

Improving mental health and wellbeing in North West London

Case for Change - a summary





What this paper is about

We are setting out the vision for improving mental health and wellbeing across North West (NW) London. We don't say how we are going to do this – that's next – but it is an important step in bringing people together and agreeing a common goal for what the improvements need to be.

Why mental health and wellbeing is important to us all

We all have mental health – for some of us it's great and for some of us it is a real struggle. For many of us, it will be an issue at some stage either personally or for a friend or family member. Mental health needs can affect any of us, although we know there are certain things which makes us more at risk such as family history, abuse, debt, drugs, unemployment and loneliness.

Too many of us think it won't affect us, but it could. Mental illness affects more of us than cancer. It affects more of us than heart disease or stroke. It affects more of us than diabetes.

Over the course of a year, almost one in four people will have a diagnosable mental illness... Perhaps the person in the queue with us at the checkout. Three of the children in the class with our child. Thirteen people on the bus with us in the morning; maybe a hundred on the same tube train.

We want to help people improve their personal mental wellbeing, to know how to look after themselves and keep well. But we also want to make sure that if you do need help, that it is there for you.



There is some excellent care and support but we need to do more

In many places across NW London, the NHS, councils and charities are already working together to provide critical support for those in need. However, many of us still don't get the help we deserve and we want to change that.

25%

of people with mental health problems receive treatment, compared to

75%

of those with heart disease and

92%

of people with diabetes.

For example, only a quarter of people with anxiety and depression receive treatment compared to more than 90% of people with diabetes.

How we want everyone to feel

My wellbeing and happiness is valued

I am supported to stay well

My care is delivered at the place that is right for me

The care and support I receive is joined up

As soon as I am struggling, help is available

The issues and our ambitions

The goal is to promote wellbeing and to improve the mental health care and support we receive if we need it.

We have identified eight major issues that we currently face in NW London and the ambitions that we must all sign up to if we are to improve things.

1 Too many people face mental health needs alone

The issue:

- Mental health needs are experienced by many of us but only a minority receive treatment.
- Depression and anxiety are by far the most common issues, affecting around 1 in 6 of the adult population in London.
- In NW London we estimate that 2 out of 3 people living with mental health needs are not known to health services.
- Too many people face their issues alone, afraid of the stigma or don't know where to get help.

Our ambition:

We will ensure that mental health needs are better understood and more openly talked about and we will improve the range of services for people with mental illness in NW London



The issues and our ambitions

2

Not enough people know how to keep mentally well

The issue:

- Mental wellbeing is about how happy we are and how satisfied we feel with our life.
- What makes us feel good is different for everyone but will often include things like relationships, work, housing, exercise, money and friendships.
- Whilst we don't always know exactly what causes mental illness, we know that certain things can put us at risk and looking after our personal wellbeing can help that.

Our ambition:

We will improve wellbeing and resilience, and prevent mental health needs where possible, by:

- **supporting people in the workplace,**
- **giving children and young people the skills to cope with different situations and**
- **reducing loneliness for older people.**

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We need to improve the quality of care for those with serious and long term mental health needs

The issue:

- Serious long term mental health needs can have a devastating impact on our lives from our relationships, jobs and friends.
- Around 23,000 people in NW London have been diagnosed with schizophrenia, bipolar and/or psychosis, which is double the national average. Around 60% of these people are supported in the community.
- The demand on existing services means sometimes people wait too long to receive routine care.
- Between 13% and 52% of people accessing mental health care are also accessing substance misuse services.

Our ambition:

For people with serious and long-term mental health needs we will:

- **make their care journey simpler and easy to understand.**
- **develop new, high-quality, services in the community.**
- **focus care on community based support rather than just in-patient care so people can stay closer to home.**

The issues and our ambitions

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Too many people experience common mental illnesses, such as depression and anxiety, in silence

The issue:

- Common mental health needs – such as depression, anxiety, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder – are experienced by nearly a quarter of million people in NW London.
- The impact on lives is significant with women typically unwell for 7 years and men for 10 years.
- The suicide rate amongst this group is 20 times higher than average.
- Too many people do not seek help and when people do, often the mental illness is missed.
- This means that two-thirds of people not receiving any care.
- For those who do receive care, the quality of community based services are not always good enough.

Our ambition:

For those people experiencing depression and anxiety we will:

- **Improve how quickly we identify, especially when people are not currently receiving other healthcare.**
- **Improve the quality and quantity of therapy that doesn't require medicines.**



The issues and our ambitions

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3 in 4 of lifetime mental health disorders start before you are 18

The issue:

- The mental health needs of children and young people have been neglected for too long.
- Around half of all mental health needs in adults emerges by the age of 14, and three-quarters of lifetime mental health disorders have their first onset before the age of 18.
- However less than 10% of CCG mental health spend is invested in care for young people.
- The national Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce identified the problems which stop us from providing excellent mental health care.
- The publication of the *Future in Mind* report is enabling people working with children to look at how they can improve experiences for young people.

Our ambition:

We will ensure that implementation of the national strategy for children and young people responds to our local needs.

Around **50%** of mental health needs start before the age of **14**



The issues and our ambitions

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New mothers, those with learning disabilities, the homeless and people with dementia do not get the right mental health care when they need it

The issue:

- Depression affects many thousands of new mothers across NW London and tragically, suicide remains a leading cause of death for expecting and new mothers.
- 25-40% of people with learning disabilities have mental health needs and the prevalence of schizophrenia in this groups is three times that of the general population.
- People who are homeless often have both physical and mental health needs as well as substance misuse needs. Their situation means they often cannot manage their own condition.
- Dementia is a rising challenge for NW London and many people remain undiagnosed.

Our ambition:

We will improve the care for specific groups in our community and support available to those who don't always get the mental health care they need within existing services.

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Too many people with long term physical health conditions do not have their mental health taken into account... and vice versa

The issue:

- People with mental health needs are at higher risk of developing significant, preventable physical health conditions such as respiratory disease.
- People with Schizophrenia are twice as likely to die from cardiovascular disease.
- Similarly, too many people with long-term conditions do not have their mental health needs properly taken into account despite being two to three times more likely to have a mental health need than the general population.

Our ambition:

We will make sure that physical health and mental health are supported for people with existing physical or mental long term conditions, learning from other work in NW London around the importance of joining up care.

The issues and our ambitions

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Our systems often get in the way of being able to provide high quality care

The issue:

- We must make sure we have the right number of staff and that their skills are developed.
- We must ensure more people - including nurses, social workers, police, housing officers, and teachers - have awareness of mental health issues.
- We need better data and information sharing to know where we are successful and where we are not.
- We need better buildings in which to provide the care for those needing mental health support.

Our ambition:

Make sure that our systems help, rather than hinder, joined up care.



Next steps

In developing our understanding of the challenges we have listened to our residents, professionals and other interested parties. We have been heartened to hear great examples of sensitive care where our teams go the extra mile. But our plans described here are based on the examples we heard where we can do better.

We will continue to listen to feedback to make sure that we have identified that right issues and ambitions to be able to improve mental health care and support in NW London.

Once we have agreement, we will continue to work with patients and organisations across NW London to develop the plan on how to achieve our ambitions.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN NORTH WEST LONDON

2 million

The total population of North West London.



250,000

people with MH conditions including:

30,000

people with SMI.

people with Dementia.

What is Like Minded?

Like Minded is a project which brings together service users, carers, the workforce, third sector and other experts to co-design the strategy to improve mental health and wellbeing across North West London.



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