

Foreword

Clinical Commissioning Groups

Why do mental health and employment matter to Clinical Commissioning Groups?

“Mental health is a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.” *World Health Organisation.*

Effective action to support employment for people living with mental illness can enable Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to deliver benefits both to their patients and to the public purse. Primary care, community teams, third sector organisations, and secondary care providers all have a key part to play in delivering services and support to enable individuals to remain in, or return to, work. Commissioners of these services have a pivotal role in securing resources and investing them well to ensure the local benefits of employment and mental wellbeing are maximised. These include:

- supporting the wellbeing and recovery of patients and facilitating their ability to contribute to their local communities
- containing the cost of providing health and social care for mental illness, which increased in England by 70% between 2002/03 and 2009/10 to £21.3bn
- reducing the frequency of GP consultations which are higher both for people with mental illness and for unemployed people than the general patient population
- making better use of mental health resources, and reducing both the need for and the length of hospital stays
- delivering QIPP and NHS Operating Framework expectations, as well as NHS, social care and public health outcomes related to mental health and employment and long-term conditions

What can CCGs do to promote mental health and employment?

“The primary care workload from patients with mental illness can be as high as 30%, and many of them experience high unemployment, social exclusion, and significant physical ill health. CCGs should put mental health patients as a priority. We need to do all we can, working jointly with other organisations, to support patients’ mental health and employment needs and address this area of social and health inequality.” *Dr Haren Patel – GP, chairman of Hackney and City CCG, and vice chair of the London Mental Health and Employment Partnership Executive Group.*

With their new responsibilities for investing NHS resources to meet local needs, CCGs have a pivotal role in ensuring mental health and employment issues are reflected in local needs assessments, primary care and mental health strategies, as well as commissioning plans. **CCGs also have an important role in securing patients’ access to effective interventions; ensuring the strong body of evidence for psychological therapies and Individual Placement and Support influences resource allocation.** In addition, they have broader roles as employers and as sources of expertise for other employers and service providers. Some priorities for CCGs are to:

- Raise awareness of mental health issues and develop staff skills to recognise and respond to mental illness
- Promote professionals’ understanding of the benefits of employment for people living with mental illness – in particular its role in enabling and sustaining recovery

- Invest in effective services to promote recovery such as psychological therapies (through Improving Access to Psychological Therapies services – IAPT), and to facilitate return to work through the wider availability of Individual Placement and Support
- Ensure that IAPT and community mental health teams offer employment support integrated with clinical services
- Provide healthy workplaces for staff, promote early action on workplace stress, and support the employment of individuals with mental illness
- Support other local employers to recognise and respond to mental ill health and take effective action to promote staff wellbeing

How do we find out more?

The accompanying 'Work, mental health and welfare' document sets out the case for action, summarising the business case for investing, and the evidence base for effective interventions. It draws on a wide range of research, data and real-life experience from a range of settings and provides a full reference list for those wanting more detail. In addition to CCGs, the document has been developed to support the work of Health and Wellbeing Boards, large employers and small to medium enterprises as employers. There are numerous resources available to support you to take effective action, many of which are listed in the document, and those likely to be of particular relevance to CCGs include the following:

Comprehensive resource including reports and guides on work and health for both employers and health professionals

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/health-work-and-well-being/>

Mental health and employment advice, support and guidance for employers

<http://www.mind.org.uk/workplace>

<http://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/employment/index.aspx>

London Health Programmes information on mental health and work, including a practical guide to employer engagement, and information on Improving Access to Psychological Therapies

<http://www.londonhp.nhs.uk/services/mental-health/social-inclusionemployment/>

Information on many London IAPT services including self-referral details where available locally and translated self-help materials

<http://www.workingforwellness.org.uk/resources/general-information/search-map/>

Easy to use guidance on what individuals can do for their own wellbeing, based on detailed evidence

<http://www.neweconomics.org/projects/five-ways-well-being>

Healthy workplace advice for NHS employers

<http://www.nhsemployers.org/HealthyWorkplaces/Pages/Home-Healthy.aspx>

Health and wellbeing advice for HR professionals

<http://www.cipd.co.uk/hr-topics/health-safety-well-being.aspx>

Health and safety guide for employers

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/index.htm>

SHIFT Line Managers Resource – A practical guide to managing and supporting people with mental health problems in the workplace

http://shift.org.uk/files/employers/lmr2009_web.pdf

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