

TACKLING HEALTH INEQUALITIES

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Background: People who use drugs or alcohol services are known to suffer from a multitude of health problems and inequalities and do NOT access treatment until a condition worsens, resulting in poor health outcomes, poor prognosis, complicated treatment needs and higher mortality rates.

There is a clear benefit to integrating health care and addiction services with scientific evidence of mutual benefits, often increasing the ability to prevent further mental and physical health decline and to reduce the cost that this incurs.

Description of model of care/intervention: September 2021 Tackling Health Inequalities strategy and (THI) awareness month launched

Aims

- Improve understanding of inequalities and how we can contribute to minimising them
- Introduction of Health & Wellbeing Standards
- Increase BBV testing, access to treatment and staff knowledge and accountability

Stage One

THI champions were appointed in each service. These are staff from various disciplines including nurses, recovery workers, administrators, social workers and community connectors and two patient representatives

Stage 2

Staff took part in collecting additional data from our patients. The data captured unmet need across 7 areas of health specifically exploring our patients perceived level of unmet need.

Stage 3

Implementation of universal health and wellbeing standards across our services.

Effectiveness: Increased take up of MECC, Advocacy and the RSPH Level 2 Qualification in understanding health improvement.

Staff felt empowered to challenge decisions and advocate more effectively on patients behalfs; and to recognise the complexity and uniqueness of individual cases which require responsivity in terms of their care.

Conclusion and next steps: The key to the collaboration is open honest relationships based on maximising outcomes for our local residents who access our collective services.

Integrating drug and alcohol services and health care options showed an increase in the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of treatment as well as improving health promoting behaviours.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: *Nothing to declare*