

Update paper

Purpose of Report

For information.

Summary

This report sets out other updates relevant to the Board, and not included elsewhere.

LGA Plan Theme: Putting people first

Recommendations

That Members of the Community Wellbeing Board are asked to:

Provide oral updates on any other outside bodies / external meetings they may have attended on behalf of the Community Wellbeing Board since the last meeting;

and Note the updates contained in the report.

Contact details

Contact officer: Mark Norris

Position: Principal Policy Adviser

Phone no: 020 7664 3241

Email: Mark.Norris@local.gov.uk

Update paper

NHS Partners

1. On 14 March, Cllr David Fothergill and Cllr James Jamieson had an introductory and informal meeting with Richard Meddings, the Chair of NHS England.
2. On 3 April, Cllr David Fothergill attended the first meeting of the NHS Confederation and LGA joint working group on Health and Devolution.

Mental Health Act

Joint Committee Inquiry on the Draft Mental Health Bill

3. The Joint Committee on the Draft Mental Health Bill was appointed by the House of Lords and the House of Commons in July 2022 to consider the government's draft Bill to reform the Mental Health Act 1983 (the Act). The [LGA and ADASS made a submission to the Inquiry](#) in September 2022. The Joint Committee Inquiry reported its findings in January 2023. The Committee welcomed the draft Mental Health Bill concluding it makes important changes to introduce more choice, accountability, and oversight into the use of the Mental Health Act 1983 (MHA). However, the committee believes the measures in the draft Bill should be strengthened in a number of ways, such as;
 - 3.1 including the four principles – choice and autonomy, least restriction, therapeutic benefit, and the person as an individual – on the face of the Bill.
 - 3.2 creating a Mental Health Commissioner to oversee the direction of travel for the reforms and their implementation, monitoring outcomes and supporting cultural change. The commissioner would also serve as an advocate for patients, their families and carers and speak up about the stigma still attached to severe mental illness
 - 3.3 requiring all health organisations be required to appoint a responsible person to collect and publish data on, and oversee policies to address, racial and ethnic inequalities
 - 3.4 abolishing community treatment orders for Part II patients (those not involved in the criminal justice system), and a statutory process and timeline be put in place for their review and potential abolition for Part III patients (those involved with the criminal justice system)

- 3.5 providing clearer guidance and tighter drafting of the detention criteria to ensure it is not used to turn away those who need help. The committee also recommends making the changes in criteria consistent between Parts II and III of the Act
 - 3.6 stronger duties on health and care bodies to ensure proper implementation of community care improvements and stronger safeguards against inappropriate detention for individuals with a learning disability and autism.
4. The LGA were pleased to see that the committee stressed that proper resourcing and implementation of the reforms will be crucial, and the provision of high-quality community alternatives to inpatient care are especially crucial. Most witnesses were unconvinced that the government's resourcing plans were adequate. The committee also highlights that mental health services are under significant pressure and, in a difficult fiscal environment, transparency and accountability will be key. The government should therefore publish a detailed plan for resourcing and implementation on introduction of the Bill and be required to report annually on progress during the implementation period.
 5. Next Steps: We are awaiting the response of the Government to the Joint Committee Inquiry recommendations. The LGA continue to work with DHSC to prepare for the introduction of the Mental Health Act.

Public Accounts Committee - Progress in Improving mental health services

6. In March 2023 the Public Accounts Committee undertook an Inquiry on mental health services. Based on the National Audit Office investigation into progress in improving mental health services, the Committee looked into whether the government has achieved value for money in its efforts to date to expand and improve NHS-funded mental health services.
7. The LGA wrote to Meg Hillier MP the Committee Chair in March 2023. The letter was signed off by both the Community Wellbeing Board and Children and Young people's Board Lead members. We wrote that the NAO report highlighted strong concerns about the lack of funding for local government preventative mental health services, with a particular reference to public health and social care budgets. Local government mental health services need sufficient funding to meet current, unmet and new demand for mental health support, including preventative mental wellbeing work that may stop the escalation of mental health

needs so that more costly NHS treatment is avoided. For many years, mental health services at all levels have been reduced despite rising demand. This means a risk of increasing a medical rather than community-based model of support.

8. We also wrote that the NAO report also noted the reduction in the Public Health Grant. Reductions in the public health budget prove counterproductive to both the public purse and health outcomes. It is vital that the Government supports councils to deliver truly sustainable funding for public health and local government.
9. We highlighted children and young people's mental health. We that further progress is required to fully support children and young people with mental health needs and to tackle the rising demand facing services. The LGA are increasingly concerned about support for young people who have the most complex needs. There are a growing number of children who are unable to be supported through traditional means such as a secure children's home and are not able to access mental health facilities due to not having a diagnosed and/or treatable mental health condition. Typically, these children are often those experiencing the most barriers to placement and further work is required to ensure the right support is available to them.
10. Next Steps: PAC inquiries usually result in the publication of a report. The report is not yet published. The Government usually respond within two months.

'Right care, right person' Agreement on police and mental health.

11. DHSC are developing 'Right Care, Right person' a National Partnership Agreement (NPA) on mental health and policing. This will be signed by Government, NHS England, the National Police Chiefs Council and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners. The intended aim of the NPA is to improve outcomes and the experience for people who need mental health support, improve accessibility to suitable places of safety, and to act as a catalyst for removing the focus on police being a primary responder to mental health. Concerns have been raised by the LGA, ADASS and other partners including as follows:

- 11.1 Concern that this model would be rolled out too quickly, with inadequate local engagement and partnership working, meaning that other agencies are unable to pick up demand.
 - 11.2 Risks that police cease engaging in cases where their involvement remained appropriate, leading to dangerous situations for patients and staff.
 - 11.3 Questions about the interaction of the NPA threshold with existing legislation.
 - 11.4 Queries about how the NPA interacts with the broader health and social care context ICSs and workforce challenges.
 - 11.5 Concerns that the agreement will have financial impact on local authorities – we have raised this as a potential new burden.
12. Next steps: A draft of the NPA will be circulated to key partners to review. The LGA will continue to work with DHSC to identify implications of the RCRP for local government and cost any new burdens.

Public Health Annual Conference

13. The eleventh LGA Annual Public Health Conference was held across three mornings on 21 – 23 March 2023. It was organised in partnership in partnership with the Association of Directors of Public Health (ADPH) and the Faculty of Public Health (FPH). To coincide with the conference, the LGA launched the [2023 annual public health report](#), along with [an animation for social media](#) celebrating all that councils have achieved in the last decade.
14. The conference included a total of nine bitesize sessions on a huge variety of key public health topics, including community development, mental health, devolution and the future of public health. The conference had a record almost 1,300 delegates register to join for the conference across the three mornings and a total of 43 speakers and chairs participated.
15. Cllr David Fothergill, Cllr David Baines, Cllr Rosemary Sexton and Cllr Mike Bell chaired various sessions during the conference on a range of key public health topics.

Webinars

16. On Thursday 11 May 2023, Councillor Joanne Harding chaired the webinar 'Public Health: Why isn't Government policy more preventive?' with Professor Paul Cairney, Professor of Politics and Public Policy at the University of Stirling.