

Croydon Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

An Overview of Mental Health and Well-being Easy Information Summary

Background

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment is made up of a group of documents. It is often called the JSNA.

It is called “joint” because it is the council, the NHS, other public organisations and people in the community all working together.

It is “strategic” because it is about looking ahead. What people will need over the coming years.

It is a “needs assessment”. This means knowing about the health and well-being of all the people who live in Croydon – the whole population of Croydon.

It is about understanding people’s needs – what they need to be more healthy and to cope better with their lives.



This information helps the council, NHS and other people to plan ahead for the services which will be needed in Croydon in the future. It tells us about some of the biggest or most common problems which affect people in Croydon.



For this year, 2012-2013, the biggest subject is **mental health and well-being**.

This report is an “easier to read” shorter summary of the document called:

“Overview of Mental Health and Well-being in Croydon.”

**Overview of
Mental Health
& Well-being**

There are three further documents in the JSNA which give more details about problems many people face. These are:

Depression in
adults

Emotional health
& well-being of
children

Schizophrenia
in adults

Finally, there is a summary of all the facts and figures about health and well-being in Croydon.

This is called the **Croydon Key Dataset**.

Dataset

All of these documents will be available on the Croydon Observatory website:

<http://www.croydonobservatory.org/jsna/chapters201213/>

This website has lots of other useful information about Croydon.

What is mental health and well-being?

Mental health is how someone is feeling in their mind. Good mental health is about feeling good about your life and being able to cope with problems when they happen.



Good mental health is called well-being or mental well-being.

In Croydon, some people will have very good mental health and some people will have a severe mental illness, including schizophrenia or severe depression. Most people will be in the middle and their mental health is either moderate (meaning not too bad) or they will be struggling to cope.

People who are struggling may find it difficult to live a happy life and they may be confused and unhappy. But with the right support or treatment they can often lead a normal life.



We want more people in Croydon to have good mental health and well-being. The JSNA documents on mental health and well-being show how this can happen in Croydon over the next few years.

The overview chapter provides a 'big picture' of how Croydon can protect and promote good mental health and well-being for all the people of Croydon.

Why is it important to improve mental health and well-being?

Mental health problems are very common. They can affect anyone.

Mental health problems are more common if people are involved in risk taking actions like substance misuse – this means taking drugs or drinking alcohol. Getting pregnant too young can also be connected with mental health problems.



If someone has mental health problems, it can affect the people around them like their family and friends.

Treating people with mental health problems can cost a lot of money.



Improving the mental health of people in Croydon makes the community stronger.

Other things like better transport education, leisure and housing also help to improve mental health and well-being.

So it is not just the job of the NHS. It is also the job of the local council and other organisations.



What things affect the mental health and well-being of people in Croydon?

Changes in the population of Croydon

The numbers of people with mental health problems can change when there are changes in the local population (the total number of people living in Croydon). Changes in the population can include:

- More people of certain ages
- More males or females
- More people from ethnic minorities
- More people with physical disabilities or illnesses.



Because of these changes in Croydon's population, the number of people with some mental health conditions can increase.



More and more people in Croydon are living in poorer conditions. This is called “**deprivation**”. In Croydon there are more people with serious mental illnesses like schizophrenia in the poorer areas than in the areas that are better off.

Deprivation can make more people become addicted to things like alcohol or drugs. It can also cause some people to be depressed.



Migration

When people come into Croydon from foreign countries, it is called “**migration**”. This can be good for mental health when families get back together again after one member has been in another country.



However some people come into Croydon because they are trying to get away from violence or disaster in another country.

This means there is a higher risk they could have mental health problems.

Ethnicity

People from black and minority ethnic communities have a much higher risk of having a serious mental illness.

There are reasons for this which include things like racism and poverty.



Some people may not use local services because they find it difficult to reach services which meet their cultural needs.

The Recession

The financial problems the whole country is having is called a recession. More people in debt means there are more people with mental health problems.



People who cannot manage their debts are more likely than other people to have depression and problems to do with anxiety.

Unemployment can also cause people to have mental illness. The longer someone is unemployed, the more they are at risk of depression, anxiety and suicide.



In the last year in Croydon, the number of families who have become homeless has risen by 45%.

Mental health and losing your home are connected because of the relationship that people have with friends, family and other people in their community.



Assets

An 'asset' is something that is good for the mental well-being of a person or a community.

Assets can improve well-being or make it easier to cope and manage any difficult times in a person's life.

One asset that Croydon has is a busy and successful voluntary sector. This means there are many local groups, charities and volunteers who provide help and support to those who need it.

Another asset Croydon has is its many parks and open spaces. Being in green open spaces can help make people feel better.



How people and communities can have good mental health and well-being

The overview chapter on mental health and well-being describes the four main ways that people and communities can improve or have good mental health.

1 Control

This means how much control individuals and communities have over their lives.

This includes things like keeping your independence. For example, having support to live at home or having opportunities for giving views and being heard such as tenants groups or public meetings.



2 Resilience

Resilience is about how well a person can manage when something difficult happens in their life. If a person is quick to recover from a setback in their life they are said to be 'resilient'. When something bad happens in a community, like a riot, are they able to recover quickly?



Resilience includes things like being able to cope when you have a setback, like not getting a job that you went for. It includes having good friends and family in your community that you could ask for help if you had a problem.

3 Participation

Participation is about how people are **involved** or take part in activities outside their immediate household.

It includes things like having a sense of belonging to a:

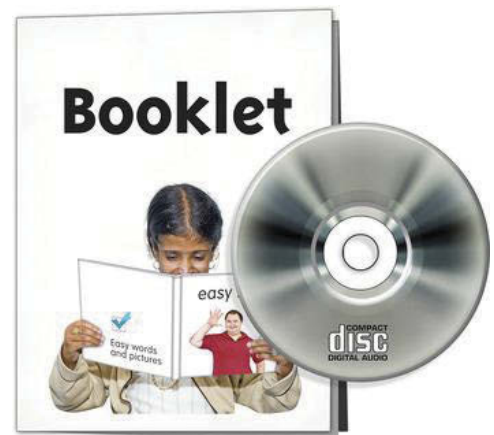
- community
- neighbourhood
- family or friends
- work team
- a volunteering project
- a club.



4 Inclusion

Inclusion is also about how people are able to get involved in opportunities.

We need to try hard to include everyone, but for some groups it is more difficult. They might need extra help, like people with a disability, unemployed people, people from black and minority ethnic groups, older people, and people with poor mental health.



Inclusion is about things like making the cost of joining a group affordable so that people who do not have much money can take part. Or having easy to read documents so that they can be understood by most of the community.

Five ways to well-being

The overview chapter recommends that all people in Croydon try to follow the five ways to well-being to improve their mental health.

1. **Connect** – we get by with a little help from our friends!

Where do you connect with people: at work, school, your street, the local park, bus stop, newsagents, in the pub or café, at the post office, bingo hall or library?



2. **Be active** – it can improve your mood and give you more energy.

Did you know that dancing, walking up stairs, spending less time in your car, gardening and even housework are all easy ways to be active.



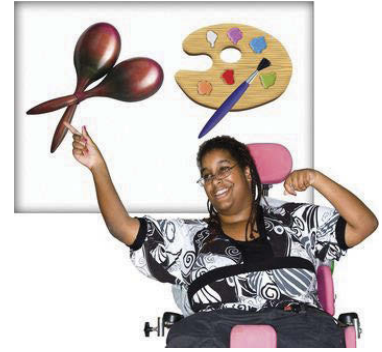
3. **Take notice** – being aware of the world around you can really make a difference to your mood and how you feel.

It costs nothing to get out and explore – did you know that Croydon has over 120 parks and open spaces, as well as over 145 listed (historic and interesting) buildings?



4. **Keep learning** - it's never too early or too late to start learning.

Join a Croydon library to escape into fact and fiction with free access to thousands of books, computers, the internet and much more.



5. **Give** – helping other people can be very rewarding and everyone has talents, experience and skills to share.

What is the nicest thing someone has done for you recently? Could you do the same thing for someone else?



What needs to happen next?

The overview chapter on mental health and well-being describes the **actions** needed to improve mental health for all Croydon people, whatever their age.



There is a list of recommendations of the important things which should be worked on:

- Making the health of pregnant women a priority
- Improving mental health of women just before, and after, they have their baby
- Supporting parents who need help in looking after their children
- Finding ways for older people to make more friends and not be lonely
- Finding ways to stay healthy as you get older
- Developing learning projects for older people like using computers
- Raising awareness of the work that the voluntary sector does in Croydon.



The overview chapter on mental health and well-being in Croydon also includes a list of the benefits of physical health services and mental health services working together.

The chapter ends with a summary of the ways it is possible to find out who is having mental health problems.

If you need more information about the JSNA

please contact: **Public Health Croydon**

Use the Contact Us form at
www.croydon.gov.uk



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