

Health and Wellbeing Board

9 March 2016

Report from the Associate Director of Higher York

Feedback from *Everybody's Business* (a Conference held on 25 November 2015)

Summary

1. This paper briefly outlines the main conclusions from a Conference held on 25 November 2015 at the National Science Learning Centre entitled "Everybody's Business". The Conference, which explored mental health issues for young people aged 0-25, was jointly commissioned by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Executive and the Higher York Board. Councillor Runciman attended the event.
2. The report is offered for information and discussion.

Background

3. The Conference came about because the Higher York Board was concerned at the apparently rising incidence of student mental health problems. This chimed with evidence being considered York's CAMHS Executive about growing problems in schools and other settings. The Conference therefore aimed to:
 - develop a shared understanding of the scale of the issues;
 - understand the provision that is available to help, and to identify any gaps;
 - explore and share best practice, particularly around transitions.
4. The Conference was designed to bring together practitioners working with young people of all ages, especially in educational settings.

It was originally designed for 75 delegates but the numbers rapidly swelled to 150 with a waiting list. Delegates included:

- Primary School Teachers
- Secondary School Teachers
- College Staff
- University Student Support Teams
- Academics
- Educational Psychologists
- Other LA Staff
- NHS Commissioners
- NHS Providers
- Representatives from the voluntary sector

5. The Conference was considered a great success, with 100% of those who completed the evaluation expressing interest in a follow-up event. Further details, including the full Evaluation Report and copies of the main presentations, can be found at www.higheryork.org/eb.

Main/Key Issues to be Considered

6. The following themes emerged from the Conference and are offered to the Health and Wellbeing Board for consideration:

Planning and Commissioning

- It is essential that Commissioners take account of the strong evidence of the rising incidence of poor mental health in young people, of all ages;
- York's substantial body of HE students, 10% of the population, needs to be given appropriate attention in local plans and strategies, and in the JSNA, alongside the needs of young people of all ages;
- There is an appetite to work on a multi-agency basis, across sectors (including the third sector) and age ranges, to address the issues of young people's mental health.

Transitions

- This was the theme that came up most frequently at the Conference: we still seem to be poor at transferring information and support across key transition points, especially primary to secondary schools; school to college; Sixth form or College to University; and CAMHS to Adult Services;
- There are particular issues for University students who may arrive from another location and find themselves having to restart the process of getting the care and support they need, often with significant waiting times;
- Do we need to design a mental healthcare plan, designed to follow the young person from one institution to another? Ownership of such a “passport” would need further debate, and this may be a national, rather than a local, issue.

Early Intervention

- It is a truism that issues identified and dealt with at an early stage can save much greater problems – and expenditure of resources – further down the track. This is particularly evident when talking about young people, where those dealing with the older age range may find themselves having to deal with the consequences of inadequate identification and support at a younger age;
- Many problems identified at an early age can be addressed through nothing more complicated than empathy, emotional support and the opportunity to talk openly about issues.

Support for the Workforce

- There is an urgent need to support the academic workforce who may be in most regular contact with young people – including teachers, lecturers and pastoral staff – to identify mental health problems and to respond appropriately;
- For example, staff need to be able to recognise the difference between “normal” anxiety and something potentially much more serious;

- “Mental Health First Aid” was frequently cited as an example of good practice in training non-health professionals;
- Others mentioned Networks of support for staff – similar to the cluster project pilot – giving external support and supervision for staff in stressful situations.

Specific Issues (1): Self-harm and suicide

- Suicide prevention should feature more prominently in the JSNA;
- We need to follow up the initial work commissioned by CAMHS to develop a better understanding of the incidence of self-harm in York, whether certain groups of young people are over-represented, and what can be done to help;
- We can learn from others:
 - A National campaign in Scotland: <http://www.chooselife.net/Home/index.aspx>
 - ASIST training: <https://www.livingworks.net/programs/asist/>
 - A community wide response in Brighton – ‘Suicide Safer Community’ http://prevent-suicide.org.uk/suicide_safer_brighton_and_hove.html

Specific Issues (2): Body image and self-esteem

- Body image is now considered an everyday state of wellbeing and should therefore be recognised as such;
- We should do more to share best practise as to how schools and other institutions in York are addressing issues such as body image and self-esteem;
- Can the ELSA’s programme be expected to continue post review? Current work developing self-esteem workshops with children at school are proving very successful;
- The removal of youth clubs and group activities after school that are cheap / free to access has removed the opportunity for many children to create social networks outside of school, which used to help build self-esteem;

- Can more be done when young people do not ‘meet the criteria’, especially relating to eating disorders – a young person is presently unable to access support until they are at a dangerously low weight;
- Boys and younger men are often neglected from conversations surrounding body image and wellbeing – how can we include this group?

Other specific issues

- Other specific issues raised at the Conference of relevance to young people included:
 - Anxiety and Depression – especially when changing institutions;
 - Autism; and
 - Dyslexia

Communications

- The pathways to support are complicated and hard to understand – how can staff and families understand the pathways better?
- Communication between stakeholders and providers needs to improve;
- Across the conference as a whole there was high demand for similar events and increased communication and information-sharing between services.

Consultation, Options, Analysis, Strategic Plans, Implications and Risks

7. As the report is offered for information, these sections do not apply.

Recommendations

8. These brief notes are offered to the Health and Wellbeing Board for discussion and to assist future commissioning. Higher York stands ready to facilitate further debate with, and between, its partner institutions.

Reason: To inform the Board of the feedback from the Conference.

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Report
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**For a list of abbreviations used in this report please see the
Glossary page before the first report in the agenda.**