

## HEALTHWATCH : Blackburn with Darwen's Homeless Population

### BwD CCG Feedback on Recommendations

Recommendation	Narrative
<p><b>Recommendation 1</b> Advice or support to stop smoking should be made more accessible to the homeless population. This should include outreach carried out in a none intrusive way in environments were individuals feel comfortable. Ways in which to access advice or support should be better promoted.</p>	<p>The Mental Health Five Year Forward View report, a Government report which outlines the health priorities for the next five years, includes a focus on Physical Health checks for people with Serious Mental Illness. As such, Lancashire Mental Health Commissioners including the Pennine Lancs Mental Health team are actively incorporating specific health aspects such as ‘smoking cessation” and “weight management’ into Mental Health services. This applies to all people using the service which includes homeless people.</p> <p>Community Mental Health Team’s are responsible for physical health checks and the new Pennine Vulnerable People Service will work with the community teams and GP surgeries to ensure people are both registered and attending appointments.</p> <p>Further detail on smoking cessation services is available via the Public Health team at Blackburn with Darwen Council.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 2</b> It should be acknowledged that some individuals choose to smoke &amp; don’t want to quit. Services should appreciate this &amp; be sensitive to the reasons why people choose to smoke. Wherever possible a harm reduction approach should be used.</p>	<p>Choice is a basic principle for all individuals. Further detail on smoking cessation service delivery is available via Public Health including helping people reduce or find alternatives.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 3</b> Ways in which the homeless population can access a healthy diet should be explored. This could include accessible cooking classes, accommodation having more accessible cooking facilities &amp; services working holistically, supporting people to become tenancy ready. This should be incorporated into the Eat Well part of the ‘Eat Well Move More Shape Up’ Strategy.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendation 4</b> Physical activity should be made more accessible for the homeless population. This should include specific support for those with a physical health condition so they can access free activities in environments that individuals feel comfortable. This could also include targeted support to encourage &amp; motivate individuals to get involved. This</p>	<p>There will be opportunities within the new Pennine Vulnerable People Liaison Service to set up groups which may include physical health activity, with the overall aim of supporting all the needs of the individual including physical, mental health and wellbeing (isolation).</p>

<p>should be incorporated into the Move More part of the 'Eat Well Move More Shape Up' Strategy.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendation 5</b> Individuals experiencing homelessness should have someone to talk to &amp; support them on an ongoing basis. It should be acknowledged that many individuals find it difficult to engage within groups &amp; need 1:1 support to improve their mental health &amp; wellbeing.</p>	<p>The new Vulnerable Person Service will be available to support people whilst they are in the service. Once their lives have been stabilised, the service will work with the Integrated Neighbourhood Teams to migrate them into community services where any ongoing needs can be supported.</p> <p>In addition, the Mental Health Helpline is available to the public and individuals can also self-refer themselves to the service for help and support with low level depression and anxiety.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 6</b> All Health &amp; social care professionals should be required to receive training in homelessness, mental health &amp; substance misuse to reduce stigma &amp; encourage an empathetic approach.</p>	<p>The CCG would support this recommendation as it would deliver positive impacts on supporting services for the homeless.</p> <p>The new Pennine Vulnerable People's Service will help to raise awareness of Substance misuse and Mental Health whilst working with partner and community organisations.</p> <p>The main Mental health provider, Lancashire Care Foundation Trust, also train other Health and Social care practitioners in Mental Health. This has been recommended in the Royal College of Psychiatrists' review of Mental Health and Acute.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 7</b> It should be acknowledged how wider determinates impact an individual's mental health &amp; wellbeing. All services supporting an individual should work together holistically, offering an array of support &amp; effectively signposting into relevant services.</p>	<p>The new Vulnerable People's Services is a holistic service, which means it looks after all aspects of the person's live including social, physical and mental needs.</p> <p>A range of services carry out reviews and assessment which cover all these aspects including the Community Mental Health Teams, Lancashire Women's Centre and Community Restart – which takes referrals from Lancashire Care Foundation Trust to support individuals with employment, housing, training and volunteering etc.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 8</b> Services should work together to support those with both mental health issues &amp; substance misuse. Those who are currently using should be allowed to access services. Refusing them access is discriminating &amp; denying them their first steps to recovery.</p>	<p>All NHS contracts comply with the Equality Act.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 9</b> Substance Misuse Services should work around the needs of the individual, visiting them in an environment where they feel safe &amp; comfortable.</p>	<p>The new Vulnerable People's Services is delivered by experienced substance misuse organisations including Change Grow Live (CGL) and Red Rose Recovery (RRR) in community settings deliberately chosen so people do not feel stigmatised.</p>

<p><b>Recommendation 10</b> GPs should allow individuals who are experiencing homelessness to make appointments in person. Options of a drop in to see a GP should be explored.</p>	<p>The CCG agrees with this recommendation. Patients, however, can make appointments in person at the GP practice reception. The CCG will remind all our practices of this.</p> <p>The new Vulnerable People's Service will encourage and support individuals to register with local dentists and GP's.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 11</b> GP practices should all follow the same procedure when registering new patients. Individual practices should not be allowed to discriminate against individuals who have no fixed abode or photo ID.</p>	<p>The CCG agrees with this recommendation and will ask GP practices to look at this procedure, with a view to adopt the same process across all surgeries. Patients should not be or feel discriminated against. The CCG will remind all our practices of this.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 12</b> Ways in which to register with a dentist should be promoted &amp; encouraged. Those supporting individuals should know the process &amp; actively encourage individuals to register.</p>	<p>NHS England is responsible for dental services. We would advise that this report to be shared with local NHSE team. The new Vulnerable People's Service will encourage and support individuals to register with local dentists and GP's.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 13</b> Dentists should not discriminate against individuals for being homeless &amp; actively signpost them into alternative surgeries if they have no available spaces.</p>	<p>NHS England are responsible for dental services. We would advise that this report to be shared with local NHSE team.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 14</b> Outreach work should be done within the homeless community to build bridges &amp; reduce the fear of dentists, raising awareness of what to expect &amp; the benefit of attending appointments.</p>	<p>NHS England are responsible for dental services. We would advise that this report to be shared with local NHSE team</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 15</b> The hospital should work closely with the local authority housing team, voluntary &amp; third sector organisations to ensure there is somewhere suitable for the individual to go upon discharge. This should start upon admission of the individual. No individual should be discharged without somewhere suitable to go.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendation 16</b> Hospital staff should be trained &amp; aware of the issues facing the homeless population to reduce stigma &amp; improve patient experience. Those using substances should be treated with parity &amp; respect.</p>	<p>The new Vulnerable People's Service will help to raise awareness of Substance misuse and Mental Health whilst working with partner and community organisations.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 17</b> Health professionals such as GP's, dentists &amp; podiatrists should deliver outreach in places those experiencing homeless frequent, such as THOMAS &amp; Platform 5. These environments would then become 'one stop</p>	<p>This recommendation needs to be considered further across the organisation to see how best this could be delivered / contracted.</p>

<p>shops' for all support needs, improving access &amp; reducing inequality.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendation 18</b> HMO's should provide more support, equipping individuals with life skills to prepare them for independent living in the future. Blackburn with Darwen HMO Quality Standards , 4.7 Care, Supervision and Support (Exempt Accommodation) The implications of the Care Act mean that Local Authorities must now ensure that they promote Wellbeing Prevent (or postpone) any reduction of wellbeing and Provide Information on support available HMO's should be proactive in allowing this to happen.</p>	