

Three pillars & a paradigm shift?

The future Scottish Government approach to Public Mental Health

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What kind of Scotland do you want to live in?

“I want, and I'm determined, that Scotland will be the country that helps change the focus of countries and governments across the world to put wellbeing at the heart of everything that we do.”

- Nicola Sturgeon, First Minister, TED Summit July 2019

Scottish Government's approach to Public Mental Health is changing, and we'd like **your** input and expertise to help us do it.

Working with internal and external stakeholders including NHS Health Scotland and the Faculty of Public Health, the **Public Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Unit** have outlined three “pillars” around which we can build the future Scottish approach to embedding Public Mental Health into all policies.



Three pillars of Public Mental Health

Narrative



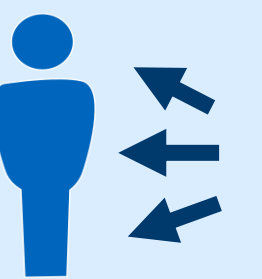
- Scottish Government will show leadership on developing the narrative on Public Mental Health in Scotland
- We want to change how we all speak about mental health and wellbeing, acknowledging that this can be challenging
- We want to galvanise and provide momentum to a range of existing activities, as well as prompting innovation
- An improved narrative would inform policy and media communications with a clear use of language and simple, persuasive concepts
- Our **goal** is improved public understanding and expectations of mental health and ill-health

People



- Many physical health promotion messages apply to mental ill-health too e.g. activity, diet, smoking, substance misuse, work / life balance
- Preventative actions to promote mental health and wellbeing will be recommended for the whole population, alongside specific ‘resilience-building’ actions for people with severe and chronic mental or physical illness
- Mental health-specific messages could include volunteering, helping others, or the role of arts and culture in supporting wellbeing
- Our **goal** is that every contact with public services should be an opportunity to promote or support mental health and wellbeing

Environment



- We recognise the effect that environment, society, deprivation and inequality have on population mental health
- We want to create circumstances for thoughtful and informed policymaking and planning in all areas which can impact on the wider social and environmental determinants of mental health
- We will aim to influence policies beyond health and social care across the economy, social security, education, employment and housing
- Our **goal** is to create conditions to promote and protect mental wellbeing outwith the NHS, taking a ‘Mental Health in all Policies’ approach.

Opportunities for paradigm shifts?

- In addition to these pillars, we want to explore potential step changes or paradigm shifts that may exist for Public Mental Health and wellbeing, building on the historic and current successes of public health such as clean water, immunisation, housing and food hygiene standards etc.
- This will involve working with stakeholders to apply a public health framework to the drive to improve population mental health in Scotland, taking account of and learning from past medical and social public health successes
- Step changes of this magnitude would need to be carefully considered in terms of the weight of evidence and risks of public and media resistance from people who do not consider themselves to be in need of universal measures.

Can you help us?

The Public Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Unit welcome the thoughts of the wider public health community on this new approach to Public Mental Health and how we can work together to realise it. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with us either directly at the conference or via the email address below:

Contact us: mentalhealthstrategy@gov.scot

