



Mental Health Action Group

Update for HWB Steering Group
August 2024

Membership

Membership includes the following organisations:

- West Berkshire Council – Public Health and Wellbeing
- West Berkshire Council – Adult Social Care
- West Berkshire Council - Members
- ICB GP Clinical Lead for Mental Health
- Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust - CMHT
- Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust – Older People’s Mental Health Services
- Eight Bells for Mental Health
- Recovery in Mind
- Healthwatch
- Let’s Connect
- Together for Mental Wellbeing
- Thames Valley Police (for relevant items)
- Community United

In practice, there has not been consistent attendance from a number of organisations . and we are currently reviewing attendance, membership and working arrangements to see how to improve this.

Current Activity

- To help achieve the delivery plan action of running regular service user engagement events, a number of co-production meetings have been held, leading to the first meeting of a new Mental Health Forum to be held on 14th October. This is principally to be owned by service users and experts by experience, but bringing in public and voluntary sector professionals for part of the meeting. The aims are to share experience, learning and information, raise issues and feed ideas to, and receive back from, the Mental Health Action Group.
- To pursue the Delivery Plan action of supporting transition across the life-course, MHAG decided to focus initially on bereavement. A successful workshop was held on 22nd July to explore the impact of bereavement on mental health. It included a good range of stakeholders with 15 attendees. Through a series of exercises and small-group work, the participants identified a range of people and circumstances where there was an increased risk of a disproportion impact on mental health as a result of bereavement. A number of sources of support were identified, and the group started to explore where there are gaps in help and how support could be improved. It is intended to hold further meetings to take this further and identify what could be done to improve things.
- The Mental Health Integrated Community Service (MHICS) is now up and running, so this objective is almost met. However, MHAG raised a concern as to how truly ‘integrated’ the service is. A workshop was held in June to explore this further and the MHAG is supporting taking forward issues identified in the meeting.
- A meeting has been organised for September to explore what support is, and could be made, available for people with mental health challenges to fill in forms and in other ways deal with

officialdom. This has been identified as a big and growing problem which puts considerable pressure on a number of voluntary organisations.

- Digital inclusion. One of the Delivery Plan actions allocated to the Mental Health Action Group is to 'develop digital inclusion champions' with a target of having champions in the top five most deprived wards. MHAG has been clear that it does not have the capacity to deliver this action but that it would consider ways of moving the agenda forward such as by bringing together bodies working in this space to share information and potentially work co-operatively together. We have not yet been able to identify sufficient bodies working on these issues to make such an endeavour workable. We think this delivery activity should now be allocated elsewhere. The MHAG would be happy to work in partnership with others on this, contributing the mental health perspective.

Future Actions

MHAG will continue to progress each of the areas of work identified above. Actions to be finally determined with partners and stakeholders but could include the following:

- A programme of Mental Health Forum meetings to be established. The arrangements for the meeting to be gradually refined in the light of experience (e.g. invitees, meeting arrangements, topics for discussion etc.)
- Events and information dissemination in National Grief Awareness week, December 2nd -8th.
- Continuing to support MHICS and the integration objective.
- Development of proposals to provide support to help people fill in forms.