

**Wiltshire Council**

**Health and Wellbeing Board**

**26 January 2023**

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**Subject: Public health workforce campaign**

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### **Executive Summary**

In November 2021 the chairs of the Health and Wellbeing Board requested options to inspire the organisations sitting on the board to implement a workforce wellbeing campaign. With a workforce of c45,000 the prospect of influencing the health and wellbeing agenda on such a scale presents a unique and exciting opportunity. Good health and wellbeing are essential to successful, sustainable workplaces.

With an initial focus on mental health, organisations were asked at the December 2021 Health and Wellbeing Board to make a commitment to enable a healthy workforce through improved wellbeing and resilience. This report provides an update on progress.

### **Original Proposal**

It was recommended to the Board that:

- I. Each organisation agrees to collectively enable a healthy workforce through improved wellbeing and increased resilience
- II. Each organisation to implement a suitable and targeted intervention that addresses health and wellbeing in their workforce
- III. Each organisation to monitor and report back on progress in 12 months' time
- IV. Each organisation, and the Health and Wellbeing Board itself, to sign up to the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health, a shared commitment by signatories to work together to prevent mental health problems and promote good mental health.

### **Outcomes**

Nine organisations provided a progress update with a combined workforce of c.28,000. Multiple interventions supporting mental health have been implemented with a clear focus on providing training and support for staff.

**Kate Blackburn**  
**Director of Public Health**  
**Wiltshire Council**

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**Purpose of Report**

1. To provide an update to the Health and Wellbeing Board on the approaches taken by the organisations represented on the Board to improving their workforce health and wellbeing and to share good practice.

**Relevance to the Health and Wellbeing Strategy**

2. Employment is a primary determinant of health. Increasing the quality of work helps support prevention and early intervention, improving social mobility and tackling inequalities, which are key guiding themes of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

**Background**

3. In November 2021 the Chairs of the Health and Wellbeing Board requested some options to inspire the organisations who sit on the board to implement a workforce wellbeing campaign. The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on progress, share examples of good practice and provide recommendations for continued commitment to the workplace health agenda.
4. Good health and wellbeing are essential to successful, sustainable workplaces. Protecting and improving the health and wellbeing of our employees remains critical to the health and economic wellbeing of our population. The impacts of COVID-19 on health and wellbeing continue to be felt, with the cost-of-living crisis further highlighting the need for workers health to remain a top priority.
5. In December 2021 member organisations were asked to focus on enabling a healthy workforce through improved wellbeing and increased resilience. Evidence indicates that if individuals do not have good mental health, wellbeing and resilience then interventions or programmes to improve physical health will very often not succeed.
6. At the December 2021 meeting the board were asked to consider the following recommendations:
  - I. Each organisation agrees to enable a healthy workforce through improved wellbeing and increased resilience
  - II. Each organisation to implement a suitable and targeted intervention that addresses health and wellbeing in their workforce

- III. Each organisation to monitor and report back on progress in 12 months' time
  - IV. Each organisation, and the Health and Wellbeing Board itself, to sign up to the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health, a shared commitment by signatories to work together to prevent mental health problems and promote good mental health.
7. All members agreed to implement the above recommendations and in accordance with section III. monitor and report back on progress in 12 months' time.

## **Progress**

8. There are eleven organisations represented on the Health and Wellbeing Board, and a request for an update on progress was made prior to publication of this report. A brief summary of the interventions implemented by the various organisations can be seen in appendix 1. It should be noted that Healthwatch Wiltshire only have four part-time employees and therefore were deemed exempt.
9. Nine organisations provided a progress update with a combined workforce of c28,000 staff.
10. There were a number of mental health focussed interventions implemented across the organisations, as recommended, with the training of staff in Mental Health First Aid being one of the most common approaches taken. Mental Health First Aid is an internationally recognised training course, designed to teach people how to spot the signs and symptoms of mental ill health and provide help on a first aid basis.
11. Other interventions included the introduction of mental health advocates and mediators, suicide first aid training and also supporting health and wellbeing conversations among staff. As well as written updates a number of organisations provided further information on their respective programmes by way of submitting audio/video clips, which are to be shared with the Board on 26 January.

## **Discussion**

12. Data from the most recent [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#) provides an up-to-date picture on current and future health and wellbeing needs of people living in Wiltshire. The prevalence of common mental health disorders is rising in Wiltshire. In 2020/21, almost a quarter (24.6%) of people aged 16+ in the county were estimated to have higher levels of anxiety, representing a 6% rise compared to the previous year.
13. The pandemic and its associated social restrictions are likely to have impacted on mental health and socio-economic pressures arising from the current cost of living crisis could see the proportion of people experiencing anxiety rise further, including members of the workforce.

14. Trends in mental ill health demonstrate that the focus on improved wellbeing and increased resilience amongst the workforce was, and continues to be, vital in creating successful and sustainable workplaces. If individuals do not have good mental health, wellbeing and resilience then interventions or programmes to improve physical health will very often not succeed.
15. Having already shown great application when implementing workplace interventions, it is felt that this momentum should be harnessed and continued. To that end organisations represented on the Board should continue interventions that support mental wellbeing and also implement interventions that enhance physical health in employees.
16. People in employment are in worse health than previously. Compared to 2019, people in employment are 13% more likely to have a health condition and 30% more likely to have multiple health conditions<sup>1</sup>.
17. The recently published JSNA indicates that our 65+ population currently represents just over a fifth of the overall population but by 2040 this age group will make up nearly a third. As people live longer they will be expected to work for longer yet are likely to do so with one or multiple health conditions, a key barrier to gaining employment and for staying in work.
18. Based on the most recent JSNA data for Wiltshire there are several lifestyle risk factors that drive poor health, which could be prevented and keep the workforce healthier and for longer. These most commonly relate to smoking, obesity and alcohol consumption:
  - Smoking prevalence in adults – **12.0%**
    - Staff who smoke at work are 33% more likely to be absent from work than non-smokers<sup>2</sup>
  - Adults classified as overweight or obese – **61.8%**
    - Excess weight can bring physical, social, emotional and psychosocial problems, leading to onset of preventable long-term illness, stigma, discrimination and reduced life expectancy<sup>3</sup>
  - Adult population drinking more than 14 units per week – **21.3%**
    - Estimated that alcohol misuse costs English economy £7.3 billion each year<sup>2</sup>
19. Interventions addressing physical health could include smoking cessation programmes for routine and manual workers, signing up to the NHS

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<sup>1</sup> IPPR, 2022 – Getting Better? Health and the labour market

<https://www.ippr.org/research/publications/getting-better-health-and-labour-market>

<sup>2</sup> BITC, 2018 – Drugs, alcohol and tobacco: A toolkit for employers <https://www.bitc.org.uk/toolkit/drugs-alcohol-and-tobacco-a-toolkit-for-employers/>

<sup>3</sup> BITC, 2018 – Physical activity, healthy eating and healthier weight: A toolkit for employers <https://www.bitc.org.uk/toolkit/physical-activity-healthy-eating-and-healthier-weight-a-toolkit-for-employers/>

Smokefree [Pledge](#), encouraging staff to reduce alcohol consumption or increase physical activity.

20. Employment is one of the five ways organisations act as anchor institutions, these being large, public sector organisations that are unlikely to relocate and have a significant stake in a geographical area<sup>4</sup>. Anchor workforce strategies involve thinking not only about how organisations can grow local workforce supply and widen access to employment for local communities, but also how to be a better employer and place to build a career for more people. Such strategies consider widening workforce participation, building the future workforce and being a good employer, which includes supporting I) fair pay and conditions of employment, II) health and wellbeing and III) professional development and career progression<sup>4</sup>.

### **Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health**

21. Whilst the Health and Wellbeing Board is not a signatory to date several organisations continue to implement interventions recommended within the Concordat. Work to sign up the Board will continue and as a priority OHID are looking to get all newly created integrated care systems to sign up with further details being provided later this year.

### **Next Steps**

22. Good health and wellbeing remain essential to successful, sustainable workplaces. The health and wellbeing of any workforce is an organisational priority and even more so given the impact of COVID-19 and the cost-of-living crisis on society. A focus on both mental and physical health in the workplace is paramount. As such each organisation represented on the Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to maintain its commitment to this important agenda.
23. Each organisation should commit to the following:
  - I. Continue to invest in workplace health
  - II. Continue to build on the excellent work done thus far on supporting mental health in the workplace
  - III. Confirm what their focus on physical health will be i.e. smoking cessation, promoting healthy eating, increasing physical activity etc.
  - IV. Increase employment opportunities by adopting the [anchor institute](#) principles
  - V. Support the Board in signing up to the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health

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<sup>4</sup> The Health Foundation, 2019. Building healthier communities: the role of the NHS as an anchor institution. [Building healthier communities: the role of the NHS as an anchor institution - The Health Foundation](#)

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## Appendix 1

Organisation	No of employees	Intervention	Outcome(s)
AWP	5,000	- As HWB is unique to each individual we took a multi-faceted approach across AWP to impact as many people as possible.	Multiple but include: - Creation of BSW Wellbeing Matters Team, specialist staff support hub, providing clinical assessments to staff experiencing mental health issues – 115 individual referrals received across BSW region, 40 requests from teams/services to provide support/training
BSW ICB	512	- Wellbeing check in as part of performance review process - Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training - Joined RUH Menopause Forum	- 24 staff trained in MHFA
Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service	1,361	- The co-ordination of Wellbeing Workshops as offered by the Firefighters Charity for dissemination to all fire service staff	- Via successful attendance we will look to gain feedback and liaise with the Firefighters Charity to take up their offer of providing bespoke training sessions for staff and managers so it is embedded within our own learning & development programme
Great Western	5,500 approx	- Mental Health First Aid training - Suicide First Aid training - Health and Wellbeing Conversations	- 256 staff trained in MHFA - 64 staff trained in Suicide First Aid - 59 staff trained in facilitating a health and wellbeing conversation
HCRG Care Group	No response received		
Healthwatch Wiltshire	4 (part time)	N/A	N/A

RUH	6,000 approx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supporting our colleagues – MH and SFA training</li> <li>- Supporting staff through trauma – TriM</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MHFA trained = 158 (32 on waiting list)</li> <li>- Suicide First Aid Training = 16 (16 booked onto February course, 42 on waiting list for future courses) Approximately 80 attended open access suicide awareness sessions.</li> <li>- H&amp;WBC facilitators trained = 153</li> <li>- 62 TRiM referrals relating to 454 individual staff members.</li> <li>- Trained 7 new TRiM practitioners, 44 TRiM supporters, 3 TRiM managers plus provided TRiM refresher training for 7 practitioners</li> </ul>
Salisbury FT	4,043	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The introduction of Wellbeing Conversations across the Trust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The roll out of wellbeing conversations across the Trust is an ongoing initiative and as such is not yet concluded</li> <li>- To date, we have provided training for managers in carrying out wellbeing conversations, and in addition individuals with expertise in wellbeing have been involved in holding wellbeing conversations to directly support areas where the managers are unable to carry them out for operational or other reasons</li> <li>- The intention is to provide further training courses and support further roll out across the Trust in 2023</li> </ul>
Wiltshire Council	4,884	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduction of Mental Health Advocates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 35 members of staff trained QNUK Level 2 Award in Mental Health at Work</li> </ul>
Wiltshire Health and Care	1,200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Workplace Mediation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fully trained new 2 mediators</li> </ul>
Wiltshire Police	No response received		