

County Council

19 March 2024

Director of Public Health 2023 Annual Report

Recommendations

That Council receives and endorses the focus of the Director of Public Health Annual Report 2023

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. Under section 73B of the National Health Service Act 2006 Directors of Public Health are required to write an annual report on the health and wellbeing of their population, and the local authority is required to publish it.
- 1.2. The Director of Public Health Annual Report (the Annual Report) is a vehicle for informing local people about the health of their community, as well as providing necessary information for decision makers in local health services and authorities on health gaps and priorities that need to be addressed.
- 1.3. This year's Annual Report (which is attached as an appendix to this report) focuses on the health impacts of domestic abuse. The Annual Report includes an overview of the health and wellbeing of the Warwickshire population and information on progress with the 2022 recommendations. The Annual Report includes a series of recommendations which require a concerted joint effort from partner organisations across Warwickshire if they are to be achieved.
- 1.4. Throughout Warwickshire approximately 17,384 women, aged 16+, were estimated to have been impacted by domestic abuse between 2021-22. Nationally, 9% of women, aged 16 and over, were victims of domestic abuse in 2022. Furthermore, data suggests that 8% of women aged 18-74 experience abuse before the age of 16. This can have devastating impacts to the victim survivors physical, mental, emotional, sexual and reproductive health.
- 1.5. This year's Annual Report builds on previous publications such as the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy (2023-2026). It takes a new approach, telling the story of a character named Mia, and her experience of domestic abuse, through the words of those surrounding her, and services involved. Whilst this story is fictional, the story is reflective of real-life experiences of domestic abuse, and it is intended to highlight the impact on victim-survivors, the communities in which we live, our services and wider society.

- 1.6. Readers of the report are encouraged to reflect upon their own role in preventing domestic abuse, whether it be from a personal perspective, within their professional role, or within their community.
- 1.7. The recommendations in the Annual Report aim to support the VAWG strategy through increasing awareness and strengthening support for those impacted by domestic abuse.
- 1.8. Recommendations of the Annual Report:
 - Partnership Working: that system partners work together to collectively use the Warwickshire VAWG strategy to create a safe and encouraging environment for victim-survivors to report abuse by producing a plan of aligned and jointly prioritised actions collaboratively with the police, health partners and relevant stakeholders.
 - Supporting child victims of violence and abuse: Aligned with the Warwickshire VAWG strategy, it is recommended dedicated resource and support is allocated to child victims to mitigate effects of violence and abuse across their life course and attempt to break cycles of abuse.
 - Linking VAWG work with Coventry and Warwickshire Suicide Prevention Strategy: To support the delivery of the Coventry and Warwickshire Suicide Prevention Strategy, it is recommended that workers in frontline services are equipped with the appropriate skills and tools to support people in crisis. This should include access to training to increase suicide awareness, to develop confidence to talk about mental health and suicidality and to improve knowledge of referral pathways.
 - Education: It is recommended that Warwickshire County Council (WCC) Education Services promote the opportunity for schools to participate in any training that has been commissioned by Warwickshire County Council relating to VAWG, or domestic abuse.
 - Local Health Partnerships: Local Maternity Neonatal System (LMNS) to endorse and support work at a strategic level to increase referral rates into Refuge from Maternity Services where existing levels are lower than expected.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1. None.

3. Environmental Implications

- 3.1. None.

4. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 4.1. The Annual Report was published in digital format on Warwickshire County Council's website following Health and Wellbeing Board's consideration of this report on 10 January 2024. References for evidence detailed in the Annual Report are also available online.
- 4.2. A detailed marketing and communications plan will be prepared to ensure the Annual Report is communicated widely with partners across the Integrated Care System, key stakeholders, and to the residents of Warwickshire. Printed copies of the Annual Report will be made available upon request for those unable to access the report digitally.

Appendices

1. Director of Public Health Annual Report 2023

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): Not applicable - county wide report

Other members: Councillor Margaret Bell and Councillors Barker, Drew, Holland and Rolfe.

The report was shared with the Health and Wellbeing Board prior to publication.