

Delegate questions and answers from our speaker panel:**“Mental Health Integration: what does it take to make it work?”****Webinar****Thursday 4 April 2019, 1-2pm****Speakers included:****Andy Bell**, Deputy CEO, Centre for Mental Health;**Brian Dow**, Deputy CEO, Rethink Mental Illness;**Sean Russell**, Director of Implementation for Mental Health, Wellbeing and Radical Prevention, West Midlands Combined Authority;**Dr Yasmin Akram**, Consultant in Public Health, West Midlands Combined Authority;**Jenny Welling-Palmer**, Mental Health Lead at Consultant Connect chaired the webinar.**Extra materials from the panel can be found on page 3 of this document.****The following Q&A is a transcription from the verbal responses of our expert panel:****To watch the webinar recording, [click here](#).****Question 1: Are you aware of any other programmes (other than Thrive at Work that you have been working on) ?****Answer:**

(Yasmin) So there are other work programmes, but I think Thrive at Work is one that brings together all the different elements because it's quite holistic. It covers not only mental health but musculoskeletal health, enablers of health and so on, and actually we've had organisations that have been working on a different programme, for example Worcestershire Works Well, and they've found that they can bring all that learning and knowledge into this so they can get accredited for both programmes. So, I'd say yes that there are some others, but Thrive at Work one's a structured holistic one that ticks all the boxes.

Question 2: Integrated care systems – do you think they are making a difference with mental health? Are they the right function to make a difference for mental health with integration?**Answers from the panel:**

(Brian) I think the answer is we don't know for certain, but I think there are some very positive signs, and whether it's through STPs, or the emerging ICSs, I think a lot of the things that we've all talked about today, and I thought Andy expressed it very well, that

actually national leaders have really – I think finally – got that message, that is integration. It is pulling these things together, it is finding creative ways to commission, perhaps, yes, to break some of the rules that will lead to the best results for people. So I have to say having seen both the level of investment that we hope will go in over the next ten years or so into community health services, but also seeing the kind of spirit of willingness that you were seeing amongst senior leaders, and I'm sure across local footprints as well, that I think they really do offer the best hope. So I'm genuinely very, very optimistic about how the future looks.

(Andy) So I'll make trouble and be a bit more negative then. I mean I think all the words are definitely right and integrated care systems sounds lovely. I just think it is too early to tell and it's disappointing that many are not the least bit coterminous for local authority boundaries and that's a real problem for where you're going to have an equal partnership. I think in many areas it feels like the NHS is trying to take over to people in the local government world, and that's just not going to wash. We'll have to see, but I think for some areas you can see where an integrated care system could really help to change some things that are very, very wrong, for example people stuck in the awful locked rehabilitation services, in hospitals, out of area, dislocated from their home, and there's not the scale in a Clinical Commissioning Group necessarily to build the kind of rehabilitation services we need, that would offer a better support for them. Whereas an integrated care system might be big enough to allow that. I think there are other areas where the geography is so big that being able to respond to local needs and work in an equal partnership with local councils and voluntary and community organisations feels incredibly difficult.

Question 3: What is the main takeaway from today's discussion that you'd like everyone listening to this webinar to take with them when they go?

Answers from panel:

(Sean) My New Years Resolution was to be chief mischief maker and I think we need to be, we need to be actually that person and the people to say 'actually break the norm', and exactly what Andy has said, and Brian's said, get ourselves into a space where we're really trying to make the people the heart of what we do.

(Yasmin) I think we can all do our little bit to improve the lives of those around us, even if it's something as simple as asking someone in a genuine way whether they're okay, so I think it's all about responsibilities, and we can make the world a better place.

(Brian) Treat the person not the condition.

(Andy) I'm not going to be that succinct. Do join [Equally Well](#), become part of our movement to make equal physical health possible, and tell us what you're doing, share the really good stuff so that we can share that around the country.

If you have any questions about the webinar, Q&A or Consultant Connect, please email hello@consultantconnect.org.uk or call us on 01865 261467.

Extra materials from the panel:

Dr Yasmin Akram from the West Midlands Combined Authority provided some extra information about the Thrive at Work programme she has been working on:

More information about the programme can be found at <http://www.wmca.org.uk/thriveatwork>.

Organisations can also register for this free accreditation and awards programme and get recognition for looking after the health and wellbeing of their staff. Yasmin is also involved in the 'This is Me' campaign which provides employers with the tools to change culture around mental health and support people to speak up about it. More details can be found at <https://www.wmca.org.uk/what-we-do/mental-health-commission/this-is-me> and new sign ups are always welcomed.

Andy Bell from the Centre for Mental Health sent some useful resources regarding initiatives they've been involved in:

Equally Well UK is one of three initiatives which began in New Zealand and seeks to promote and support collaborative action to improve physical health among people with a mental illness. It has been set up in the UK by the Centre for Mental Health, Kaleidoscope Health & Care and Rethink Mental Illness. They are working together with support from the Royal College of GPs and the Royal College of Psychiatrists. With support from NHS England, Health Education England, NHS Improvement, Public Health England and many more national and local bodies, they are seeking to bring about sustained change across the country. Everyone is welcome to join their collaborative. More details can be found at <https://equallywell.co.uk/>.

If you are thinking about prevention, Andy suggests this as a helpful starter for you: <https://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/vision-prevention>.

He also shares the Centre for Mental Health's briefing on the NHS Long Term Plan: <https://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/nhs-long-term-plan>

Brian Dow from Rethink Mental Illness sent us this document with some useful information about the work they do and how they can help you. [Click here to download it.](#)