

# Culture and Communities Committee

10:00am, Tuesday, 16 March 2021

## Developing Trauma Informed Services

Executive/routine  
Wards  
Council Commitments

### 1. Recommendations

---

- 1.1 The Culture and Communities Committee is asked to:
  - 1.1.1 Note the contents of this report
  - 1.1.2 Note the progress being made in Edinburgh Justice Social Work Services in relation to the Scottish Government priority for a trauma informed workforce.
  - 1.1.3 To request an updated progress report in 12 months' time

**Jackie Irvine**

Head of Safer and Stronger Communities and Chief Social Work Officer

Contact: Carey Fuller, Acting Community Justice Senior Manager

E-mail: [carey.fuller@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:carey.fuller@edinburgh.gov.uk) | Tel: 07711016163

## Developing Trauma Informed Services

### 2. Executive Summary

---

- 2.1 Work that has taken place in Criminal Justice Social Work services to develop trauma informed service provision has been highly successful. This work meets Council priorities in line with the Community Justice Outcome Improvement plan (CJOIP) 2019-2022.

### 3. Background

---

- 3.1 The Scottish Government has made an express commitment to developing a Trauma Informed workforce in Scotland. In recent months, Scottish Government has written to all local authorities asking them to nominate Trauma Champions who pledge to work towards Trauma Informed service provision.
- 3.2 This agenda has been driven by the ever-growing and international body of research which evidences that exposure to adversity and trauma can have a significant impact on a person's physical and mental health and development, social functioning and life chances.
- 3.3 Trauma can impact on how people engage with and relate to individuals in our organisation and the services we provide.

### 4. Main report

---

- 4.1 Work has taken place in recent years within City of Edinburgh Council Criminal Justice Social Work Groupwork services to promote culture and practice change. This involved explicitly adopting a trauma informed model of service provision that recognises and centres the contribution made by experiences of trauma and its impact, on service users' presentations. National guidance indicates social workers in justice services should be operating at "Trauma Enhanced Practice" level.
- 4.2 The work was led by a Sector Manager and a Senior Clinical Psychologist and involved the following activity:

- 4.2.1 Leadership Coaching and Development - engaged 11 leaders in ongoing trauma leadership sessions, coaching, trauma specific trainings and shadowing opportunities. This work also involved leaders in the project planning when changes to practice were to be introduced and in project delivery including leaders delivering training to staff groups and co-facilitating trauma informed group supervision in teams. On site access to project leads included leaders having ad hoc and planned consultations with the Senior Clinical Psychologist.
- 4.2.2 Staff Training, Development and Wellbeing Support - involved developing four days of trauma training for justice staff in line with the National Trauma Training Plan. A total of 78 staff were trained to the Trauma Enhanced Practice level followed by regular Trauma Informed Group Supervision to embed knowledge into practice and support worker wellbeing against the negative impacts of trauma work.
- 4.2.3 Changes to staff practice included introducing new routine Trauma and Mental Health Screening (TAMHS) for all individuals coming into contact with our services; developing new materials and resources for staff to provide different types of interventions and piloting a safety and stabilisation course for men with a trauma history who have criminal convictions.
- 4.3 Recent evaluation of the work highlighted the following key findings:
  - 4.3.1 Experiences of trauma are highly prevalent within the population of men in contact with Edinburgh Criminal Justice Social Work services
  - 4.3.2 Very high levels of mental health impact are present in this population including:
    - 4.3.2.1 Four out of five service users describe post traumatic symptoms indicative of significant levels of distress and impairment:
    - 4.3.2.2 Four out of five service users meet criteria for anxiety, including 68% with moderate or severe levels
    - 4.3.2.3 Four out of five service users meet criteria for depression, including 52% with moderate or severe levels
- 4.4 The prevalence of trauma and its impact, and the level of unmet need, indicates trauma informed approaches should be adopted across a range of services with a specific remit to work with people in contact with the criminal justice system, including other social work, support and mental health services.
- 4.5 The trauma informed service model adopted in this project was found to be compatible with practice in a broad range of Criminal Justice Social Work services and highly acceptable to front line staff, managers and service users.
- 4.6 Significant leadership resource and commitment is essential to bring about the necessary practice and culture change required to implement a Trauma Informed service model into existing Criminal Justice Social Work service provision.

- 4.7 Having a highly specialist Senior Clinical Psychologist embedded within the criminal justice service to provide expertise and appropriate governance relating to trauma interventions was essential and highly effective.
- 4.8 With appropriate leadership, training and supervision in place criminal justice social work staff can be supported to embed trauma enhanced approaches into existing social work practices, including protocol based psychological interventions

## **5. Next Steps**

---

- 5.1 Financial support is being requested to continue and extend the work of the project across all criminal justice social work services. This will be sought from the Edinburgh Community Safety Partnership and NHS Lothian Re:D budget. Re:d is an innovative community of practice established to promote partnership working to combat negative outcomes for individuals and communities that arise from deep-rooted inequalities, supported by Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership.
- 5.2 City of Edinburgh Council, and partner service providers, are invited to consider applicability of these findings in relation to the delivery of trauma informed service provision across the wide range of services with a specific remit to work with people in contact with the criminal justice system, including other social work, support and mental health services.
- 5.3 Trauma Leadership events will be available for online participation, to members of the Council Corporate Leadership Team and Elected Members in March 2021.
- 5.4 Work will take place to disseminate learning from the project and to support other service areas committed to developing trauma informed service delivery, for example in Homelessness services. This will include establishing a Trauma Informed Service Advisory Panel to bring together those with experience of developing, implementing, and delivering new models of trauma informed service provision, including partners from Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership. Together, with individuals with lived experience of trauma, the panel can provide practical support, advice, training, and other resources for services committed to support trauma informed service delivery.

## **6. Financial impact**

---

- 6.1 Existing resource from within Criminal Justice social work services is being utilised to support the work, specifically in management time allocated to the project.
- 6.2 Matched funding of £42,000 is being sought from Edinburgh Community Safety Partnership and NHS Lothian Re;d, to extend the financing of the Senior Clinical Psychologist

## 7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

---

- 7.1 Views of those using justice services have been sought prior to and during the project. Service users who experienced trauma informed services in the past through justice social work have indicated it helped them to engage with services and they found this type of service delivery more highly accessible. Findings demonstrated improvements across a wide range of aspects of their lives including in relation to self-efficacy, mental health improvements, stability in housing, reductions in substance misuse as well as improved coping, problem solving and self-harm. Preliminary findings from this project indicates service users found the changes in practice and interventions helpful.
- 7.2 Key stakeholders have included NHS Lothian, Re:d and Psychology including The Rivers Centre, Edinburgh's specialist trauma service as well as Community Justice Scotland.
- 7.3 The work meets Council priorities in relation to the Edinburgh Community Safety Partnership Outcome 3 (Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan 2019-2022): specifically that 'People in the criminal justice system experience improved access to and engagement with, housing and other support services'. Local priorities developing and delivering trauma informed leadership; and delivering services which demonstrate a greater awareness of men's experiences of trauma.

## 8. Background reading/external references

---

- 8.1 Geekie, J. and Pate, K (2021) *The Trauma Project; Developing, implementing and evaluating trauma informed services in Criminal Justice Social Work*
- 8.2 Homes, A. and Grandison, G. (In press; 2021). *Enhancing Trauma Practice: A Toolkit for Scotland*; Scottish Government
- 8.3 NHS Education for Scotland (2017). *Transforming Psychological Trauma: A National Knowledge and Skills Framework for The Scottish Workforce*. (Accessed December 2020)
- 8.4 NHS Education for Scotland (2019). *Scottish Psychological Trauma Training Plan*. (Accessed December 2020)
- 8.5 [Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan 2019-2022](#)

## 9. Appendices

---

- 9.1 None.