

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 7 December 2017

Report of the Head of Health Equity, Welfare & Partnerships

Part I

Electoral Divisions affected:
All

Suicide Prevention in Lancashire

(Appendices 'A' - 'C' refer)

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Executive Summary

This report sets out the County Council's Suicide Prevention Plan and how it contributes towards a 10% reduction in suicides across the Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) footprint.

Recommendation

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- (i) Note the publication of the suicide audit report set out at Appendix 'A'.
- (ii) Endorse the strategy, set out at Appendix 'B', and the work programme to achieve the national target of 10% reduction in suicides across Lancashire and South Cumbria STP by 2020.
- (iii) Approve the County Council's plan to contribute towards the STP suicide prevention plan.

Background and Advice

The need for effective suicide prevention is set out in the Government's National Strategy for England, *'Preventing Suicide in England: a cross-government outcomes strategy to save lives'* and in the Mental Health Taskforce's report to NHS England, *'The five year forward view for mental health'* where suicide prevention is a key recommendation; the Minister for Health also wrote to each Director of Public Health advising of the need for Local Authorities to have a suicide prevention strategy in place.

The Lancashire and South Cumbria STP has established a suicide prevention oversight group within the prevention work stream and developed an action plan. Lancashire County Council (LCC) is a key partner in the STP work.

To date the following key work has been undertaken:

- A suicide audit, as set out in Appendix A, based on deaths between April 2013 – March 2015 was undertaken in early 2017. This data has been used to inform the STP action plan and the draft LCC Suicide Prevention Strategy.
- A suicide prevention strategy which clearly summarises the national guidance from Public Health England and applies local data from the recent suicide audit has been developed, as set out in Appendix B. Consultation on this strategy with key stakeholders is taking place in November – December 2017.
- An Action Plan, as set out in Appendix C, has been devised by the STP Suicide Prevention Oversight Group which will be adopted locally to drive action in support of achieving the national target of 10% reduction in suicides.
- A Suicide Prevention Partnership is currently being established across the LCC footprint to contribute to the delivery of the STP plan.
- Related training is commissioned by LCC across the Lancashire 12 districts including Youth Mental Health First Aid, Safe Talk and Assist. A key element of the STP Action Plan is to look at how Mental Health training can be standardised across the footprint and expanded to support parity of esteem between mental and physical health and to promote mental wellbeing in the population. In 2016-17 over 900 individuals (including 94 NHS staff and 96 LCC staff) covering over 250 organisations (including 71 schools) were trained in either Youth Mental Health First Aid, Safe Talk or Assist. Increasing investment in training is a key aspect of the national suicide prevention guidance.
- Unique support for educational establishments to build resilience and skills to cope with developing mental health issues in young people and take preventative action in the establishment is currently commissioned from Lancaster University. This plan will maximise the impact of this unique service and extend provision to cover the transition between primary and secondary education, enhance the skills of in school practitioners and develop peer to peer support to key stage 3 and 4.
- The STP Action plan (Appendix C) supports the development of a Real Time Surveillance system for suicides. This system is recommended in national guidance and is being developed in other regions. The system would produce initial data on suspected suicides to allow real time understanding, planning and a more proactive response to risks in local communities, followed by more in depth data (broadly in line with the suicide audit data) following a coroner's verdict. A system across the STP will require support for development, implementation and ongoing management and data analysis over and above current workforce capacity. This plan will see LCC contribute towards an STP wide solution.

Consultations

Following an STP wide engagement event in September 2017, minor amendments have been applied and the final document is due to go to the STP oversight group in December 2017.

The Lancashire Suicide Prevention Partnership will oversee further engagement with stakeholders starting from winter 2017-18.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

The combination of the above work streams is intended to have a positive impact on suicide prevention and post suicide support across Lancashire.

Financial

Costs for the County Council are estimated to be approximately £158,000 per annum, as a contribution towards the STP plan. This will be met through the existing public health and wellbeing budget.

Risk management

The key risks of not following the recommendation is that Lancashire would continue to be an outlying area for suicide.

There is a risk that focussed work on suicide prevention may increase numbers detected through better surveillance and data collection.

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
None		
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		
N/A		