

Health Improvement Board

28 November, 2013

Report on “Making Every Adult Matter”

Introduction

Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) is a coalition of four national charities – Clinks, DrugScope, Homeless Link and Mind – formed to influence policy and services for adults facing multiple needs and exclusions.

Adults with multiple and complex needs often:-

- **experience several problems** at the same time, such as mental ill health, homelessness, drug and alcohol misuse, offending and family breakdown. They may have one main need complicated by others, or a combination of lower level issues which together are a cause for concern. These problems often develop after traumatic experiences such as abuse or bereavement.
- **have ineffective contact with services.** People facing multiple needs usually look for help, but most services are designed to deal with one problem at a time and to support people with single, severe conditions. As a result, people with multiple needs are often seen as ‘hard to reach’ or ‘not my problem’.
- **live chaotic lives.** Facing multiple problems that exacerbate each other, and lacking effective support from services, people easily end up in a downward spiral of mental ill health, drug and alcohol problems, crime and homelessness. They become trapped, living chaotic lives where escape seems impossible, with no one offering a way out.

Making Every Adult Matter - Oxford

Oxford City Council with partners across a wide range of statutory and voluntary sector partners submitted an Expression of Interest to the MEAM coalition in early 2013 to become a pilot area for the South East and was chosen as one of nine local authority areas to work with the national partners to deliver improved outcomes and interventions for people with multiple needs.

Oxford City Council will be the lead agency for this work. Partners include the following organisations:-

- Oxfordshire County Council (including Mental Health, Housing Related Support and Young People’s Commissioning, Drug and Alcohol Action Team and Vulnerable Adults Teams)
- Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group - mental health commissioning
- Oxford Health - statutory mental health
- Thames Valley Probation
- Thames Valley Police
- Voluntary sector representatives including those working with people with mental health problems, homeless and complex needs.
- Homeless Link (Local Network Team from national coalition)
- Mind (Local Network Team from national coalition)

Although this initial pilot phase will be focussed on the City, learning, good practice and implications can be shared both across the County.

The MEAM approach

Author : Nerys Parry, Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager, OCC
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The MEAM approach provides a non-prescriptive framework for developing a coordinated approach in our local area. It does not bring extra resources into an area but seeks to organise current resources in a more effective way to help meet the needs of this group of vulnerable people.

The MEAM approach is broadly as follows:-

- **Partnership and Audit**
- **Consistency in Client Identification**
- Coordination for Clients and Services
- Flexible Responses from Services
- Service Improvement and Gap Filling
- Measurement of Success
- Sustainability and Systems Change

Partnership

Oxford is at the planning phase and is currently in the process of establishing its governance group as well as a broader partnership of interested parties.

The governance group will be made up of senior managers who will be responsible for developing MEAM and brokering the necessary partnerships as well as reporting to the HIB periodically. The partnership will be a wider group of organisations all of which will have an interest in the agenda

Audit and Client Identification

Having agreed on the definition of the client group, we are looking to carry out an audit of need in order to establish how many clients with these complex and multiple needs we believe there are in the City so that we can tailor our response. A small working group has been established to carry out this work.

Having established the need we will then be able to progress to the next steps of the process and begin to co-ordinate our response.

It is worth noting that MEAM does not necessarily look to establish new services for this client group although in time it may be appropriate to appoint a co-ordinator to pull together client work and approaches to various agencies. In fact, its essence is in looking at mainstream services and helping them where necessary and with a co-ordinated approach to flex their approach and service to meet the needs of this client group at the earliest opportunity.

In order to achieve this, buy-in at a senior level is essential to give the authority for this flexibility.