

Scrutiny Review – Scoping Document

Review Title:	Mental Health Services
Scrutiny Board:	Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board
Date of Review:	2021
<p>Reasons for undertaking the review:</p> <p>At the mental health scrutiny review sessions undertaken in Autumn 2020, it was predicted that the pandemic would lead to a steady increase in the presentation of common mental disorder.</p> <p>Sixteen months into the pandemic the mental health impact of lockdowns on Sandwell communities has been considerable. Increased social isolation has been perhaps the most visible aspect and the Board considered it a priority to investigate how people can reconnect again in the post-pandemic period.</p> <p>In Autumn 2020, the Board also envisaged that there would be ongoing scrutiny of work done to expand mental health service capacity in Sandwell. Such scrutiny is designed to ensure that mental health services keep in touch with residents' needs and are ready to meet demand.</p> <p>Moreover, recommendations one and two of the most recent Sandwell Adult Mental Health and Wellbeing Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) identified the need for review of mental health services in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the routes into acute mental health services in order to establish a clear emergency pathway that is understood by everyone; • barriers that residents face when engaging in routine mental health and wellbeing services, including the need to develop clear referral pathways and reduce waiting times. <p>The review will enable the Board to investigate some of the following topics after the precise scope of the review has been determined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop a clear understanding of the current pathways for accessing emergency and routine mental health services; • To map out the role of various health agencies in Sandwell in delivering mental health services and identify where collaboration can be improved; • To capture residents' perspective on accessing mental health services, including identifying the challenges that prevent them from accessing the help they need; 	

- To capture residents' views on stigmas associated with coming forward with mental health problems and what can agencies do to facilitate people in making the initial contact with services;
- To work on developing a single all-age, all-needs pathway to make it easy for people to access mental health services and for individuals to be directed to the most appropriate;
- To investigate how to support provision of grassroot community organisations that help residents re-engage with their communities and reduce social isolation;
- To look at access and support provided for people to remain in employment during or following a mental health crisis;
- To ensure greater equality of access to mental health services by identifying how to overcome the particular barriers faced by high-risk groups (young adults 18-24; isolated people in later life; people with pre-existing mental health problems; people with long-term, disabling health conditions; single parents; unemployed and those in insecure employment, and BAME communities).¹

The Health and Adult Social Care will determine the scope of this review from topics above at the July meeting of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board.

Intended Outcomes:


To utilise the evidence gathered from the review process in order to suggest mechanisms by which the Local Authority and Health Partners may improve mental health support pathways and facilitate easy access to mental health services to any resident who needs it.

To use the review process data to enable greater cooperation between the voluntary sector and Local Authority and Health Partners in order to ensure that community mental health support is available to Sandwell residents.

To identify strategies for facilitating access to mental health services for groups identified as being at high-risk of mental health problems and reduce the hesitancy in some communities associated with seeking help for mental health problems.

To improve the 'quantitative' outcomes of mental health services in Sandwell such as the proportion of people who were seen within 20 minutes of the agreed appointment time, or the proportion of people accessing emergency support who have a comprehensive assessment.

¹ <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus/divergence-mental-health-experiences-during-pandemic>

Officer Group (including partners):	Lisa McNally Rashpal Bishop Katharine Willmette
Links to Vision 2030:	
Scoping undertaken by:	
Council Chief Officer (or partner equivalent):	Lisa McNally
Existing data available for consideration:	
<p>Sandwell Council data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • directory of mental health support groups, • Suicide Prevention Strategy – to identify links with the existing review • Sandwell Good Mental Health Strategy – to identify how the 9 promises contained in the strategy can inform mental health service delivery <p>Regional data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional mental health support programmes such as Thrive into Work (a WMCA programme to help unemployed people who have mental or physical health conditions get back into the workplace). <p>National data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat is a national agreement that sets out the principles of how organisations should work together to ensure that people get the help they need when they are having a mental health crisis. <p>Experts by experience and carers' views</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview and survey data from experts by experience, current service users and carers providing mental health support to ascertain the practical solutions that work well during a mental health crisis and when part of longer term support 	
Potential witnesses	Black Country and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group – steering/strategy group; Sandwell Primary Care Networks; Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (provides mental health services in Sandwell); Healthwatch Sandwell; Sandwell Voluntary Sector Organisation;

	<p>Mental Health Community Support Groups (e.g. Sandwell African Caribbean Mental Health Foundation); Sandwell Council Community Mental Health Team; Mental Health - Commissioned Services; Changing Our Lives; West Midlands Police.</p>
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Review Work Programme:			
Task	Method	Lead person(s)	Completion by:
Health Scrutiny meeting to determine scope of the review	Invite health partners to add their views		28 July 2021
Follow up conversations with partners to ensure their views are taken on board	Partners to be asked via email/survey to send additional comments		
Public Engagement – Evidence Gathering Session(s) at Town Level	Focus Group		
Set up a working group to action the suggestions from public engagement	Member/Officer Working Group		