Mental Health update – august 2022

Partnership working:

The Mental Health Alliance continues to develop with around 40 organisations represented including many voluntary and community groups, Police, NHS, Isle of Wight Council and ICS. Meetings are quarterly and feed into the Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Partnership. Joined up Comms, training and communtiy projects are discussed.

We work we our neighbours in Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton to develop the mental wellbeing and suicide prevention agenda. We endeavour to share messages and join up comms to maximise reach and promote local support.

Training:

Public Health have commissioned Mental Health First Aid, Suicide First Aid, Connect 5 and Debt and Mental Health. These courses were available to statutory sector staff, private businesses, community groups and voluntary sector. All courses were popular with all the target groups, many being oversubscribed, therefore Public Health in collaboration with the council’s learning and development team is commissioning Mental Health First Aid, Mental Health awareness and Suicide First Aid training for the above groups for the next two years. The Mental Health First Aid course will also form the basis for the Community Mental Health First Aiders programme we intend to roll out later this year.

Other examples include the delivery of 2 training sessions from the Lions Collective Hair&Beauty Talk which saw bespoke mental health training for the hair and beauty industry in recognition of the role they play in regular support, time and a safe environment they provide to their clients. 10 hair and beauty establishments attended – representing a cross section of experience and Island locations – including Cowes, East Cowes, West and central wight, Newport, Ryde and Sandown. 1 attendee has registered interest in engaging further with the charity to become a volunteer and 2 attendees are lecturers at the college and expressed an interest in the mental health element with regards to the curriculum

We also continue to work with partners such as housing, NHS and community and voluntary groups to participate in and share training.

Mental wellbeing small grants Fund:

17 organisations were supported through the Mental Wellbeing Small Grants Fund 2022/23. The organisations supported include a diverse array of local groups including support for families such as Tidal Family Support and Sensory Space; groups supporting adults, veterans and carers such as Cowes and Brading Men’s Sheds, Wight DASH, Veterans Hub, Prostate Cancer Support Group, Out On An Island and Carers IW as well as creative enterprises such as Nature Therapy, Equals IW and Pigsty Farm. We are currently visiting all 17 organisations to see how the funded projects are developing and to discuss evaluation. This has enabled us to see first-hand the amazing support these organisations are providing to Island residents.

Update on Mental Health Strategy:

Findings from the Mental Health Needs Assessment have been shared with our partners via both the Mental Health Alliance (MHA) and Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Partnership (MH&SPP). This has led to some engaging discussions around the development of the Strategy with stakeholder workshops being held with partners from both the MHA and MH&SPP.

‘Must do’ elements from the workshops to inform the Strategy included: community focus, statutory and third sector input, empower individual, normalisation of positive mental health promotion with themes around: challenging stigma, communication, partnership approach, clearer pathways and information leading to easier access and the right support earlier, prevention and trauma informed approach and equity.

A Task and Finish group has been established with representatives from across the partners including carers, veterans, ICS, adults’ services and housing to develop the strategy with recognition that the community and wider groups (including Healthwatch) will be consulted at first draft stage and plans are developing around wider stakeholder events to listen to people’s experience and give them an opportunity to shape the strategy, actions and outcomes.

Comms:

The ‘Is ok to not be ok’ and ‘its ok to ask for support’ continue as the main messages to help people ask for help early and to spot signs of deteriorating mental health and some ways to help. We work with partners across the mental health alliance to promote these messages and to share their messages. We use channels such as the radio and the press to reach a wider audience as well as social media which allows for notable days in the calendar to be marked such as Suicide Prevention Day and World Mental Health Day.

Young People:

Our PEACH (Partnership for Education, Attainment and Children’s Health) programme for schools which sees a holistic whole school approach over domains of healthy eating, PHSE, physical activity and emotional wellbeing and mental health. All 38 primary schools involved and developing within the early years and secondary schools.

Links continue with early help and the voluntary sector including Barnardo’s and the Youth Trust with increasing emphasis on young people’s mental health.