

## REPORT TO COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 8<sup>th</sup> September 2022

### WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE THE MENTAL HEALTH OF OUR COMMUNITIES

#### 1 Executive Summary/Recommendations

- 1.1 This thematic report was requested by the Committee on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2022 to provide a concise update on current partnership working.

The report aims to reflect how Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP), Aberdeenshire Council and other key partners are working together for the benefit of people in our communities to support and improve mental health and wellbeing.

The report outlines services and supports that are available in addition to the statutory services comprising Aberdeenshire Community Mental Health Team's and MHO service. The report also highlights some of the plans for the development of future services.

The effect of the Covid pandemic continues to impact on service delivery and on local communities and individuals. Referrals to services and required response and treatment activity has remained high for a considerable period and it is a testament to the resilience of local teams and practitioners that service delivery has been sustained during the Covid affected period.

Many of the projects referred to within the report have been developed as a direct result of the Aberdeenshire Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019 to 2024, which was approved by the Integration Joint Board. The strategy can be accessed at [Adult Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2019 - 24 \(aberdeenshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/adult-mental-health-wellbeing-strategy-2019-24)

#### 1.2 The Committee is recommended to:

- 1.2.1 Acknowledge the work being undertaken by all partners and receive the update.

#### 2 Decision Making Route

- 2.1 The Committee is not being asked to take a decision, rather the Committee requested this information update, and this is the purpose of this report. As part of active engagement any comments made by Committee members will be gratefully received and actively considered going forward.

#### 3 Discussion

- 3.1 Working together to support the mental health of our communities can be a complex and demanding assignment.

3.2 The Committee is asked to recognise the following initiatives and acknowledge the service improvements:

- **The Mental Health Improvement and Wellbeing Service**, this team was directly funded from Action 15 monies and provides members of the public quicker access to mental health and wellbeing services. This service is available to every GP Practice within Aberdeenshire. This team are available to all GP Services, taking referrals since the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 and have received 181 referrals since then till the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2022. It is planned in time the service will be open to self-referrals. The aim of the service is to ensure that the public have quicker access to mental health and wellbeing services, with fewer barriers and criteria to overcome. The ethos of the service is to empower clients to take control of their mental and physical health by connecting them to community resources and services for practical and emotional support, whilst providing this via direct service support in the shorter term. It is anticipated by proactively helping patients presenting with a wide range of non-medical issues early, a key outcome will be swifter recovery and the alleviation of pressures being experienced by GPs who have been spending time trying to manage these social and life issues, which is not their primary remit. The Team serves as a source of information and support covering a wide range of topics and areas. This can be direct practical support, advice, and information or even a warm handover to existing community projects and services.

Topics include:

- Financial advice, budgeting support and information.
- Housing support advice and information.
- Managing and understanding mental and physical health and wellbeing.
- Access to community services, groups, and activities.
- Signposting for education, volunteering, and employment opportunities.
- Social and community integration and lifestyle choices.
- Exploring existing networks and supports to maximise outcomes.
- Developing and managing positive habits and routines.
- Holistically supporting and facilitating positive life changes.

Link workers also refer clients to other agencies if their client's needs are beyond the scope of the link worker role.

- **The North Crisis Intervention Team** which collaborates closely with Police Scotland and other emergency services including Scottish Ambulance Service, Custody Centres, and the Aberdeenshire Minor Injury Service, providing urgent and rapid intervention and stabilisation to those people coming to the attention of Police Scotland. The Team was created to respond to the needs of adults residing in North Aberdeenshire who are experiencing crisis out of hours. The Team have been trained in Assessment, Risk Assessment, and Intervention, in Crisis Situations through the Association for Psychological Therapies. Their assessments and interventions focus on engagement, rapport building, mood matching and validation – informed by 'Davie's structured interview.' Alongside those experiencing Crisis, practitioners devise

support plans to work towards crisis resolution and act to minimise the risk of future need by building upon strengths, personal resilience, existing skills and increasing service user abilities to cope with ongoing or future challenges/adversity.

- **Primary Care Psychological Service** the Aberdeenshire Primary Care Psychological Therapies Service offers Psychological Interventions and Therapy for individuals experiencing mild to moderate common mental health problems across Aberdeenshire. The services accept referrals from GPs including Depression, Anxiety, Panic Disorder, Social Anxiety, Health Anxiety, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and deliver evidence-based interventions and therapy adhering to both the Matrix and Nice guidelines.

The service comprises Clinical and Counselling Psychologists, Psychological Therapists and Wellbeing Workers as well as trainees.

Wellbeing Workers deliver low intensity, evidence-based CBT interventions as a first-tier intervention for individuals referred with mild to moderate mental health presentations on a one to one basis following a guided self-help approach or group-based intervention.

Psychological Therapists deliver high intensity, evidence-based Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), to people with a wide range of mild to moderate mental health difficulties on a one to one basis at Tier 2 offering up to 12 sessions.

Clinical Psychologists, deliver up to 20 sessions of evidence-based one to one therapy drawing from several psychological approaches one of the most important being CBT. This level, Tier 3, includes the more severe, complex, or entrenched presentations of common mental health disorders and many cases are complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Referrals to Tier 3 can come straight from GPs or are stepped up internally by professionals through the other tiers.

Currently the service is offering a mixture of face to face and VC appointments using Attend Anywhere and telephone appointments.

- **Allied Health Professionals** involved in a test of change programme with Occupational Therapists working in Primary Care, Substance Misuse and Criminal Justice. These three posts are new and will be evaluated. They are providing targeted support with a specific remit of supporting the rehabilitation of people. The Occupational Therapists work by exploring 'beyond diagnoses and limitations' and focussing on 'hopes and aspirations.' They explore the relationship between everyday activities alongside the challenges of the environment. By producing a practical plan of goals and adjustments targeted at achieving a specific set of activities treatment options are enhanced. This support can give people a renewed sense of purpose and a mental well-being boost.

- **Penumbra ‘Well Aberdeenshire’**, this relatively new commissioned service has been available since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022. Replacing the previous SAMH project, Penumbra have been working closely with all stakeholders and offer one to one support and group activities across Aberdeenshire. This service is tailored to supporting the wellbeing, stabilisation, and resilience of individuals across the area. Well Aberdeenshire is based on a short-term intervention model designed to improve wellbeing, build resilience and empowerment all linked to local support networks and existing community services. Many of the team members are peer colleagues who have lived experience of living with mental ill health challenges meaning they often have a greater understanding of what people in service are experiencing.

The service is designed to offer up to 3 support sessions to explore a person’s current situation and formulate a plan for their goals. Penumbra’s friendly group workshops are reported as a great place to share practical techniques and tips with others to manage personal mental health. The peer volunteer network can connect people with others locally who are prepared to share their own lived experience, and who can directly support people to join in with local community activities and interests

All support is free and easy to access for people aged between 16-65 and who live in Aberdeenshire and can be accessed by contacting Penumbra directly.

- **Primary Care Mental Health Hubs**, planned to be offered in Central Aberdeenshire in Year 1 of the initiative, they will create a one stop shop and utilise a no wrong door ethos. The Hub will comprise a mixture of statutory service practitioners and include third sector partners. The Hub will be focussed on building mental health support from a primary care perspective. At this stage it is Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership's proposal to create a new Primary Care Mental Health and Wellbeing team and Mental Health Triage Hubs within Primary Care, with an initial investment in the Central area in year 1. The Hub will include colleagues from Substance Misuse as this will meet cross themes relating to the Government Standards for drug and alcohol services (known as the Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) standards). It is envisaged that the Penumbra initiative will be more closely aligned also. All referrals will be triaged at a daily meeting Monday to Friday where several services of those attached to the hub will attend covering every aspect of mental well-being and mental illness. Accessing shared information to allow patient care to be stepped up and stepped down to the different services attached to the hub, will be based on the patient’s presentation and recovery. This will generate as seamless a service as is possible to prevent multiply storytelling and to continue the best care for the patient. As there are multiple services at different tiers attached to the hub no person seeking support will be rejected. It is anticipated that this model would enhance and support improved working relationships between Primary Care and Secondary

Care practitioners and help demystify the often complex mental health access to services pathway.

- The HSCP is also working closely with **Housing** colleagues to support individuals experiencing mental health problems to manage their tenancies. The Housing Service is seeing a rise in mental health issues with their customers, which are being taken out on staff or being displayed through quite concerning behaviours. Develop a training plan and provide support with training. A plan has been devised to:
  - Increase Partnership working - Housing staff referring to Mental Health service for further assessment and support. Identifying pathways for Housing Officers to strengthen links with the Mental Health teams.
  - Housing to consider having a Mental Health Practitioner or team within the Housing Department.
  - Awareness raising to be increased re resources already available to Housing Officers.
  - Explore how Housing Officers can be part of the Primary Care Hubs.

The above is not an exclusive list and there is a plethora of other work going on across Aberdeenshire with a strong mental health and mental wellbeing focus.

- **Days of Action**

As part of the collaborative approach towards reducing drug-related harm in the north-east of Scotland and improving mental health and well-being, Community Safety partners from Aberdeenshire Council, Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership and Police Scotland were involved in targeted activities in the Fraserburgh and Banff areas last month.

The 'Safer in Service' Days of Action saw staff from a combination of Community Safety, Criminal Justice Social Work, Substance Misuse, Housing, Children and Families and the Police carrying out engagement and enforcement during the multi-agency approach to tackling the issues associated with drug-related harm in our communities.

Focusing on providing support to those most vulnerable within our communities, more than 180 outreach visits were made to individuals who were offered the support of services designed to keep them safer and reduce the risk of drug-related overdoses and deaths.

There were around 100 positive interactions with members of the public and service users at the Partnership Health Bus with information being issued to support them making or influencing positive life changes.

Complementing the outreach work and to disrupt those involved in exploiting the vulnerable, six drug search warrants were executed, and two arrests made for drugs found. Three people were also seen by Social Work/Health while detained and three Anti-Social Behaviour Order warnings were issued linked to drug-dealing related community harm and drug-dealing related anti-social behaviour.

The 'Safer in Service' Days of Action are based on a 4-tier approach:

- **Outreach**  
*Cross agency teams carry out doorstep visits to people believed to be at risk of drug-related harm. Social Work, Health and Police colleagues offers support and bring people 'into service'.*
  - **Drop-in**  
*A partnership 'Health Bus' is stationed prominently in the town centre. Health and Social Work staff in the bus engage with people dropping in and get them 'into service.'*
  - **Community Harm Reduction**  
*Community Safety Officers from Aberdeenshire Council proactively investigate and gather evidence of drug dealing related antisocial behaviour. This evidence is used for civil proceedings such as Antisocial Behaviour Orders.*
  - **Enforcement**  
*Criminal Justice enforcement against drug-dealing activity through Drug Search Warrants. Police execute the warrants and are supported by Health and Social Work colleagues who engage with individuals once searches are complete.*
- **Adult Support and Protection** Teams receive referrals relating to individuals with underlying mental health issues. Using Initial Referral Discussions (IRD) these individuals are supported to access Community Mental Health Team staff or signposted to the most appropriate services to meet their needs. The protection of vulnerable people at risk due to mental health challenges is a core service priority.
  - **Distress Brief Intervention (DBI)** offered by Penumbra to those people taken into custody at Kittybrewster Custody Centre who are Aberdeenshire residents. At this time, the service covers South and Central Aberdeenshire residents with those living in North being referred to the North Crisis Intervention Team.

The funding for the services above comes from a variety of sources, Committee Members may be interested in those services/initiatives that have specifically been enabled as part of the post Covid £3m funding directly provided by the Council.

- **Community Chaplaincy**

This is a service provided by NHS Grampian Healthcare Chaplaincy Department. The Community Chaplaincy Listeners are experienced and trained in 'active listening'. The service is open to patients, carers, and members of staff, it offers a space to talk. The service is confidential and non-judgemental. It aims to help people reflect on their situations, explore positive change, and build coping strategies.

- **Together all**

An evidence based, clinically moderated, 24/7 online peer to peer mental health community freely available to anyone aged 16+ living in Aberdeenshire. Members join the community anonymously for support with a wide range of mental health and wellbeing issues, from anxiety, depression, and isolation to relationship issues and lifestyle challenges.

Website: [togetherall.com](http://togetherall.com)

- **Suicide Prevention**

This commissioned initiative is designed to increase capacity for suicide prevention activity by raising awareness, organising training, and undertaking publicity campaigns (incorporating 'know who to turn to') and enhancing a suicide prevention social media presence. SAMH and Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership will work in partnership with NHS Grampian, Police Scotland, and the Third Sector. Awareness raising will specifically target people aged 16+ for people living or working across Aberdeenshire so that they can have an improved understanding of and ability to access to suicide prevention resources, information, and training. The Publicity Campaign will aim to reduce stigma and encourage conversations about suicide prevention. There is to be continuing promotion of the North East Scotland 'Prevent Suicide' App and signposting to further support. The output agreed will be:

- A Directory of Champions: A virtual and real project publication

- **Live Life Physical Activity Pathway**

A joint initiative between Public Health and Live Life Aberdeenshire designed to utilise physical activity to specifically support mental health recovery.

- **Care Home Mental Health initiative**

Additional support to promote mental well-being within care homes with a specific focus on dementia.

- **Mental Health First Aid**

Designed to help boost resilience by increasing access to the 'Mental Health First Aid' programme in conjunction with opportunities for increased peer support. Incorporating the 'decider skills' training.

- **Reshaping Care**

Challenging some of the social causes of mental ill health and affected mental well-being by working with Housing and Service Property and accommodation providers to model homely sustainable environments that maximise independence and support the delivery of care. The benefits of a healthy living environment being evidenced based for the sustained improvement of mental well-being.

- **2022-2023**

In 2022/23 additional activity is planned: linked to communication enhancement and media messaging, getting the positivity of the message is regarded as crucial is helping build stronger resilience and improving mental well-being. Horseback UK will become an available resource and Penumbra's Distress Brief Intervention initiative will enter phase 2.

As evidenced from the projects and initiatives listed here there is a lot of activity designed to tackle mental illness, build resilience and improve mental well-being and more details can be obtained by contacting the author of the report directly [Vicky Henderson Service Manager Mental Health and Learning Disabilities \(Central\)](#).

#### **4 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk**

##### *4.1 Specify which of the Council's Priorities are relevant to the report.*

<b>Pillar</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Our People	Education Health & Wellbeing

This report highlights work already being delivered and planned in the future under The Pillar – Our People.

This report is underpinned by the Mental Health Strategy and offers an update on what is being delivered on the strategy.

An Equality Impact Assessment was completed as part of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy (01/05/2019).

#### **5 Scheme of Governance**

##### **5.1** The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services and Chief Officer HSCP have been consulted in the preparation of this report and they have no comments to make and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.



5.2 The Committee can consider this item in terms of Section D 1.1 as it pertains to social work matters delegated to the IJB.

**Jeff Shaw – Interim Partnership Manager (North), Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership**

Report prepared by Vicky Henderson, Mental Health and Learning Disability Service Manager (Central) 15<sup>th</sup> August 2022