

West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership Board

6 December 2022

Summary report	
Item No:	50/22
Item:	Working in partnership to alleviate poverty - responding to the cost-of-living crisis
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Executive summary	
<p>At its September 2022 meeting, the Partnership Board considered a paper setting out the impact that the of the cost-of-living crisis will have on our staff and the wider population of West Yorkshire.</p> <p>Since this discussion we have been working to develop a set of common immediate actions that could be adopted across our system, recognising that a huge amount is already taking place at organisational level. This action plan is centred on mitigating the impacts of increased cost of living and poverty on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Supporting the health and wellbeing of West Yorkshire health and care of people who work and volunteer in the West Yorkshire health and care system (including voluntary and community sector employees, volunteers and unpaid carers) b) Supporting the West Yorkshire Voluntary and Community Sector to provide ongoing support to people and communities impacted most by poverty and increased cost of living and reduce the risk of losing services c) Supporting the mental health and increased risk of suicide of people as a result of the crisis d) Ensuring that services are taking a proactive approach to identifying and providing support to those who are at risk. <p>This action plan is set out at Annex A to this document.</p>	

In addition to this we have developed a joint statement [with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority] setting out our commitment to supporting people through this time. This is as follows:

The cost of living crisis facing our country and region is more than an economic issue. It will have far reaching implications for health and care services across West Yorkshire and will impact across both the people we serve and the staff we employ.

We know that financial hardship directly impacts on the mental and physical wellbeing of people, and as more people are pushed into poverty this will increase the number of people who need our support. We also know that a significant proportion of employees in our organisations, as well as carers and volunteers will also be directly affected.

This is a priority for us all, and all partner organisations across West Yorkshire are taking action to support people during this time. The actions set out below are the collective actions we have agreed as an Integrated Care System (ICS) and Combined Authority (CA) that we are implementing immediately to support people during this challenging time. They focus on:

- ***Reducing costs to households and providing support to employees in financial hardship***
- ***Supporting voluntary and community sector organisations***
- ***Ensuring mental health and suicide prevention services are providing the appropriate support***
- ***Ensuring that services are proactively responding to the impact of the cost of living crisis***

We propose that the oversight of this work is managed through the Improving Population Health Function at ICB level, supported by a steering group comprising the ICB, WYCA, Local Authorities and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) partners.

Recommendations and next steps

The Partnership Board is asked to:

- support the publication of a joint statement on behalf of the ICS and WYCA setting out our commitment to supporting staff and citizens; and
- support the action plan (Annex A) and agree to collectively implement it.

Working in partnership to alleviate poverty - responding to the cost of living crisis

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- Reducing costs to households and providing support to employees in financial hardship
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- Ensuring that services are proactively responding to the impact of the cost-of-living crisis

We propose that the oversight of joint work is managed through the Improving Population Health Function at ICB level, supported by a steering group comprising of the ICB, WYCA, Local Authorities and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) partners.

The Combined Authority is also taking action by supporting businesses with funding for energy efficiency measures, and reducing the cost of travel by bus, in addition to implementing the Mayor's Cost of Living Fund.

Action Plan

Action	Potential delivery vehicle	How WY level action adds value
1. Mitigate the impacts of increased cost of living and poverty on the health and wellbeing of people who work and volunteer in the West Yorkshire health and care system		
Support employers tackle the stigma of poverty by helping them normalise conversations with employees about money worries through the provision of tools and training, building on the work done by the workforce hub. For example, Feeding Britain is providing training on money skills for Councillors and managers in Calderdale. Ensure training is trauma informed, recognising the impact of poverty on health and wellbeing and decision making.	Employing organisations, supported by ICB Workforce programme	Sharing of examples of good practice for training. Potential to agree one training programme across the system. This could be commissioned or developed once across WY
All employers provide simple information about support available for staff, sensitive to stigma and reflecting the mental health as well as physical health impacts of poverty	Employing organisations supported by Workforce programme	Share examples and good practice
Support the normalisation of conversations about staff and volunteer mental health and suicide through the development of staff suicide prevention and preparedness plans. Use staff check in campaign resources and link to specialist suicide bereavement support	Kate Sims, supported by suicide prevention programme (Jess Parker)	Suicide preparedness protocol, development of campaign, delivery of workshops
Support employers in their review of mileage rate policies for staff who are required to drive their own cars to provide health and care services, e.g. consideration of pay systems which pay mileage expenses in advance of expenditure	ICB Workforce programme	Share examples and good practice

Support employers to review their salary systems which may enable staff to access salary through the month	Employing organisations supported by ICB Workforce programme	Share examples and good practice
Negotiate parity of staff discounts for employees of all health and care partners (including social care and voluntary and community sector)	Steering group to agree lead	Commission/ negotiate at WY level
Commissioners consider flexibility in use of resources for temporary salary increases in lower paid staff in providers funded by vacancies (e.g. in voluntary and community sector providers)	Steering group to agree lead	Share examples and good practice
Reduce the cost of travelling by bus for all residents, including reducing the commuting costs of people who work in the health and care system.	Delivered by the MCA and bus operators	Reductions applied at WY level

Action	Potential delivery vehicle	How WY level action adds value
2. Support the West Yorkshire Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector to provide ongoing support to people and communities impacted most by poverty and increased cost of living and reduce the risk of losing services		
Use the Mayor's £ 3 million cost of living fund to support VCSE to help those in workless households or experiencing in-work poverty to pay for essentials and access mental health and/or debt support	LA existing VCSE contracts and individually negotiated funding agreements	Targeting of regional funding available via West Yorkshire Devolution
Explore the development of Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE) funding mechanisms to support the sector's resilience in light of the increase cost of operating; and to maintain the provision of	Harnessing Power of Communities programme Improving Population Health Programme	Share experience and good practice

<p>VCSE support to mitigate the impact of poverty and the increased cost of living on health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Specific actions that will be explored include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancement of the Mayor’s £ 3 million cost of living fund with investment from the health and care system, e.g. use of winter pressures funding, resilience funding and creative use of vacancies funding. • Bring together funding offers where possible to simplify and streamline processes for the VCSE sector • Enabling additional investment to reach hyper-local, small and micro voluntary and community sector organisations who deliver the majority of support, the greatest value for money and are able to respond rapidly to local issues 		
<p>Review voluntary sector commissioning/ contracting policies, including exploring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of payment up-front to support cash flow and no longer provide payment in arrears • Greater flexibility in use of funding already allocated to VCSE organisations (e.g. vacancies funding to pay salary uplifts or cover increased energy costs) • Minimising reporting requirements/re-tendering processes where possible – saving staff time to focus on delivery • Timely decisions and communication regarding services due to end in March 2023. 	<p>Harnessing Power of Communities programme</p>	<p>Share experience and good practice; Share agreements / legal / procurement advice</p>

<p>Strengthen the contribution that the VCSE sector makes to reducing the health impacts of poverty and increased cost of living, including exploring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the role of Anchor Institutions (including Community Anchor organisations / larger VCSE organisations) in partnering with and supporting their local small and micro VCSE organisations • Enable more VCS organisations to link with the West Yorkshire Suicide prevention network with information on the WY Suicide Prevention website about the services they offer 	<p>Harnessing Power of Communities WY suicide Prevention Programme</p>	<p>Share Experience and practice WY/ Regional networks Suicide Prevention programme works at WY Level</p>
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Action	Potential delivery vehicle	How WY level action adds value
<p>3. Support the mental health and increased risk of suicide of people as a result of the crisis</p>		
<p>Promote WY suicide prevention website to the public and partners and review content so it links to support with money worries.</p> <p>This has been led by WY Suicide Prevention programme, but in order to reach the population required, consideration needs to be given to how it can be implemented through all place-based partnerships to ensure reach across the whole of the WY Health and Care Partnership</p>	<p>WY Suicide Prevention Programme Placed based suicide prevention partnerships</p>	<p>Co-designed, resourced and delivered at WY level – local and national updates added to the site by WY suicide prevention team and regular updates continued to be sent out across WY SPAN, need to increase circulation to wider area.</p>

<p>Raise awareness of the increased risk of suicide as the cost of living increases across WY partners.</p> <p>Increase the provision of suicide awareness training across the WY Health and care Partner organisations to help make suicide prevention everyone's business and increase understanding of the impact that financial difficulties has on suicide rates and individuals' decision to take their own life.</p>	<p>WY Suicide Prevention Programme</p> <p>Placed based suicide prevention partnerships</p>	<p>£40K contract being commissioned at a WY level.</p> <p>Set to reach approx. 1000 people in jobs supporting those with risk factors for suicide.</p> <p>Links to local and national training providers on website.</p>
<p>Extend suicide prevention social media campaign Check In with Your Mate www.staffcheck-in.co.uk/males - specific focus on Job Centres, credit unions, food banks, warm spaces and elsewhere</p>	<p>WY Suicide Prevention Programme</p> <p>Placed based suicide prevention partnerships</p>	<p>Campaign and assets developed at WY level and delivered by WY partners</p>
<p>Co-ordinate WY mental health service system and respond to increased demand caused by increased cost of living and poverty</p>	<p>Take to MHLDA Programme Board for discussion</p>	<p>Co-ordinate at WY level; share good practice and innovation</p>
<p>Explore developing regular communication with trained mental health first aiders in WY, providing information about the support available and inviting them to provide insight from people about issues that they are seeing on the ground</p>	<p>WY Suicide Prevention Programme</p> <p>Placed based suicide prevention partnerships</p>	<p>Co-ordinate a WY level</p>
<p>Provide information on employee mental health and suicide prevention to businesses in receipt of financial support with the increased cost of living and or doing business through WYCA</p>	<p>WY Suicide Prevention Programme; WYCA, Mindful Employer network</p>	<p>Deliver at WY level</p>

Action	Potential delivery vehicle	How WY level action adds value
4. Ensure that services are taking a proactive approach to identifying and providing support to those who are at risk.		
<p>Connect people at high risk of ill health from cold homes to affordable warmth measures (e.g. people on GP asthma, COPD, and CVD disease registers) Explore connecting with energy suppliers to explore proactively contacting people with health risks who are using less energy than expected</p>	<p>Place based with learning shared through winter warmth task and finish group chaired by Improving Population Health Programme</p>	<p>Share good practice Develop data sharing protocols, negotiate at a WY level</p>
<p>Provide information about health risks (including poor mental health and risk of suicide) from increased cost of living / poverty and support available, to front line staff across the system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Particularly focus on those visiting people in their own homes, e.g. housebound vaccination teams, health visitors, district nurses, • Be trauma informed and include the recognition of poverty and stress on decision making and behavioural choices • Link to Making Every Contact Count • Include specific information on health risks as well as access to support for staff working with specific populations (like pregnant families, people with disabilities or long term conditions) 	<p>Place based and communications led with support from Improving Population Health Programme</p>	<p>Share resources developed by place. Sharing good practice Consider developing training across WY (linked to action under 1)</p>
<p>Implement the recommendations of the NICE Guidance on reducing Excess winter deaths and illness and the health risks associated with cold homes</p>	<p>Relevant place-based partnerships, supported by Improving Population Health Programme</p>	<p>Share examples of good practice Identify actions that we can do once and share</p>

<p>Include fuel poverty and wider impact of poverty in winter planning including identifying resources to invest into affordable warmth intervention to reduce the impact of fuel poverty on the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the population, especially those most at risk.</p>	<p>Integrated Care Board and Partners</p>	<p>Adding additional resources to reduce the number of people unable to adequately heat their homes this winter</p>
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