzled as to why these have been omitted

Recommendation to include the 2 missing Marmot priorities

- **Ensure a healthy standard of living for all**

- **Ensure people receive the care and support they need across the life course**

Note about Consultation Process

It is important for the Board to remember that consultations are accessible and inclusive to all Redbridge residents in accordance with good consultation practice. In particular that the standard and quality of the consultation has to be the same.

For instance, the fact that the Easy Read version was made available late September has undermined the standard and quality of the consultation.

We have also had feedback that parts of the Easy Read strategy is of poor quality and not accessible.

“I work with adults with a learning disability. I would like to express my disappointment that the easy read version was only made available last week.[end of September] My understanding is the consultation has been going on since the 12th July. Really does not give people an awful lot of time to express their views.”

“I also have concerns about how easy read the report is. If I gave it to my service users parts of it would not be clear.”

Community Organisation, Health and Well Being Workshop 27
September

About Redbridge Concern for Mental Health

Redbridge Concern for Mental Health - established over 15 years ago – is a service user led organisation based in the London Borough of Redbridge dedicated to promoting, improving and protecting the mental health and emotional well being of the wider community.

We offer high quality services to local residents seeking mental health support. We also provide information and signposting as well as challenging the stigma and discrimination that people experience in their everyday lives.

Our Aims

- To develop high quality, culturally appropriate, accessible services for people recovering from and experiencing mental health problems.
- Work in partnership to influence mental health policy and to promote best practice in all aspects of service planning and delivery.
- Develop new ways of promoting service user involvement and helping service users to improve their lives.
- To improve people's health, care and well-being by promoting positive mental health.
- To challenge the stigma and discrimination that people experiencing and recovering from mental health problems encounter in their everyday life.

Voice – Nothing about us without us A key role of RUN-UP is to influence the design, delivery and management of local mental health services. In particular: to contribute experience and expertise to policy development as a „critical friend“ as well as to promote and monitor the effectiveness of user involvement in the planning, commissioning, managing and monitoring of services to ensure service users have a full say in policies and practices which affect their lives. Articulating views and experiences of our members by attending meetings, seminars, workshops and debating issues

Campaigning for full inclusion in society We all want to live in communities where we can participate fully and equally. Many indicators show us that for people with mental health conditions this hasn't yet happened and there remains considerable work to be done to get to this point. People with mental illness commonly describe the stigma and discrimination they face as being worse than their main condition. Discrimination, stigma and prejudice can pervade every part of their daily life - their personal life, working life, sense of citizenship, their ability to maintain even a basic standard of living