



STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD
1st April 2014

Mental Health

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To provide an update on the work of West Midlands Police(WMP) on Mental Health.

Introduction

2. This paper seeks to update the board on the progress around the Mental Health portfolio for West Midlands Police. This update builds upon the report presented to the board following the PCC's Mental Health and Learning Disability Summit in March 2013.

Background

3. The summit identified a number of recommendations which were merged with the Force Mental Health Delivery Plan. The key themes were identified as; data sharing, West Midlands Ambulance Service support for conveyance, progression towards Mental Health provision within custody as normal business, Liaison and Diversion schemes within the Criminal Justice System, engagement on Mental Health between the Force and Office of Police and Crime Commissioner and wider multi agency training provision.

Data Sharing

4. The development of multi-agency information sharing agreements has been a critical part of the last twelve months. Existing protocols have been reviewed to ensure compliance and effectiveness. Each of the four Mental Health Trusts within the WMP area has a policy, which enables information to be shared when appropriate. This process enables information to be shared in line with both data protection and Caldecott rules.
5. This process has been enhanced within Birmingham and Solihull with the implementation of the Street Triage process. Information is exchanged in a more efficient process enabling both Police, Ambulance, Local Authority and Mental Health staff to deal with incidents of risk presented in their daily work. This process has already seen improved outcomes for individuals on the street and reduction in the resources (Police and Ambulance) required to be retained at incidents.

6. The wider strategic approach to information is now being addressed with support, to review data to inform the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. At a local level work is being undertaken to scope out demand and need for services linking Mental Health Trust, Acute Trust, Police and Ambulance. The aim is to understand the trends which will support the Public Health agenda and promote more effective problem solving at a local level.

Conveyance

7. Following on from a number of critical incidents within the Force, a direction was taken to ensure that all conveyance of mental ill health persons was conducted via the Ambulance, thereby providing a more effective and appropriate response should a medical issue occur.
8. As a force we were able to influence the Ambulance Trust which is commissioned to deliver this service and service provision. The joint protocol is clear that all detentions under s136 Mental Health Act 1983 will be treated as a medical emergency response and conveyance will be undertaken with support from the police where necessary. The policy has now been agreed nationally and is due to be implemented on 1st April 2014.

Custody Provision

9. Mental Health is as significant component of the Criminal Justice System with 9 of 10 persons in Prison suffering from Mental ill Health. Ensuring that the future custody estate within WMP area has adequate Mental Health support, is commissioned by the NHS England Offender Health strand. To support this work and wider Liaison and Diversion agenda, discussions have taken place with the local Mental Health Trusts to consider a corporate approach. Both Coventry and Sandwell have access to a Department of Health / NHS England funded pilot schemes which will support development of a business case to the Treasury in autumn 2015. Discussions are also taking place with Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust (BSMHFT) to review the existing Court liaison scheme with a view to developing a more holistic approach. The focus will be an all age mental health diversion process which supports the wider agenda highlighted in the Bradley Report in 2009.

Engagement with the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)

10. The Force lead for Mental Health has established strong links with the OPCC, which has strengthened the engagement with the local community. Two officers with the OPCC have mental health leads and this provides a positive conduit for support and delivery.
11. Following the recent establishment of the Youth Commissioners, a Youth Commissioner has been identified to act as a Champion for mental health. This will support the wider drive to improve engagement with young people.
12. An area of regular discourse is around BME communities and engagement with the Criminal Justice System. Work has been undertaken to engage with both the Afro-Caribbean and South Asian communities. The Force attended the Black Mental Health UK conference in Wolverhampton where links were made and activity identified to improve service delivery.
13. WMP and BSMHFT hosted a National Place of Safety conference. The purpose was to raise awareness of good practice, provide a conduit for support at a national level and reduce the number of persons detained under s136 MHA 1983 taken to police cells. The conference was attended by 180 people from across the country and identified a

number of areas to support wider improvements including better data collection and pathway identification.

West Midlands Police Strategy for Mental Health

14. The Strategy and Delivery plan was commissioned in September 2013 and is now implemented. There is Strategic Governance through ACC Forsyth, to an operational level group aimed at improving delivery. The groups meet bi monthly and provide a holistic approach to Mental ill Health focusing on the recently published Crisis Care Concordat, Audit and review of data through to support mechanisms internally. Each group has representation from Local Policing and Departments which is able to shape policy and practice.
15. The crisis care concordat is due to be adopted by each local area; the ambition for WMP is to achieve a wider agreement to ensure that across the 7 Boroughs activity is delivered at a corporate standard.

Training

16. It is well documented that training for the Police Service around Mental Health has been described as inadequate. As such, a review has been undertaken. A PhD student has been commissioned to review the understanding of the police and use of the Mental Health Act which will report back in April 2014. The expectation is that this will support the current review being undertaken by the College of Policing and enable the force to develop the front line staff appropriately. In the short term a number of pilots have been undertaken to close the knowledge gap. In Birmingham and Solihull over 500 staff have now received a presentation delivered by the Trust to improve officer street skills and access to information. In Dudley a multi-agency training programme has just been commissioned to be delivered to both response and neighbourhood policing staff.
17. It has been agreed with WMP Learning and Development that Mental Health Training will be enhanced for all new Police Officers and Staff.

Street Triage

18. In January 2014, Street Triage was implemented in Birmingham and Solihull. The project consists of a Police Officer, Mental Health Nurse and Ambulance Paramedic in a plain car being deployed to a person in Mental Health Crisis. During the first 5 weeks 267 persons received a face to face intervention with 20 persons being detained under the Mental Health Act; for the same period in the previous year this was 55.
19. Individuals are now seen in a more timely manner, access to pathways for further delivery have been opened up and officer time has been freed to other policing duties. The project is due to finish in Dec 14, however; discussions have taken place with Clinical Commissioning Groups(CCG's), Local Authorities and Mental Health Trusts to consider adopting the project and main streaming into normal business. A full evaluation is being conducted later this year which will provide an evidence basis by which further adoption can be based.

Conclusion

20. WMP has been extremely active in this arena over the last 12 months. Following on from the excellent foundations left by Inspector Michael Brown the force is seen in a number of areas as delivering best practice.

21. The demand which Mental Health brings to policing is significant. There is still a considerable disparity between Mental Health and physical health. The stigma around mental ill health is also evident on a day to day basis. Our strategic objective is to develop an early recognition of mental health issues which determines the most appropriate response using a multi disciplinary approach. The work outlined above is only the start of the journey in this challenging arena but seeks to provide an update on the approach which has been adopted and the drive to improve service delivery to people suffering from Mental ill Health.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

22. There are no financial implications known at this time

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

23. There are no financial implications known at this time

RECOMMENDATIONS

24. There are no recommendations at this time

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Local Policing and Service Improvement