

Overview report on student health services

Summary

1. Scrutiny committee work plan requested that an update report on student health services be provided. This report will:
 - Provide a progress update on achievement against the 2017 student health needs assessment findings led by Higher York through the Student Health Network
 - Review and consider ongoing leadership and support arrangements of the Student Health Network

Background

2. Following a cluster of suicides among our local further education student population in 2016/17, a gap in our local understanding of the health needs was identified. In response to this gap, the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) group was tasked to conduct a needs assessment into student health (Annex 1).
3. As a more direct response to the cluster of suicides, and in parallel to the needs assessment, a local Student Mental Health Forum network group was established to support our multi-agency response to this suicide cluster. This was made up of colleagues from the institutions and services affected by and responding to the cluster.
4. As this network developed and the work of the needs assessment began to take shape, the network was identified as a forum which, due to its wide ranging membership and focus on student health, seemed naturally placed to take a lead on responding to the findings of the student health needs assessment.
5. A proposal that Higher York take on the leadership and coordination for this group was agreed and the Network agreed its terms of reference in June 2017 (Annex 2). These broadened the scope of the network to

become a Student Health Network looking at both mental and physical health needs within the student population and defined that the Network would report into the Health & Wellbeing Board.

6. The Higher York Board will consider and review its ongoing leadership of the network at its forthcoming Board meeting of January 31st.

Action Plan

7. An action plan (Annex 3) was developed by the Network as a response to the findings from the student health needs assessment. This determined that the measurement of outcomes would be determined by individual organisations and focussed on the key themes identified within the needs assessment of:
 - Mental Health
 - Communication
 - Accessing Services
 - Integrated approach to wellbeing
 - Local leadership and partnership working

Consultation

8. Members of the Network contributed to the Health & Wellbeing Board Update that this report draws on around progress updates.
9. Members of the Network were asked to give their views about the purpose, function and future of the Network:
 - 21 responses were received, 20 of whom were current members, 20 wanted to stay members of the network
 - Network described useful for networking, as a forum, a place to share information, best practice, and to bring professionals together to help improve student health
 - Core objectives were seen as needing to develop collaboration, share information and practice, provide a multi-agency response, highlight issues, and improve health
 - 12 respondents want the network to continue, 1 did not in its current format, the other 8 did not respond to this question

Analysis

10. The Student Health Network was facilitated and supported by Higher York. Quarterly updates about the work of the Network were provided to the Higher York Board by the Chair of the Network.
11. The Network agreed Terms of Reference dated June 2017 with an annual review date scheduled. There is no record of the terms of reference being reviewed due to the role that chaired the group on behalf of Higher York no longer being resourced.
12. There were no apparent contingencies or continuity plans made and it appears that the last meeting of this group was held in July 2018. The Higher York Board will consider and review its ongoing leadership of the network at its forthcoming Board meeting of January 31st.

Progress of the Network

13. The Student Health Network provided an update report to the Health & Wellbeing Board on 11th July 2018 which identified that the Network has:
 - Been led and facilitated by Higher York
 - Provided a space for key stakeholders to focus on service provision from a multi-agency perspective
 - Enabled student support services to have a voice in a city-wide multi-agency setting
 - Developed an action plan to effectively support the needs of students across the city
 - Provided a forum to raise, share, understand, and respond to existing and newly identified needs around students
 - Allowed for open discussion and sharing of research between student service teams, health providers, student unions and the voluntary sector
14. This update report identified specific progress against action plan objectives which included:
 - Investment into Student Support Services (SSS) to create hubs which enable tiered access points into support; creation of liaison roles to work between SSS and health and mental health care providers; reviews of referral routes to reduce waiting times; investment in staff training both within student services and the wider staff body

- Implementation of more accurate attendance registers which can be used to identify those students who may require additional support to achieve their academic learning objectives
 - Collaborative work between Samaritans, City of York Council and Higher York institutions to support the suicide prevention agenda
 - Successful bids for funding projects such as 'All About Respect' to reduce sexual violence and domestic abuse
 - Take up of suicide prevention training and shared training provision
 - Involvement with CAMHS and through schools outreach work to support transition into university and colleges
15. In developing the action plan, Network members decided to identify outcome measures as relevant to each individual institution so there is a lack of clear, comparable outcome measures that are easily accessible.
16. There is perhaps a need to review, strengthen and coordinate / share standard outcome measures (where appropriate).
17. The Network reported contribution to achievement of good outcomes against the themes of: Mental Health; Communication; Accessing Services; Integrated Approach to Wellbeing; Local Leadership and Partnership Working.

Future work required

18. The Network agreed to run another student health needs assessment review during the 2019 / 2020 academic year. The structure and resources to complete this are yet to be defined by the Network.
19. The Network identified its approach to review the current action plan for gaps when compared to the SHNA, individual institution priorities, or Higher York priorities, and agree actions to contribute to the achievement of work. This might include work on:
- Student preparedness for transition out of university
 - Provision of holistic approaches to wellness at organisational levels which might include: employee wellbeing; healthy places to work; and draw on work from sources like Universities UK and their work on the role of the academic
 - Better support arrangements that ensure inequalities within the entire student cohort are reduced e.g. postgraduate, PhD, international student cohorts

- The Network will continue its work to raise the 'Profile' of student health and wellbeing by having a voice into and engaging with existing partnerships such as Mental Health Partnership; Early Intervention Sub-Group.
- Joining these approaches together by supporting each institution to access existing programmes such as the People Helping People Strategy
- The Network will consider how York's experience can influence the development of a national best practice charter for mental wellbeing recently proposed by the Universities Minister and how any such charter could be applied by partners

Multi-agency approach

20. The issue of student health requires a multi-agency approach that considers both physical and mental health concerns relating to students. Higher York leadership of this Network felt particularly appropriate to supporting a collaborative approach to student health.
21. The Higher York Board will consider their future role in leading this network at their Board meeting of 31st January 2019.
22. Following the outcome from this board meeting, if there is a need to find alternate leadership for this network, Public Health from City of York Council propose to offer leadership to this group for an initial year long period to give the Network an opportunity to:
 - Review its Terms of Reference and re-frame its priorities
 - To more clearly define how it will monitor progress against the action plan
 - To identify resource and a plan to support a renewed student health needs assessment in the 2019/20 academic year

Options

23. There are no specific options to choose between.

Council Plan

24. The focus on student health relates to the Council Plan priorities of:

- A Prosperous City for All by supporting students to reach their full potential
- A Focus On Frontline Services by providing support services to those who need them
- A Council That Listens To Its Residents by continuing to engage student bodies and organisations into work programmes to support and improve student health

Implications

Financial

25. There are no direct financial implications noted within this report

Human Resources (HR)

26. There are no known Human Resources implications within this report

Equalities

27. There are no known Equalities implications within this report

Legal

28. There are no known Legal implications within this report

Crime and Disorder

29. There are no known Crime and Disorder implications within this report

Information Technology (IT)

30. There are no known Information Technology implications within this report

Property

31. There are no known Property implications within this report

Other

32. There are no known other implications within this report

Risk Management

33. There are no known risk implications within this report.

Recommendations

34. Members are asked to note the content of this report and the contingency proposal to bring leadership of this network under the remit of Public Health pending the outcome of the Higher Board meeting on 31st January

Reason: Higher York leadership of the network provides ability for a co-ordinated response to student health issues within York. The option of a contingency plan provides assurance that the network will continue

Contact Details

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Report Approved

Date *Insert Date*

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

Annexes

Annex 1: Student Health Needs Assessment

Annex 2: Student Health Network Terms of Reference

Annex 3: Student Health Network Action Plan

CAMHS – Child and Adolescent mental Health Services

Human Resources

IT - Information Technology

JSNA - Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

PhD - Doctor of Philosophy

SHNA - Student Health Needs Assessment

SSS - Student Support Services