

Divisions Affected - All

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

16 DECEMBER 2021

MAKING EVERY CONTACT COUNT (MECC) TO SUPPORT HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY PRIORITIES

Report by Corporate Director of Public Health, Oxfordshire County Council

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Health and Wellbeing Board is RECOMMENDED to:**
 - (a) note implementation of MECC in Oxfordshire to date
 - (b) agree to the arrangement of a MECC training workshop for the Board in early 2022 to support it in championing further implementation of this initiative

Executive Summary

2. This report summarises the implementation of MECC in Oxfordshire so far and describes how it can support delivery of the some of the priorities within the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. It also suggests next steps in expanding further implementation of this initiative.

Background

3. Making Every Contact Count is a programme which originally developed in the NHS. MECC utilises opportunistic conversations in everyday life to talk about health and wellbeing. It involves responding appropriately to cues from others to encourage them to think about behaviour change and steps that they could take to improve their health and wellbeing. The recognition of the value of MECC in prevention is its inclusion in the prevention framework.
4. MECC is an 'upstream' intervention that can apply to a range of settings within the community, beyond the NHS. Conversations are based on a 'peer to peer' approach to encourage people to be more comfortable to talk about health as

part of everyday conversations. More general information about MECC can be found here: <http://www.makeeverycontactcount.co.uk/>

MECC in Oxfordshire

5. We have an Oxfordshire MECC Partnership which is part of a wider MECC system in the region. The Oxfordshire MECC Partnership reports into the BOB (Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire West) MECC Oversight Group and into the South East MECC Network. The local group shares learning with other MECC groups which enables a consistent approach to MECC within the BOB region.
6. A key strength of the Oxfordshire MECC Partnership is seen in the collaborative partnership working between the various organisations involved. The Oxfordshire MECC Partnership is Chaired by Oxfordshire County Council and membership includes the Oxfordshire CCG, Oxford Health, Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust, Cherwell District Council, Carers Oxfordshire and others.
7. A range of organisations within Oxfordshire are already engaging with MECC training but there is potential to scale this up and increase the reach to other organisations that have contact with the public. The level and stage of engagement varies, but some examples of organisations engaged with so far include; the Oxfordshire Library Service, Carers Oxfordshire, Refugee Resource, Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service.

MECC and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy Delivery

8. The Health and Wellbeing Board recently reviewed its strategy in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and a paper summarising this review was presented at the last Health and Wellbeing Board in October 2021. It is important the Board now ensures that the strategy priorities are implemented in Oxfordshire.
9. The role of MECC is already captured as one of the “live well” priorities of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. However, it is an initiative with significant potential and broad scope. For example, it has application to any stage of the life course and can be used by a range of professionals within the local system. It might therefore be an initiative that can be included as a cross cutting theme of the strategy as opposed to sitting within one part of the life course.

Expanding MECC in Oxfordshire

10. There is an opportunity to develop the MECC approach with a deeper community focus, helping to contribute to addressing health inequalities, and developing community resilience by enabling a number of people who are skilled in engaging with local residents to be having conversations about wellbeing and health.

11. Training is available to enable people to gain the skills and confidence to have MECC conversations about health and wellbeing with others and to then to be able to follow up with signposting to support available. In Oxfordshire the BOB MECC training programme is available and we encourage people to signpost to the Oxfordshire Live Well website for further information and support. <https://livewell.oxfordshire.gov.uk/> A virtual training model was developed and piloted in 2020. This virtual training can be delivered as a stand-alone training session with groups or for more sustainability, as a cascade training approach embedded within organisations.
12. To achieve an increased reach into communities, consideration of a more localised community approach to MECC is required. An essential element of this will be the support and endorsement from the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board.
13. To achieve this the Board is asked to consider undergoing a 2 hours MECC training workshop to help it more fully understand the nature and potential of the programme. If agreed, this would help the board to champion the initiative, explore how their organisations can further expand the work and to provide leadership to the Oxfordshire system on this.

Conclusion

14. The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy adopted by the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board in 2018 has agreed priority areas. A wider adoption of the MECC approach will help with the implementation of this strategy. The Board has a key leadership role to play to support this.

Financial Implications

15. There are no specific financial implications associated with this report, although engagement with training will require organisations to commit some staff time to attend.

Legal Implications

16. There are no specific legal implications associated with this report

ANSAF AZHAR
CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

Annex: Annex 1- PowerPoint slides summary of HWB Strategy priorities and MECC approach

Contact Officer: David Munday
Consultant in Public Health
david.munday@oxfordshire.gov.uk

December 2021