

## **Suicide Action Plan update for Safer City Partnership note**

### **Background**

1. The City of London Corporation developed a Suicide Prevention Action Plan which was agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board in January 2016. The Plan was developed by a task and finish group which had representatives from the City of London Police, the Metropolitan Police, the Clinical Commissioning Group, the Coroner and the Samaritans.
2. The steering group met in July to discuss how the Action Plan has progressed and are due to meet in December to discuss further updates. Progress on actions has so far been good but with some outstanding.
3. This paper outlines the progress on actions within the plan and also updates the Safer City Partnership on the progress of the Bridge Pilot.

### **Action Plan update**

#### **Progress on Actions**

4. Mental Health First Aid training has been organised by the Public Health Team and offered to frontline staff in the City.
5. Information, training resources have been provided to the working population through the Business Healthy webpages.
6. Leaflets with help seeking information have been placed in Section 136 suites at Homerton University Hospital and The Royal London Hospital.
7. The Mental Health Strategy has been developed and the Mental Health Action Plan implementation is being coordinated by DCCS.
8. The City and Hackney Clinical Commissioning Group have reviewed suicide risk reduction audit guidance with mental health inpatient settings to see which approaches can be adopted.
9. The Public Health Team are coordinating the development of a comprehensive suicide dataset. Data sharing agreements are being set up with the City of London Police, British Transport Police, the Metropolitan Police, and the City of London Coroner.
10. We are working with the RNLI to ensure adequate lifebuoy provision and signage near the bridges.
11. The Public Health England Help is at Hand document has been shared with partners and is available at City of London libraries.
12. The Samaritan's Media reporting guidelines have been shared with partners including the Evening Standard.

## **The Bridge Pilot**

13. Data collated whilst developing the Suicide Prevention Action Plan recognised that drowning in the Thames is the most common method of suicide in the City of London (57% in 2014). From London Bridge alone in 2014 there were 52 calls for help and eight who jumped. In 2015 12 people jumped from London Bridge.
14. As a result the Bridge Pilot has been developed as a joint initiative between the City of London Corporation, City of London Police, the Metropolitan Police, the Samaritans and the RNLI. The Bridge Pilot combines the recognised approach to reducing suicide at iconic sites by encouraging help seeking behaviour by sign posting to support and training frontline staff in how to recognise someone who might be at risk.
15. This 12 month pilot starting in April 2016 is being monitored to assess the effectiveness of placing preventative measures on London Bridge compared to baseline figures from 2014 and 2015.
16. Six signs with the Samaritan's phone number were put up on London Bridge to encourage those who may be considering suicide from a bridge to seek help. This had a cost of £270 which came from the City of London public health budget.
17. A leaflet has been developed by the Public Health Team which tell the general public what they should do should they come across someone on the bridge who they believe might be going to take their own life. 2,500 have been handed out on London Bridge since April by the City of London Police.
18. The Public Health Team along with the Samaritans, with input from City and Hackney Mind and East London Foundation Trust have delivered five training sessions to the general public and frontline staff at various locations in the City. A train the trainer model of the training has been developed. This has been delivered to 15 people, who are now also able to deliver the training and there has been more interest in this particularly from frontline staff.

## **Next Steps**

19. City of London Police cover five bridges on the Thames: Blackfriars, Tower, London, Southwark and the Millennium Bridge. Of 214 calls to the police regarding threats of suicide in 2014, 105 of these occurred from these bridges and 21 of 43 suicides attempted occurred from these bridge. It is intended, following the results of the Bridge Pilot that signs will be put on all other bridges under the City's jurisdiction. In July a paper was taken to Planning and Transportation Committee outlining these plans and members unanimously supported the idea.
20. It has been decided that signs will not be put on Millennium Bridge, this bridge sees the lowest number of attempted suicides and logistically it would be very hard to fit signs to the bridge.
21. The City of London Public Health Team are taking responsibility for the extensive administration involved in getting signs on the other bridges within the City. Tower, Southwark and Blackfriars bridges require Listing Building Consent and for a Design, Access and Heritage statement to be submitted. Tower and Southwark Bridges also

require Listed Building Consent from the other Local Authorities into which they cross. We hope to have signs on Blackfriars Bridge in the next 6 weeks. With cooperation from the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and the London Borough of Southwark it is hoped Southwark and Tower Bridge will follow shortly after that.

22. Following recent discussions with the City of London Police we are proposing that the Suicide Prevention Action Plan be refreshed next year and this becomes a joint document between the Police and the Corporation. This is subject to agreement by the Health and Wellbeing Board.

**Appendix 1:**

Sign on London Bridge:



Partnership wording here

samaritans.org

A registered charity

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