Equally Well UK: Working together for equal health

Chris Lynch and Andy Bell, 12 June 2019
@CentreforMH @EquallyWellUK
Mental and physical health overlap

The overlap between long-term conditions and mental health problems

**Long term conditions:**
30% of population of England (approx. 15.4m people)

30% of people with a long-term condition have a mental health problem (approx. 4.6m people)

**Mental health problems:**
20% of the population of England (approx. 10.2m people)

46% of people with a mental health problem have a long-term condition (approx. 4.6m people)

From Long-term conditions and mental health: the costs of co-morbidities
http://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/long-term-conditions © Centre for Mental Health, 2015
Unequal health outcomes

- 15-20 year shorter life expectancy
- 3.7 times higher premature mortality
- Up to three times as likely to have diabetes
- Twice as likely to have heart disease
- More likely to die from cancer
- More likely to have multiple physical health problems
- Greatest health inequalities among young adults
What causes the gap?

- Physical health ‘overshadowed’
- Unhealthy ‘lifestyles’ ignored or taken for granted
- Symptoms not believed: missing signs of emerging illness
- Side effects of medication
- Unhelpful responses to self-harm injuries
- Unhealthy environment in inpatient care
- Poverty and insecurity
What might help to reduce inequalities?

- Health promotion from the start
- Medication management & decision-making
- Tailored support with smoking
- Improved access to cancer screening
- Dental health care
- Access to healthy food (including in hospital)
- Opportunities for physical exercise
- Improved understanding among all NHS staff
Everyone’s business

- Mental health services
- Primary, acute and community care
- Service commissioners and providers
- Education and training
- Public health and social care
- Charities and voluntary groups
- Research organisations
- Service users and carers
Collaborative to spur collective action on physical health

Set up by Centre for Mental Health, Kaleidoscope & Rethink Mental Illness with Royal Colleges of GPs and Psychiatrists

Three principles:
1. We all have a right to good health
2. No one organisation can do this alone
3. The answers lie in collaboration and coproduction
Charter for Equal Health

Sharing evidence, research and resources

Publishing blogs & podcasts on practice and experience

Organising learning events, webinars and other activities

Website [www.equallywell.co.uk](http://www.equallywell.co.uk)
Ambitions

- To create a nationwide learning network
- To bring people together across organisations, sectors and roles
- To establish a ‘brand’ for equal health
- To raise all our sights and expectations
- To enable people to enjoy better health for longer
Priorities for 2019

- Healthy weight management
- Tobacco smoking
- Learning events
- Resources (lots of them)
- Annual meeting (March 2020)
The role of primary care

- Physical health checks for people on SMI registers
- Mental *and* physical health support for people not using secondary care services
- Health promotion & disease prevention: links with social prescribing?
- Securing access to smoking cessation
- Medication management and decision-making
How can we reach GPs and primary care colleagues most effectively?

What resources would you find most helpful?

What issues would you most like help to tackle?
Thank you

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