

**REPORT TO:** Health Policy & Performance Board  
**DATE:** 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2021  
**REPORTING OFFICER:** Director of Public Health  
**PORTFOLIO:** Health and Wellbeing  
**SUBJECT:** Suicide Prevention  
**WARD(S):** Borough-wide

## 1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 Provide update regarding suicide prevention agenda.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board:

i) **Notes contents of the report.**

## 3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The effects of suicide are far reaching and have a devastating impact on families, friends, communities and colleagues. An estimated 130 people are greatly impacted for every suicide that occurs and there are approximately 25 people attempting suicide for every person that takes their own life. Therefore even if numbers of deaths by suicide may appear low they are just the tip of the iceberg and don't reflect those impacted and those attempting.

Suicide risk is greater in areas of deprivation, such as Halton, due to social and economic inequalities and the wider determinants of health. There are certain groups who we know are more vulnerable to suicide such as; those in debt, those living in poverty, unemployed, those bereaved and many more.

Evidence demonstrates that suicide is preventable. In Halton the local suicide prevention partnership board meet quarterly to drive the suicide prevention agenda and evidence based action plan. Since Halton has been recording potential suicides via its Real Time Surveillance system in 2017 it has seen a reduction in suicides from 16 in 2018 to 9 in 2020. This reduction isn't always reflected in ONS data as potential suicides are subject to a coroner's inquest that can take up to 6 months. This means potential suicides that happen in 2019 for example may not reach a verdict of suicide until 2020 and therefore are captured in 2020s statistics. This demonstrates the importance of having a local Real Time Surveillance system that captures potential suicides within the year they happened. Having said that table 1 – ONS data 2020 suicide figures demonstrates a reduction in the rate of suicide for Halton from 11.7 to 10.8. edging Halton closer to the North West average of 10.7 and the England average of 10.4.

**Table 1- ONS data 2020 suicide figures**

	2020	2019	Number of deaths and age-standardised suicide rates per 100,000 population - 2018-2020 rolling 3 year aggregate	Number of deaths and age-standardised suicide rates per 100,000 population - 2017-2019 rolling 3 year aggregate
Halton	9	14	10.8	11.7

### 3.1 Public Health England Prevention and Promotion Mental health funding

Haltons Public health team were successful in their application for Prevention and Promotion Mental Health funds of £270,000. The funding can only be utilised for prevention and promotion mental health programmes which help mitigate against the impact of the pandemic

12 months funding will be used to provide:

- Bereavement support to adults
- Bereavement support to children, young people and their families
- Support to those struggling with financial insecurity and debt
- 5 ways to wellbeing activities to improve children and young people's mental health and wellbeing
- Pilot outreach programme to engage young males in wellbeing activities
- Parenting programme co coordinator

#### Outcomes achieved so far since funds awarded in June

- Bereavement support services and additional support for those struggling with financial insecurity and mental health now available.
- Marketing and communication plans being developed to promote services to partners and public.
- Small grant application process co-developed with Youth Cabinet and promoted to VCSE organisations to encourage them to apply for funding to deliver 5 ways to wellbeing activities in the community. Successful applications will deliver activities between January 2022 and May 2022.
- Pilot programme to engage young males developed by Vibe with timeline for implementation
- Parenting programme co-ordinator vacancy role out to advert with aim to be filled by December.

### 3.2 Champs

The Champs Public Health Collaborative coordinates the joint actions for Cheshire & Merseyside (CM) to prevent suicide through the NO MORE Suicide Strategy. In 2018 NHS England (NHSE) announced a 3-year suicide prevention funding programme worth £25 million that will reach the whole country by 2021. It forms

part of the government's commitment to reduce suicides in England by 10% by 2021 and will support the zero suicide ambition for mental health inpatients announced by the Secretary of State in January 2018. Cheshire & Merseyside have secured £615,000 for 19/20 and additional £295k specifically for Middle age men's health. Halton continues to work with Champs to deliver the zero suicide agenda across Cheshire and Merseyside

### **Self-Harm**

Champs have commissioned NHSE to lead a self-harm network to drive improvements in this area. Kate Bazley the mental Health and Wellbeing lead represents Halton at this network ensuring Halton contribute to developments and benefit from them.

### **Outcomes achieved so far by the network**

- Self-harm guidance for front line staff is in under development
- Self-harm dashboard has been developed in collaboration with North West Ambulance Service (NWAS), NSHE and PHE. The dashboard captures the number of calls to NWAS in relation to self-harm and their outcomes. Local Suicide prevention leads will eventually have access to the dashboard and will be able to utilise the data to deliver local preventative work.
- Self-harm care kits - Currently being piloted across the region and evaluation conducted by John Moore's University. Evaluation will be brought to local suicide prevention partnership board for discussion
- Self-harm awareness training -Champs have commissioned the provider Harmless to deliver this training for front line staff. Kate Bazley is co-ordinating access to this training for Halton

### **Lived Experience Network**

Champs have commissioned Wirral Mind to develop a lived experience network with members who have been impacted by self-harm or suicide. The lived experience members have opportunity to influence suicide prevention programmes across Cheshire and Merseyside.

### **Outcomes achieved so far**

- Haltons suicide prevention partnership board now has lived experience representation with a local male time to change champion.
- Halton has access to lived experience members who can provide input into local suicide prevention work. The lived experience network has provided guidance on a variety of projects locally

### **Real Time Surveillance System**

Due to delays in receiving data from coroners regarding potential suicides over the last 18 months Champs is working to adapt the Real Time Surveillance system to

be police led. A police led system has already been implemented in Merseyside and will soon be developed in Cheshire. By moving to a police led RTS system we will be able to receive a richer data set in a more timely fashion. This will enable Halton to respond to potential suicides more effectively and provide richer data to direct preventative work.

### **3.3 Core local activity**

#### **Tackling Mental Health Stigma in men with Halton's Time to Change hub**

Halton's Time to Change hub secured funding to develop 20 second videos utilising footage previously filmed by male Time to Change Champions sharing their lived experience of struggling with their mental health, what helped and details of text support available. 75% of suicides both nationally and locally are male therefore it is essential we tackle mental health stigma which is a main barrier to men discussing their worries and seeking support. Evidence tells us the best way to tackle mental health stigma is by sharing lived experience stories in a safe way and by tackling mental health stigma we can reduce barriers to accessing help and seeking support. The 20 second video clips engage men via a video display campaign. The messages will be aimed at sharing what helps keep men mentally well as well as what other people can do to help someone who is struggling. The project is overseen by the Time to Change coordinator who is funded by NHSE monies received through Champs.

**Table 2- outcomes achieved to date**

Total views of 100% of the video	137,562
Total clicks through to full length video	914

Anecdotal evidence via Time to Change champions who took part in the video tells us many males have reached out to them after identifying with their stories and have sought support for the worries and difficulties they were facing

#### **Workforce development**

To improve the knowledge of front line staff and communities by influencing how they look after their own mental health and the mental health of those they work with the following training continues to be delivered by the Health Improvement team:

- Mental Health Awareness for staff working with adults
- Mental Health Awareness for managers
- Suicide Awareness for staff working with adults
- Mental Health Awareness for staff working with Children and Young People
- Self-harm awareness for staff working with children and young people

#### **Whole Setting approach**

Schools and early year's settings continue to be supported by the Health

Improvement team to implement a whole setting approach to improve mental health and wellbeing. This preventative offer complements support provided by partners such as Educational Psychology, Nurture network, CAMHS and Behaviour Improvement team

### 24 hour crisis line

The 24 hour Mental Health crisis line continues to be promoted by Mersey care, the Local Authority and local partners to ensure those who need it have access to support 24 hours a day 7 days a week

The Help line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and is available to people of all ages who need urgent mental health support including children and young people.

Tel: 0800 051 1508 Free to call from both landlines and mobiles

For further information regarding support available if you need help now with your mental health please visit [Mental Health Info Point Need Help Now](#)

### Mental Health Teams in Schools

Halton CCG and Merseycare are leading the implementation of NHSE funded Mental health teams in schools. The following schools have been identified to take part based on a criteria established by NHSE:

**Table 3- Runcorn schools**

Primary	Secondary
Astmoor	The Grange Academy
Hallwood Park	The Bridge Pupil Referral unit (PRU)
Halton Lodge	St Chads Catholic High School
Woodside	

**Table 4- Widnes Schools**

Primary	Secondary
Widnes Academy	Wade Deacon
Chestnut lodge special school	Ormiston Chadwick
Simms Cross	

The Mental health Teams in Schools will provide support to pupils struggling with mild to moderate mental health issues. They will also support schools to develop a whole setting approach to improving mental health and wellbeing. Support will be available for pupils from January 2022

### **Outcomes achieved to date**

- Education Mental Health Practitioners have been recruited and have started training for the role
- Schools are being liaised with to allocate Education Mental Health Practitioners and secure appropriate rooms to deliver interventions for pupils
- Partners who currently work to support schools to improve mental health and wellbeing of pupils and staff such as: Educational Psychology and Health Improvement team are engaging with the project to ensure it complements current provision.
- Multi partner implementation group established

## **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no new Policy implications as a result of this report.

## **5.0 OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There is an economic cost of approximately £1.6 million for every person who takes their own life. Work to reduce suicides mitigates against this economic cost and the unseen implications on the wider system

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

### **6.1 Children & Young People in Halton**

The population mental health work driven by public health aims to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people as well as reducing suicides

### **6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

The population mental health work driven by public health improves knowledge and skill of those who live and work in Halton via a variety of training available

### **6.3 A Healthy Halton**

Population mental health work driven by public health improves the mental health and wellbeing of those who work and live in Halton as well as reducing suicides.

### **6.4 A Safer Halton**

Population mental health work driven by public health improves the mental health

and wellbeing of those who work and live in Halton as well as reducing suicides.

## **6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

No implication on Urban Renewal

## **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Covid has impacted population mental health negatively, the following cohorts have been specifically impacted; women, children and young people, adults who were shielding, adults living with children and lone mothers, ethnic minority population, adults with pre-existing mental health conditions, adults with low household income, unemployed. Risk of suicide has increased during the pandemic in the following: those isolated and lonely, those bereaved, those who have increased alcohol intake, those being domestically abused. Population mental health work that has taken place throughout covid has aimed to mitigate against these risks.

## **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 Population mental health work driven by Public Health aims to support organisations who work with clients with protected characteristics

## **9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

9.1 None identified.