

REPORT TO: Health & Wellbeing Board

DATE: 22 March 2023

REPORTING OFFICER: Director of Social Health & Community
Inclusion, Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust

PORTFOLIO: Health & Wellbeing

SUBJECT: Life Rooms

WARD(S) Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To give an overview of the Mersey Care Life Rooms Social Model of Health and to detail current Life Rooms activity across Halton.

2.0 **RECOMMENDED: That the report be noted.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Since its launch in May 2016, The Life Rooms social model of health has expanded to provide a range of commissioned, non-clinical services and interventions to Mersey Care service users and carers as well as the wider community.

3.2 The first Life Rooms opened in Walton on 9 May 2016. The past five years have seen The Life Rooms offer an open door, community-based approach, supporting recovery, prevention and overall population health. The Life Rooms has evolved to comprise over 100wte staff providing a range of services across a number of locations and communities (See Appendix A – ‘Six Years of The Life Rooms’)

3.3 Community is the central focus for The Life Rooms and a core part of its function is to enable localised community engagement to take place. The Life Rooms Social Model is designed to improve population health and address social inequality through activation and system-change. All activity within The Life Rooms is delivered through a three-pillar model:

- **Learning:** Delivering a wide range of evidence-based learning opportunities designed to improve population health. Our creative and inclusive curriculum works alongside the lived experience of individuals and communities to support positive life outcomes.
- **Social Prescribing:** Enabling individuals to connect with their wider community through the co-creation of a personalised pathway. Together with voluntary and community sector partners, we offer practical one-to-one support around social issues such as loneliness,

finance and housing.

- **Inclusion:** Listening to communities to understand need and aspiration. We work together with individuals and communities to co-design and embed culturally informed approaches to improved life and health outcomes.

- 3.4 The three-pillar model enables people to become more activated in their own health; it operates within a social approach that focuses on prevention and the enabling of community and community assets to acknowledge the role that social factors play in health and to encourage system change. Through health activation and system change, population health is improved and pressure on clinical services is reduced.



- 3.5 The Life Rooms aims to design, develop and evaluate services together with those who access and deliver them as well as the wider community in which the service situates. This means the service is shaped by everyone in The Life Rooms community, including people who access, work and volunteer within the service, as well as partners and the wider community. Working 'side by side' means The Life Rooms continuously changes according to the needs and experiences of stakeholders and communities; whilst the fundamentals of the model remain static, how this manifests itself is flexible. This flexibility allows for a truly responsive service with population health at its core.

- 3.6 The Life Rooms partners with over 100 voluntary and community sector organisations across the six Places served by Mersey Care. The Life Rooms could not deliver the model described without effective collaborative working with the voluntary and community sector services through the facilitation of existing and developing community-based assets. As such, the end user does not have to navigate the complexities of a heterogenous system but rather experiences a seamless pathway of advice, support and care. Cross system support offers have been

enhanced by the use of Elemental, a digital social prescribing platform, which allows for the management of referrals across clinical and voluntary services as well as the measurement of impact.

- 3.7 **Halton Service Offer** Following the acquisition of services formerly provided by the North-West Boroughs NHS Foundation Trust, Mersey Care approved a 12-month pilot expansion of its Life Rooms offer to support secondary mental health service users accessing Early Intervention, Crisis Resolution Home treatment and Recovery Team services. A non-recurrent investment of £300K was made for each of the boroughs of Halton, Warrington, St Helens and Knowsley.

This service mobilised successfully in July 2022 and operates peripatetically from existing trusted community assets. For the last 5 years, The Life Rooms has utilised the 'Elemental' digital social prescribing platform to connect people with community assets and evaluate both the impact of our partner organisations and also our own internal Life Rooms provision. In September, Mersey Care becomes the first Trust in the country to be capable of providing Elemental interoperability with our RiO clinical information system.

The Mid-Mersey pilot is trialling the interoperability of clinical and social prescribing systems to improve the speed and effectiveness of the referral process. Clinical team members who utilise RiO can have their Elemental social prescribing functionality in RiO activated through The Life Rooms. This allows clinicians to make referrals directly into The Life Rooms so to immediately address any social support that they identify when meeting service users, thereby saving clinicians time and resources.

Our evaluation will explore the extent to which clinicians' time is saved and ascertain whether this then allows clinicians to work on clinical issues by being assured that social support is being met through another Mersey Care service. Clinicians will also be able to monitor the social support that has been received directly through RiO, which will allow for the accurate recording of social support offered and accessed.

Crucially, the integration also offers voluntary and community sector organisations the opportunity to participate safely within a wider ecosystem of health and wellbeing as well measure their impact. (A report detailing current Halton activity and evaluation is detailed in Appendix B)

- 3.8 Key to the development of the long-term strategy for The Life Rooms is the development of **The NHS Numbers Project** commencing in January 2023. The NHS Numbers Project aims to explore the relationship between The Life Rooms user data and the user data of the wider Trust in which The Life Rooms sits.

We aim to utilise the NHS numbers of The Life Rooms' service users, linking to RiO data, to explore how these users are supported in relation to their secondary mental health and community needs. This will allow us to understand the user group and allow us to look specifically at community

and inpatient contacts for those that use The Life Rooms and explore how these change over time in relation to their use of The Life Rooms. Further, we can identify gaps in relation to those that access The Life Rooms and inform service growth to meet the needs of under-served populations.

We will also link our data sets with the Combined Intelligence for Population Health Action (CIPHA), the population health management platform that supports access to data sets required for population analytics. Linking The Life Rooms data with CIPHA data will allow us to explore where else in the health and social care system these users appear. We will establish key lines of enquiry within the data. Initial ideas may include but are not limited to: neurodiversity prevalence, engagement and attainment in education, polypharmacy, breakdown of Serious Mental Illness and most common diagnoses, whether users are known to the Criminal Justice System or the Care System and how this impacts social circumstances, levels of social isolation and how each of these cohorts utilise services. Those accessing The Life Rooms are likely to have touchpoints in a wide range of health and wellbeing services.

Through this research, we hope to understand this further and continue to develop a truly preventative approach to health and wellbeing that promotes upstream working. Researching this further would allow The Life Rooms to ensure that we are proactively understanding need, by considering those who already have care and support needs, as well as those who are at risk of developing these needs. This research would also allow us to highlight trends in the data that would enable us to identify and target people who fall into these groups and work with these communities to consider potential opportunities for contact with those who may benefit from this preventative support.

We aim to evidence both the human and financial impact of The Life Rooms' model and its interventions, demonstrate how it supports the prevention agenda and its impact on both primary and secondary care services. We hope to collaborate with local authorities and encourage wider system change to ensure there is a consistent focus on prevention in all aspects of the system. The prevention agenda requires a significant and sustained effort to prevent illness and support good physical and mental health through collaborative working which The Life Rooms hopes to sustain and develop following this research.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The current Life Rooms offer in Halton focuses upon secondary mental health service users but services commissioned in other areas work in a more up-stream, preventative way so as to support an overall population health objective

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Life Rooms pilot within Halton is currently scheduled to end in July 2023 unless further investment is secured.

5.2 Current investment within Halton only pertains to those currently accessing secondary mental health service users and so the service is not commissioned to work in the prevention space.

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

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton** – Social and practical support provided to the complex lives wrapping around the child have the potential to break on-going cycles of poor health as well as reduce the risk of adverse childhood experiences and/or placement in care services.

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton** – A core feature of Life Rooms activity focuses on financial security, employability and life-long learning

6.3 **A Healthy Halton** – The Life Rooms service offer supports recovery and prevention agendas as well as health self-management and activation.

6.4 **A Safer Halton** – The prioritisation of community relationships and cohesion promotes a clear safety culture from within communities.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal** The Life Rooms grounds within a Health on the High Street approach through the utilisation of premises not traditionally associated with health.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 None identified.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 The Life Rooms is based upon principles of Inclusion and proactively seeks to address health inequalities disproportionately impacting members of our communities.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None identified.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.
