

Report to the North West London Joint Health Overview Scrutiny Committee

12 September 2023

Report Title:	North West London Mental Health Strategy
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Committee Date:	12 September 2023
Report Deadline:	29 August 2023
<p>Purpose To provide an update on the progress to refresh the North West London Mental Health Strategy.</p> <p>Background and context A key part of the developing North West London Integrated Care Partnership strategy, is the commitment to providing the people who use mental health services with high-quality care as close to home as possible, by prioritising prevention of mental health crisis, strengthening alternatives to admission and shifting provision to a more community-based offer in line with national priorities.</p> <p>Our aim across North West London Integrated Care System (ICS) is, and always will be, to ensure that we provide the highest quality, compassionate, trauma-informed and most appropriate mental health care for people who need it across our boroughs. This includes increased access to integrated services in the community, inpatient facilities that meet modern standards of acute mental health care, supporting patient dignity and privacy, with ease of access where required. We follow the principles laid out in the Mental Health Capacity Act 2005 that mental health care should be in the least restrictive setting and acute inpatient care should only be used where there is no better alternative.</p> <p>Refreshing our mental health strategy We are taking a phased approach to refreshing our mental health strategy, first focusing on adult services (community and inpatient). To support the first phase, a Working Group with representation from Local Authorities, Borough-Based Partnerships, NHS Mental Health Providers, the VCSE, Service Users, ICS Programmes and ICB Core Teams has been established to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree a shared understanding of need, prevalence and demand;• Agree a shared understanding of current provision;• Review and agree progress against previous/ existing strategies; and• Collectively set out our ambitions for fulfilling lives, further improving mental health services and closing our biggest treatment gaps, including a focus on innovation (e.g. digital) <p>Through the Working Group we have discussed and clarified the scope of the work – to focus on adult community and inpatient services; whilst the stressors that may drive increase demand in mental health services are acknowledged, it is agreed that this work will not result in an overall health and wellbeing strategy and instead will reference existing strategies in place locally for promoting resilience and wellbeing.</p>	

Work has begun on understanding our shared understanding of need. The Working Group has reviewed data points from the Mental Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment toolkit that could be analysed to demonstrate the mental health need of our adult population; suggestions of additional data points have been limited. Therefore, the data points below will be used to build a picture of need across the eight boroughs, at North West London level and with comparisons to London and England where possible:

- Prevalence and incidence
- Risk factors
- Protective factors
- Health and wellbeing
- Activity within services
- Quality and outcomes

Through the Working Group we have gathered views on successes within adult mental health, identified gaps and also collected views on priorities. These have been used to inform the emerging themes of the strategy (below) that will be iterated through further engagement, along with understanding the impact of these from a resident's point of view:

- 1) We will work together in trusted partnership to build a supportive community environment that harnesses a broad range of roles, providers and sectors to enable care and support, recognising and advocating for the skills, expertise and benefit of the whole community. We will improve access to education, training, employment and broader health settings and interventions to promote good mental health for all.
- 2) Organisations and services that support residents' mental health, in both statutory and VCSE sector, will be equipped to meet the diverse health and social needs of the local population in a culturally effective manner. There will be a clear emphasis on prevention, early intervention, maximising independence and embedding strengths based approaches to both community and individual interventions.
- 3) For people (including carers) in crisis or requiring an urgent response, they will be able to access a multi-agency response that supports a holistic psycho, social and welfare approach to preventing, supporting and managing the crisis.
- 4) Care will be delivered in the least restrictive setting, but when hospital based care is required, it will be delivered in a timely way, by an expert team, within a therapeutic and compassionate environment.

Further work also includes modelling demand and capacity of our adult mental health services – including community and inpatient beds – to understand what proportion of our local population need is accessing support (met demand) and what proportion is not (unmet demand), along with understanding our current capacity [including current level of investment] of services. Through the Working Group we will also be exploring how capacity can be optimised by understanding how productivity plans and innovation (including digital) can be used to maximise capacity.

Approach to engagement

NHS North West London, in partnership with Local Authorities and NHS provider trusts in our area, has an extensive outreach programme to hear from local residents and communities. This includes discussions in all eight boroughs, some on specific topics, and conversations via organised public events and social media. To inform the strategy the Working Group has reviewed comments and feedback from what our residents have been telling us with regard to mental health, their concerns and what matters to them through the outreach programme.

Insights reviewed from September 2022 to June 2023 highlighted broad concerns regarding residents' mental health; anxiety, depression and despair came through in the majority of borough engagement events, particularly at the height of the cost of living crisis. Several themes have emerged in discussions with our residents:

- Wider determinants of mental health – in particular housing issues, poverty and the impact of the pandemic, including the cost of living crisis.
- Access to services – access to urgent mental health care, and delays in accessing GP appointments, which can exacerbate developing concerns, are areas of particular concern.
- Further work is needed to offer services in non-traditional environments, understanding the importance of faith, and to support people for whom English is not their first language.
- Perception of a “bed crisis” – issues include a reduction in inpatient beds, early discharge of patients, out of borough placements, and high levels of readmission.
- Stigma – for many communities, there is a taboo around mental health which needs to be understood and addressed the system.
- Isolation – many residents are experiencing isolation and loneliness, leading to or exacerbating mental health concerns. These include, but are not limited to, older people, those who are bereaved and carers.

We have discussed further engagement approaches with the Making A Difference Alliance (Experts by Experience Group for North West London) and a series of bespoke engagement events (see Appendix) have been arranged where the aim is to share the approach and scope to the strategy work, share insights gathered so far and seek further input from local residents. These include:

- Face to face drop in sessions in each borough (from late August to end of September)
- A lunchtime and evening focus group (mid-September)
- Individual engagement sessions with local community groups.

Responses to local residents' surveys have also been requested to provide another source of data and information to inform the strategy.

Timeline

A draft of the first phase of the strategy will be available in October which will include an understanding of need for our local population, progress against previous and existing strategies along with an outline strategic case and clinical model, including review of the national evidence base. The demand and capacity modelling will also be completed and the first draft will also set out our collective shared priorities for adult mental health services, focusing on how treatment gaps will be closed.

Member Request:

Cllr Ketan Sheth, Committee Chair, 2023

Appendix: Engagement events

Borough	Venue	Date
Harrow	Saint Peter's Church	29 August (Tuesday)
Hillingdon	Uxbridge Library	31 August (Thursday)
Brent	Brent Civic Centre Library	05 September (Tuesday)
Westminster	(TBC)	(TBC)
Hounslow	Hounslow Civic Centre	19 September (Tuesday)
Ealing	Ealing Library	20 September (Wednesday)
Hammersmith and Fulham	People Arisenow, Community Connect 20 Dawes Road, Dawes Hub, SW6 7EN	26 September (Tuesday)
Kensington and Chelsea	(TBC)	(TBC)
All Boroughs	Online Focus Group	Wednesday 13 September (lunchtime) and Thursday 14 September (evening)