

Health Improvement Board

12th September 2024. Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health Update and mental health initiatives.

1. Purpose / Recommendation

The purpose of this paper is to present the new Framework and Action Plan for the Mental Health Prevention Concordat, provide a 6-month progress update for the mental health training and outline the new digital offer for Children and Young People (CYP). The Health Improvement Board are asked to:

- Support the Mental Health Framework and action plan for 2024-2027
- Note the progress of the Suicide Prevention Strategy refresh
- Note the Mental Health Training Service
- Note the Children's and Young People's Digital Offer
- Note the Better Mental Health Fund

2. Background

In 2023, around 1 in 5 children and young people aged 8 to 25 years in England had a probable mental disorder. This was 20.3% of 8- to 16-year-olds, 23.3% of 17- to 19-year-olds and 21.7% of 20- to 25-year-olds. Probable rates were similar for boys and girls, while for 17- to 25-year-olds, rates were twice as high for young women than young men¹. This suggests there are around 35,000 children and young people with a probable mental disorder in Oxfordshire.

As of 2022/23 there were a total of 3,691 school pupils in Oxfordshire supported with a primary need of social, emotional and mental health. Rates are increasing and above average for both primary and secondary school ages. The greatest increase between 2019 and 2023 were females at secondary school, where those with social, emotional and mental health as a primary need increased by 391 (134%).

At an England level, the groups that were most likely to be persistent absentees² in 2021/22 were pupils with social, emotional and mental health primary educational needs (50.4%)² and children with a mental health disorder financially less likely to be able to access activities³.

We have seen improvements in average wellbeing scores for people aged 16 and over in Oxfordshire with mean scores for feeling "worthwhile", "happiness" and "life satisfaction" each increasing by 0.1%, 2% and 1.7% ([Oxfordshire JSNA 2023](#)).

The latest 2022-23 ONS wellbeing scores for Oxfordshire – happiness, life satisfaction, worthwhile – show a similar level to the previous year. Between 2021-22 and 2022-23 in England the average level of anxiety increased significantly. Levels of anxiety appear to have decreased in Oxfordshire, although are not statistically different to the England average.

¹ [MHCYP Wave 4 - Briefing Presentation \(Final\).pdf \(digital.nhs.uk\)](#)

² [Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care \(phe.org.uk\)](#)

³ [Mental Health of Children and Young People in England, 2023 - wave 4 follow up to the 2017 survey - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

According to the latest Active Lives Survey (Nov22-Nov23) almost a quarter of people aged 16+ (24%) in Oxfordshire feel lonely *often/always* or *some of the time*, just below the England average (25%)⁴.

Over the 20 years from 2001 to 2021, the number of people aged 75+ in Oxfordshire increased by 20,600 (+49%). In the 20-year period between 2021 and 2041, this age group is expected to increase by 40,200 residents (+62%), almost double the number added in the previous 20 years. According to the 2024 Carers Week report, by far the biggest negative impact due to unpaid caring is on mental health⁵.

3. Key Progress

Mental Health Prevention Framework

Mental health and a wider sense of wellbeing is a local and national public health priority and is now widely recognised as an asset to invest in throughout our lives. We know that mental health is complex and multi-faceted, and prevention efforts should take a multi-agency approach, utilising the skills and knowledge from local partners, stakeholders, and those with lived experience.

Partners (shown below) across Oxfordshire signed up to the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health in 2019 and developed the first Oxfordshire Mental Health Prevention Framework 2020-2023 to ensure the promotion of good mental health remained a local priority in Oxfordshire.



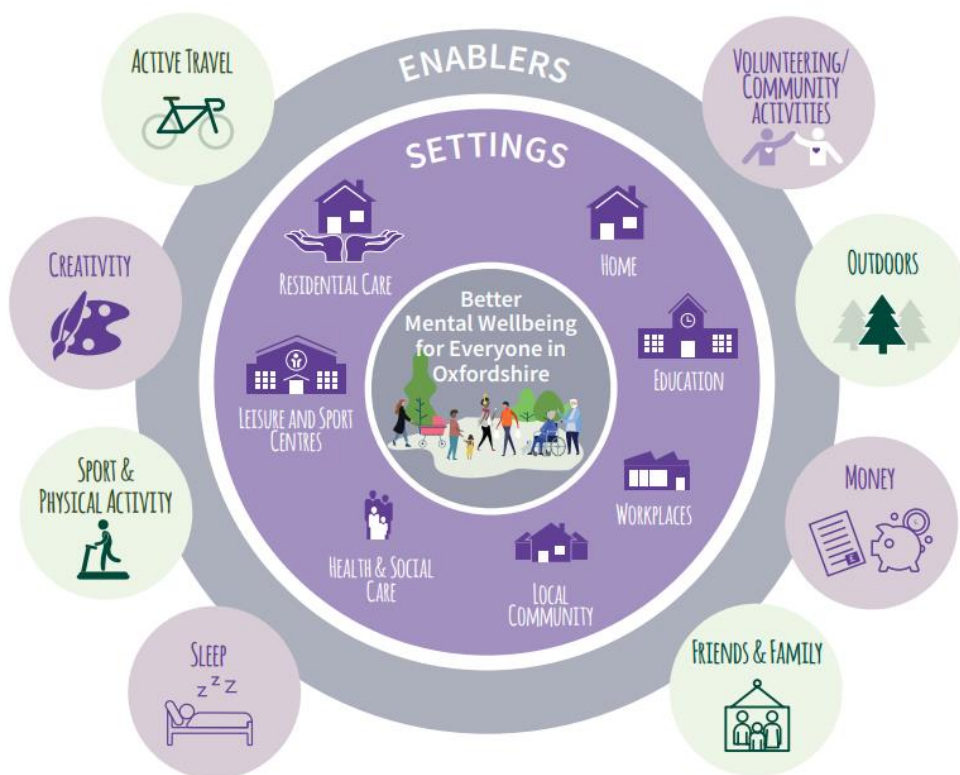
⁴ [Active Lives data tables | Sport England](#)

⁵ [Carers Week Report 2024](#)

Lots of progress has been made since 2020 despite the challenges throughout this time. A Mental Wellbeing Needs Assessment was completed to inform priorities, the Oxfordshire Communications Group was set up and delivered 9 joint mental health and wellbeing campaigns, and the Oxfordshire Men’s Health Partnership successfully developed and launched their 30 Chats in 30 Days Campaign.

The Oxfordshire Men’s Health Partnership continues to grow and promote work focused on reducing the inequalities in men’s health, particularly in relation to suicide data and wellbeing. The partnership meetings are well attended with around 20 organisations attending each quarterly meeting including: Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City Council, Oxford University Hospitals, Oxfordshire Mind, Thames Valley Police and Oxfordshire Libraries.

[The updated Mental Health Prevention Framework 2024-2027](#) has been developed to continue the work the partnership group has committed to do, and to identify opportunities for further collaboration and innovation to support people at risk of and experiencing poor mental health. To succeed, we recognise we need to address the wider social determinants of health, focus on the enablers of good mental health (shown below) and tailor our approach to address the needs of our communities.



The Concordat’s vision is that everyone in Oxfordshire has the opportunity to achieve good mental health and wellbeing. Partners have worked together to develop actions within four key focus areas:

Collaboration and Co-production

- Continue to support and maintain the effectiveness of the Concordat Partnership and sub-groups including the Oxfordshire Communications group and Oxfordshire Men's Health Partnership.
- Co-ordinate and communicate mental wellbeing campaigns for partners, adopting national branding where possible.
- Broaden the reach and influence of the Concordat Partnership using opportunities to influence policy and strategy.

Insight and Evaluation

- Identify and analyse emerging community insight on mental health to capture the local (Oxfordshire) voice.
- Seek good practice and research opportunities to support the work of the Concordat.
- Stay up to date with national and local latest insights and findings on mental health.

Confident Workforce

- Upskill frontline staff and volunteers around Mental Health Awareness and Suicide Prevention, prioritising settings and groups identified in the Mental Wellbeing Needs Assessment.
- Develop a network to share good practice, identify further need and empower people to develop their role in supporting the mental wellbeing of individuals and communities.
- Support employers to feel confident talking about mental health with their workforce in a way that is culturally and socially relevant and uses inclusive language.

Resilient Communities

- Continue to explore, identify and share funding opportunities with the group to deliver community-based initiatives.
- Promote wellbeing through connection to people and place.
- Focus on groups in the community with identified need.

Suicide Prevention Strategy refresh

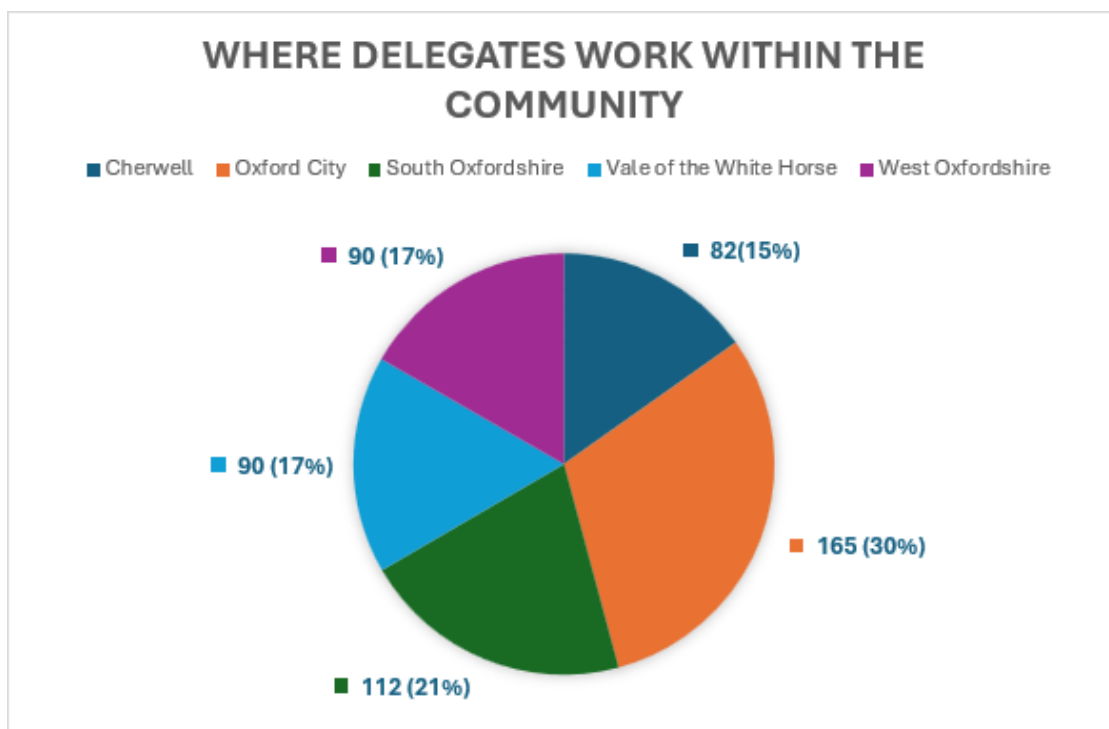
Work began in July to update and refresh the Oxfordshire Suicide and Self-Harm Prevention Strategy with a multi-agency strategy workshop, where partners were given the opportunity to shape the new strategy. Several other projects to analyse the current priorities in Oxfordshire have been undertaken by the Oxfordshire County Council public health team and further engagement is planned in Autumn to gather feedback from people with lived experience. All this data and insight will then be used to create the new strategy, which is due to be released in early 2025, with the Oxfordshire Suicide Prevention Multi-Agency Group holding governance and monitoring progress with system-wide partners.

Mental Health Training

The need for a comprehensive Mental Health and Suicide Prevention training service across the county was highlighted by the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental

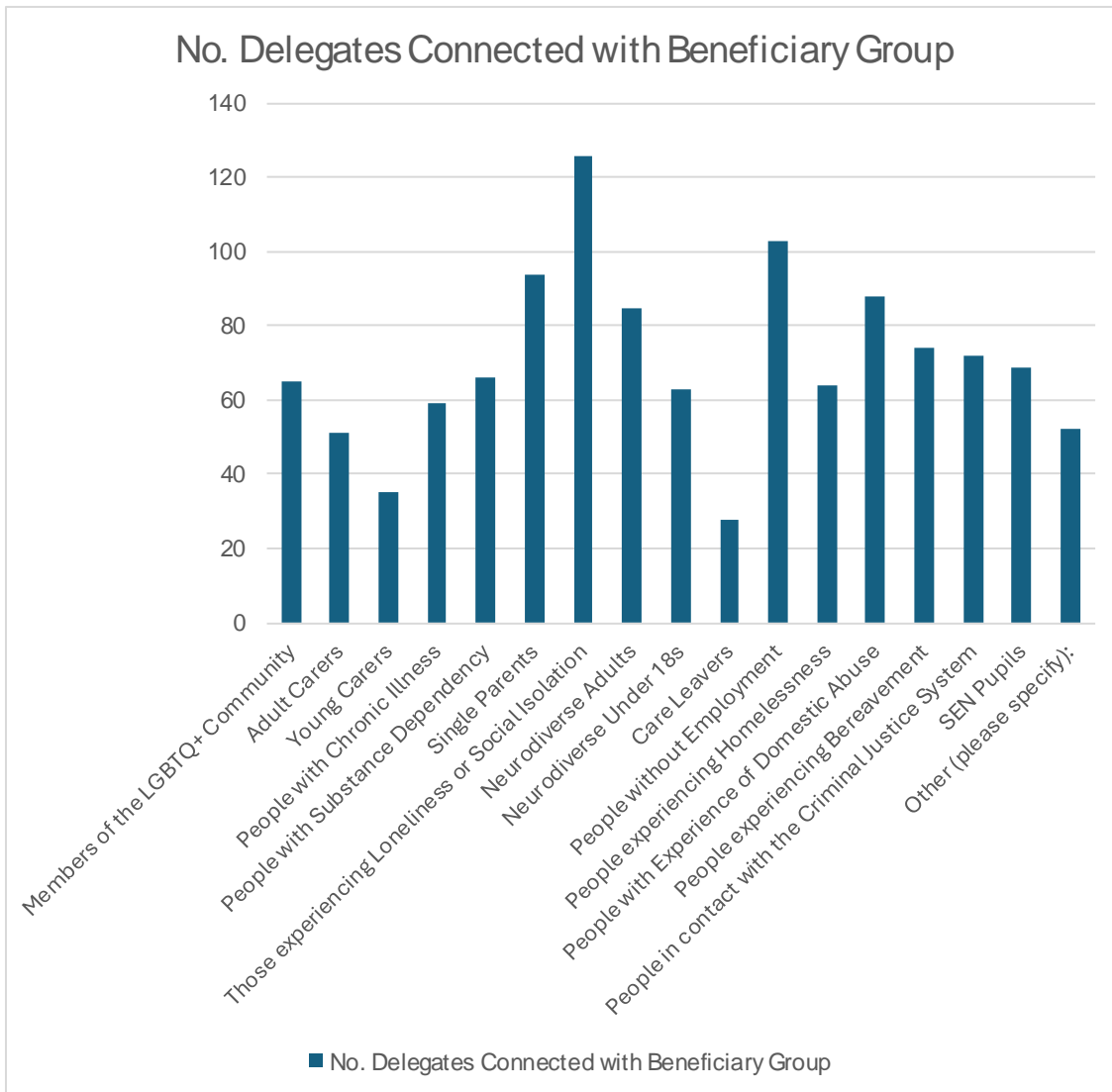
Health Partnership group and commissioning a new service was a key action in the previous framework.

Oxfordshire Mind was commissioned to provide a mental health training service for staff and volunteers working with established priority groups in October 2023 and training delivery commenced in January 2024. The training has been made available to those supporting or in consistent contact with groups of the community that have an elevated risk of ill mental health and organisations that traditionally would not routinely receive mental health training, including staff and volunteers working within Bullingdon prison, care leavers, care staff, taxi drivers and bar staff. To date, the training has been delivered across Oxfordshire, see graph below.



There are a range of courses on offer, including half-day awareness sessions that explore mental health as a topic and instruct delegates on how to have a conversation around mental health, and 2-day Youth Mental Health First Aid that goes into detail on topics like eating disorders, suicide and psychosis. Suicide First Aid Lite and SPEAK training, both half-day courses dedicated to the topic of suicide and instructing delegates on how to safely approach the topic with someone experiencing crisis are also available.

The Oxfordshire Mind training suite is suitable for staff and volunteers working with people of all ages and has been delivered both in-person and online. The content is comprehensive, allowing people with no background knowledge of the topic to engage and learn. Bespoke courses, tailored to the needs of individual delegate groups will be available in the future. To date, the training has been delivered to organisations working across a range of beneficiary groups, shown in the graph below.



Enthusiasm for the project is incredibly high, and we have heard how valued this training is in the community. Feedback has been excellent, with 100% of delegates reporting “Good” or “Excellent” satisfaction scores after the training, with 91% reporting an increase in confidence around mental health topics and 94% reporting an increase in knowledge on the subject.

“Thank you for a very useful, thought provoking course. I feel I gained confidence, learned a lot and was able to reflect on my own mental health too. It was also an enjoyable and well run half day (which I hadn't been looking forward before I attended). I'm now looking forward to following up with other courses.”

“A good opportunity to refresh and consolidate as I am dealing with clients with mental health issues and being an active listener on a daily basis in my job”

“It was a confronting yet positive training experience. (The tutor) made me feel comfortable about a potentially uncomfortable topic.”

Children and Young Peoples Digital Offer – Tellmi

Partnership working in Oxfordshire across the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health, The Suicide Prevention Multi-Agency Group, and the Children and Young People’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Project Board has proved instrumental in the new commission of Tellmi in Oxfordshire to support and improve the mental health of young people.

[Tellmi](#) is a digital mental health service available 24/7 365 days a year, which delivers pre-moderated peer and counsellor support to children and young people from the age of 11. It has been designed with the input of over 6,000 young people and has safely supported over 85,000 young people since its launch in 2017. It is anonymous and provides a safe space in which young people can help themselves by helping each other. Young people can discuss their challenges and provide each other with reciprocal support, advice, and empathy.

This has been evidenced to improve emotional resilience, social functioning, and overall mental health outcomes. The app also features a directory of 700+ crisis and specialist services, and psychoeducation and self-care tools, which can be filtered by topic and postcode. [More on Impact and Evidence](#)

It will be available in Oxfordshire from September 2024 to provide access to the app to all 11- to 18-year-olds and partners will additionally be engaging with schools and community organisations to offer training, resources, and workshops as well as data insights to Oxfordshire County Council.

Better Mental Health Fund

Working in partnership with Oxfordshire Community Foundation (OCF), the Better Mental Health fund awarded £210,000 of mental health grants in August 2024 to 8 grassroots organisations across Oxfordshire. The Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health group will oversee the grants in partnership with OCF and a small working group will be set up to provide advice and support to recipients where appropriate. The grants have aim to:

- Support the prevention of poor mental health and cultivate good mental wellbeing for the people of Oxfordshire in their communities.
- Narrow inequalities in mental health and wellbeing; and support community-based activities including peer support and community support groups.

Local mental health data has informed the target recipients who are:

- Pregnant women and new mothers, including their families.
- Autistic children and young people and their families.
- LGBTQ+ young adults.
- 30–59-year-old men, especially those experiencing relationship issues.

4. Budgetary implications

The partnership has been operating without a dedicated budget; however, the Prevention Concordat partners have provided staff time and resources.

5. Equalities implications

The Mental Wellbeing Needs Assessment helped to identify groups that may be more at risk of poor mental wellbeing and the partnership shared learning from the community Participation Action Research and other local insight. This informed previous actions and has been used to develop the action plan for 2024-27, which aims to further target action to meet these identified needs.

6. Communications

The Oxfordshire Communications Group continues to work in partnership with the Concordat and the Oxfordshire Men's Health Partnership in a triangular approach, which has led to several successful collaboration projects and the joint delivery of several mental health campaigns including around Sleep, Men's Health Week, World Mental Health Day and Maternal Mental Health Awareness Week.

The Mental Health Training offer has been promoted across all groups and several organisations from the Communications Group and Men's Health Partnership have received training in 2024, reaching many of the priority groups. An example of effective collaboration across groups is the partnership between the Men's Health Partnership and Oxfordshire Mind, who worked collaboratively to deliver suicide prevention training to staff members at HMP Bullingdon.

Members of the Communications Group have also co-produced a Communications Toolkit. The concept of creating guidance for inclusive communications originated from discussions within the group, in recognition of the different levels of capacity when developing communications, especially in smaller teams, and in reflection of the rapidly evolving landscape of language and recommendations for inclusive communications. This is due to be released in Autumn 2024 and will be shared widely across these multi-agency groups to promote effective, inclusive communication.

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