Kent and Medway Listens

To understand the pressures and improve the wellbeing of (seldom heard) communities in Kent and Medway

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Kent county council (KCC) – Public mental health and suicide prevention team
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Purpose:
• To understand pressures impacting local mental wellbeing and improve mental wellbeing (indicators) across Kent and Medway

Objectives:
• To listen to communities about the pressure affecting their mental wellbeing and ways to relieve those pressures
• To provide quick-win funding to address immediate pressures
• To build capacity within communities to enable them to co-create solutions
• To provide senior decisions makers with local insights to help them make informed decisions with local communities

Audience:
The whole of Kent and Medway – with coordinated outreach with seldom heard communities

Scope:
This project will examine all issues relating to mental wellbeing (e.g. social determinants) rather than just the mental health services or suicide prevention
Stakeholders

Local communities/ Community leaders/ local religious leaders

Voluntary Community Sector

Kent and Medway ICB, ICS and 4 HCPs

Local authorities/district councils

Small enterprises/local schools and universities

NHS trusts/ primary care networks/ social prescribers/ care navigators
Listening and insights

5,332 community members were engaged with in Kent and Medway Listens

Top 5 pressures impacting mental wellbeing:
1. COVID-19 uncertainties
2. Employment security
3. Cost of living
4. Work life balance
5. Pre-existing health conditions

Top 5 ways to relieve pressures:
1. More mental health/ well being support
2. More community based support/ activities
3. Lifting of COVID-19 restrictions
4. Improving access, delays and experiences of healthcare
5. More specialised services for complex needs
Accountability and devising solutions

A total of £100,000 was provided to the VCS partners

- £25,000 was provided to each HCP area
- A total of 50 wellbeing project/activities were co-initiated with community members to address pressures impacting wellbeing

The Better Mental Health Network:

- The network was used to hold project accountability, enable collaborative working and be a learning network
- Open to all
Stakeholder workshops with over 240 participants:

- 4 x HCP reflection and action planning workshops
- 1 x ICS level reflection and action planning workshop

So what I’ve heard today is a call to arms. It’s a challenge. I don’t have the answers today. think anyone does, but I think what I can say on behalf of the Integrated Care Board, is a rock solid commitment to be part of the solution, part of the journey.

*Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board Chair - Cedi Frederick*
Successes, lessons learnt and unexpected outcomes

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<th>Engagement:</th>
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<td>● Community based approach:</td>
<td>● Rapport building with communities</td>
<td>● Hostility and lack of trust from community members</td>
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<td>● Elements of tokenism</td>
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<td>● Asset based approach:</td>
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<td>● Darzi Fellowship (LSBU)</td>
<td>● High level development of engagement questions</td>
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<td>Accountability:</td>
<td>● Co-design of workshops</td>
<td>● Space for continuous community input</td>
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<td>● (Growing) Better Mental Health Network</td>
<td>● Co-creation/ co-design- with communities of some wellbeing activities/ events</td>
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<td>● Understanding the system</td>
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Outcomes and Next Steps

Short term outcomes:
- Increased understanding amongst decision makers about local community needs
- Increased membership of the Better Mental Health Network
- Co-deigned grassroots community and VCS devised wellbeing projects
- Grassroot projects to address (where possible) issues raised from listening events
- Improved individual wellbeing (indicators) directly from project

Long term outcomes:
- Improved engagement with local communities
- Co-designed wellbeing action plan
- Improvement of individual/community conditions
- Improved community wellbeing (indicators)

- Current listening insights used for the Kent and Medway JSNA
- Recommendations from Kent and Medway Listens has been submitted for Cabinet briefing paper
- Current data will be part of the KCC Public Health Strategy
- KCC will be holding next iteration of ‘Listening’
- Next iteration of decentralised funding (community chest) has been implemented
- To continue building upon relationships (especially with VSC partners and communities)
- To involve listening champions in decisions