

Press release: PHE highlights 8 ways for local areas to prevent mental ill health

Public Health England (PHE) has today (30 August 2017) launched a ground breaking new tool for local public health teams identifying the most cost effective mental health programmes. One of these 8 initiatives is an innovative resilience programme in schools that results in an estimated saving of £5.08 for every £1 invested (over 3 years).

The tool was developed in partnership with leading economists at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). The programmes it identifies are proven to reduce the incidence and/or risk of mental health problems at all stages of life: children and young people, the working age population and older people. Mental health problems represent the largest single cause of disability in the UK. The cost to the economy is estimated at £105 billion a year.

The full list of programmes identified in the Return on Investment tool are:

- Children: whole school anti bullying programme – every £1 invested results in an estimated saving to society of £1.58 (over 4 years)
- Children: social and emotional learning – every £1 invested results in an estimated saving to society of £5.08 (over 3 years)
- Workplace: wellbeing programme – every £1 invested results in an estimated saving to society of £2.37 (over 1 year)
- Workplace: stress prevention – every £1 invested results in an estimated saving to society of £2.00 (over 2 years)
- Collaborative care for physical health problems – every £1 invested results in an estimated saving to society of £1.52 (over 2 years)
- Older people: tackling loneliness through volunteering and social activities – every £1 invested results in an estimated saving to society of £1.26 (over 5 years)
- Adults: debt and welfare service – every £1 invested results in an estimated saving to society of £2.60 (over 5 years)
- Adults: suicide prevention – every £1 invested results in an estimated saving to society of £2.93 (over 10 years)

Alongside the tool, PHE has published several other evidence-based resources that will help local areas create effective public health systems that can prevent as well as treat mental ill health.

Duncan Selbie, chief Executive at Public Health England said:

A lot of mental health illness can be prevented, this will not only improve the quality of life of the individual but also provide economic benefits by reducing the financial burden of mental ill

health, which has been estimated to cost the UK £105 billion a year.

In order to provide a truly 21st century response to this important public health issue we have to give equal attention to the prevention of mental ill health as well as treating it.

Health Minister Lord O'Shaughnessy said:

Improving the nation's mental health is a government priority.

The tool and resources published today will give public services the evidence they need to ensure spending on mental health is as cost effective as possible.

It is part of a broad and ambitious plan to combat mental illness, which includes the first ever access and waiting time standards and record levels of public spending on mental health provision.

Professor Martin Knapp, Director of PSSRU at LSE said:

From our research in this field, there is good evidence for these (and other) interventions for mental health promotion and prevention. Our work, led by David McDaid, has concentrated on the likely returns on investment that adopting these interventions will make and bring to local areas. This work is good news for mental health and good news for encouraging a focus on prevention alongside care and treatment.

The tool and other resources are an important turning point in moving towards a more prevention focussed approach – helping those who are experiencing challenges to their mental health and also helping to improve mental health within local communities.

In order to achieve this movement action is required not just from the health, social care and public health sectors but also the community and voluntary sectors to give more attention to the wider causes of mental health problems including health inequalities and wider social determinants.

Major health bodies have thrown their support behind preventing mental ill health, signing a statement of intent. The Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health has also been published today and is signed by agencies including NHS England, the Local Government Association, NICE, the Faculty of Public Health and Association of Directors of Public Health.

PHE exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities. It does this through advocacy, partnerships, world-class science, knowledge and intelligence, and the delivery of

specialist public health services. PHE is an operationally autonomous executive agency of the Department of Health. www.gov.uk/phe. Follow us on Twitter @PHE_uk

Professor Brian Ferguson, Chief Economist at Public Health England said:

One in four adults experience at least one diagnosable mental health problem in any given year. 10% of children aged 5 to 16 have significant mental health difficulties. By investing in interventions for children, the workplace, adults and older people we can support people throughout the course of their life and prevent common mental health conditions.

£105 billion a year figure taken from: [NHS Five Year Forward View for Mental Health February 2016](#)

The full list of resources published by PHE today:

1. [Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health: consensus statement](#)
2. [Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health: prevention planning resource for local areas](#) (PHE) is a practical guide developed to support local areas across England to put in place effective arrangements to promote good mental health and prevent mental health problems.
3. [Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health: prevention planning resource for local areas and overview infographic](#)
4. [Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health: local planning resource summary](#)
5. [Stocktake of local strategic planning arrangements for the prevention of mental health problems: summary report](#) (PHE and Kings Fund) is a high-level summary of how local areas are currently incorporating mental health promotion and prevention of mental ill-health in their planning processes. The stocktake was based primarily on a content analysis of key planning documents in 35 local areas, including a random sample of 16 areas across England and 19 areas selected as possible examples of good practice.
6. [Mental Health and Wellbeing Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Toolkit: knowledge guide](#) (PHE) complements the Mental Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Online Profile which is designed to support local Health & Wellbeing Boards in developing Mental Health JSNAs. It brings together nationally available data on mental health prevalence, risk and protective factors and healthcare services

7. [Commissioning cost-effective services for promotion of mental health and wellbeing and prevention of mental health problems](#) (PHE and LSE) summarises the findings of modelling work to estimates the cost of investing in several different interventions for which there is evidence that they can help reduce the risk and/or incidence of mental health problems in individuals of different ages and/or promote good mental health and wellbeing.
8. [Barriers and facilitators to commissioning cost-effective services for promotion of mental health and wellbeing and prevention of mental ill-health](#) (PHE and LSE) examines some of the barriers and facilitators to the implementation of actions to promote better mental health and wellbeing and prevent mental health problems.
9. [Mental Health Promotion Return on Investment Tool and tool guide](#) (PHE and LSE) reports the Return on Investment to health and other sectors from investment in 8 different interventions to promote better mental health and prevent the development of mental health problems. Results can be tailored to local settings. The guide provides users with step-by-step instructions and guidance on how to use the Mental Health Promotion Return on Investment Tool.
10. [Psychosocial pathways and health outcomes: Informing action on health inequalities](#) (PHE and UCL Institute of Health Equity) provides a conceptual framework that focuses on the psychosocial pathways between factors associated with social, economic and environmental conditions, psychological and psychobiological processes, health behaviours and mental and physical health outcomes.

For further information contact: