

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2555

Title: Papyrus Suicide Prevention Training for Further and Higher Education Institutions

Executive Summary:

This Assistant Director Decision (ADD) seeks approval of funding for suicide prevention training in further and higher education settings.

The activity outlined in this ADD supports delivery of the Mental Health and Wellbeing mission – one of nine missions in the London Recovery Programme, launched by the London Recovery Board. It will be delivered by Thrive LDN, a public mental health partnership supported and funded by the Mayor of London; London's integrated care systems; London boroughs; NHS England; and the Office for Health Improvements and Disparities.

This Decision is in accordance with MD2852: Mental Health Recovery Mission and Thrive LDN Work Programme 2021-22. The full expenditure amount of the project is £36,000, which combines £20,000 as already approved through MD2852, and £16,000 approved through this form from the Social Prescribing budget.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Health, Education and Youth approves expenditure of £16,000 in financial year 2021-22 to support the roll-out of suicide prevention training for further and higher education institutions, taking the project total to £36,000.

AUTHORISING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/HEAD OF UNIT

I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

Name: Jazz Bhogal

Position: Assistant Director, Health, Children and Young Londoners

Signature:



Date:

16/2/22

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 This Decision is in accordance with MD2852: Mental Health Recovery Mission and Thrive LDN work programme 2021-22. The full amount of £36,000 for the project combines £20,000 as approved in MD2852, and £16,000 from the Social Prescribing budget, for which approval is now sought.
- 1.2 The London Recovery Board has launched the Recovery Programme, which includes a Mental Health and Wellbeing (MHWB) mission. Thrive LDN is leading the work with mental health sector stakeholders to: deliver the MHWB mission's broad objectives; ensure Londoners have the skills, tools and resources to support one another; and protect or promote mental health and psychosocial wellbeing.
- 1.3 Around 2m Londoners will experience mental ill health every year. However, the risk is not evenly distributed, with different burdens and outcomes seen for different groups.
- 1.4 Poor mental health is both a consequence and a cause of inequality and disadvantage. Some communities and groups of Londoners who face other inequalities also carry a higher burden of mental ill health than others.
- 1.5 Young Londoners experience a range of risk factors for poor mental health. Mental health problems that emerge in adolescence will benefit from timely intervention to prevent or manage longer-term mental illness. Supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people is a priority for the Mayor.
- 1.6 The GLA and Thrive LDN are already supporting the mental health of Londoners, and particularly young Londoners, through a range of projects. In addition, Thrive LDN was commissioned by the University of London in 2019 to undertake a needs assessment of mental health support in London universities.
- 1.7 Colleges play an important role in helping students and staff look after their mental health. A GLA-commissioned report, "Supporting good mental health amongst London's FE learners" by the Institute of Employment Studies (ADD2406), gives an assessment of mental health needs and support approaches. It includes views of London colleges and students along with some examples of activity.
- 1.8 Moving into further education (FE) is a key transition time in young people's lives and can therefore impact a person's mental health and wellbeing both positively and negatively.
- 1.9 The Association of Colleges has identified the important role that FE plays in supporting the health of learners; but has also found that many initiatives aimed at bringing the health and education sector together have not involved FE.
- 1.10 The higher education (HE) needs assessment conducted by Thrive LDN identified that students are an important group to engage around mental health support and interventions. Evidence shows that suicide remains the highest cause of death for those aged between 18 and 25. Moreover, the data demonstrates that 75 per cent of anxiety, mood, impulse control and substance use disorders develop by age 24. The pandemic has worsened mental health, with more people reporting thoughts of death or self-harm. Demand for services outstrips availability;

therefore, staff need to be equipped to respond to students in crisis and initiate difficult conversations about suicide.

- 1.11 This project would sit alongside the suicide prevention framework developed by Universities UK, which provides guidance on understanding student suicide, mitigating risk and embedding a robust mental health strategy within the institution. This offer would address the training gap identified in the FE assessment report and address the recommendations. The Papyrus training would be a complimentary offer that would aim to upskill existing safeguarding leads and student liaisons and would sit alongside the existing Youth and Adult Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training offer, which has been offered since January 2019.
- 1.12 We propose to offer all London FE institutions and HE settings access to Papyrus's suicide prevention training. SP-EAK provides an introduction to suicide prevention skills; and SP-EAK+ includes follow-up sessions allowing participants to share more in-depth learnings and reflections, as well opportunities to network and share good practice amongst attendees. This is an extension of an existing programme of work delivered in schools.
- 1.13 As part of our commitment to become a zero-suicide city, we need to consider the mental health offer across both FE and HE institutions. Suicide prevention is a role shared by frontline agencies, NHS colleagues, education staff and the wider community. Staff need to be equipped to initiate difficult conversations about suicide, and manage suicide interventions and safety planning as appropriate.

2. Objectives and expected outcome

- 2.1 This project seeks to equip staff and institutions with the knowledge and skills to better understand suicide and suicide prevention; and to develop appropriate safeguarding procedures for vulnerable students.
- 2.2 It also seeks to provide staff with specific training to students who are identified as being at a higher risk. Thrive LDN currently offers both youth and HE MHFA training; this offer will be part of a suite of training offered to staff at these institutions to address the needs of the student populations.
- 2.3 The aim of this project would be to reach student safeguarding leads, pastoral care workers and other appropriate student support staff across all London university and FE institution settings. This training would provide robust and considered support to students as they arrive at/return to campuses post-pandemic.
- 2.4 Post-training support will be available for new trainees, including access to the free HOPELINE which provides a debriefing and specific advice for 'concerned others'. In addition, there will be a post-training community of practice session (9-12 months after completion of training) that will incorporate a training refresh, and the opportunity to share application of the training within institutions.
- 2.5 Another objective is to create a network of champions within university and FE settings; and a wider London network to enable sharing of good practice and connection with regional suicide groups, and with mental health leads in the integrated care system.
- 2.6 Another objective is to strengthen existing policy outcomes, including embedding a suicide-safer universities policy in institutions and support gaps in mental health provision for students. The

project also aims to encourage institutions to adopt the development of safety plans for students identified as at risk.

- 2.7 Another objective is to encourage an open, safe and sensitive conversation around suicide, with those experiencing thoughts of suicide.
- 2.8 Another objective is to invite those trained to become part of the Wellbeing Champion network as part of our MHWB Recovery Mission. This would strengthen our connection with FE/HE-specific contacts, allowing for greater multi-agency collaboration in the prevention of suicide.
- 2.9 With reference to the GLA Contracts and Funding Code Section 4, this is defined as a funding agreement as the GLA will not be receiving a direct or indirect benefit; and the GLA is supporting, via a third party, an activity that aligns with the Mayor's priorities, but which is the initiative and activity of the other organisation.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1 Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Equality Act), as a public authority, the GLA must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Protected characteristics under the Equality Act are age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; and marriage or civil partnership status (the duty in respect of this last characteristic is to eliminate unlawful discrimination only). Further, section 33 (1) of the GLA Act requires the Mayor to make appropriate arrangements with a view to ensuring that, in the formulation of the policies and proposals to be included in any of his statutory strategies and in their implementation, there is "due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people".
- 3.2 This project will be focused on addressing the wider determinants of health. It will reflect the Health Inequalities Strategy (HIS), which is designed to address systematic and unfair differences in mental and physical health between groups of people. This project recognises that different groups of Londoners experience specific inequalities, and will focus on reaching the most vulnerable and marginalised. This includes socioeconomic inequalities, as well as inequalities experienced by those with single or multiple protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. The ambition of this project, work on wider determinants of health and health inequalities, and the HIS in general is to improve health for all through an approach of proportionate universalism: universal approaches, with additional support in proportion to need.

4. Other considerations

Key risks and issues

- 4.1. The FE sector is large and fragmented, with providers falling into four sub-regional partnerships across London and varying types of learning available, providing further complexity. With settings catering for learners aged 16-19, and those aged 19 and over, ensuring this training is relevant for the whole institution is key.
- 4.2. Choosing not to support the mental health needs that exist within this sector risks further entrenching inequalities for both the student base and workforce.

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.3. Skills for Londoners is the first post-16 skills and adult education strategy produced by a London Mayor. This strategy aims to “empower all Londoners to access the education and skills to participate in society and progress in education and work”. To do this the strategy seeks to reduce barriers to participation and increase targeted support to the most disadvantaged groups, so they are better equipped to access education and work.
- 4.4. The Mayor has published a Skills Roadmap for London which will help Londoners to access good jobs and to lead happier, healthier lives. It sets out how the Mayor plans to ensure London’s skills offer better serves London’s communities and economies and supports better personal health and wellbeing outcomes.
- 4.5. MD2265 and MD2510 for the Young Londoners Fund funded youth MHFA training for professionals in educational settings, youth clubs, faith communities and other settings.
- 4.6. Support to the FE sector can provide added weight to the work of the Violence Reduction Unit – particularly with the focus on supporting local communities, of which colleges and adult learning settings are key stakeholders.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. Approval is sought for the expenditure of £16,000 in the form of grant funding to Thrive LDN to support the roll-out of suicide prevention training for further and higher education institutions.
- 5.2. The costs will be funded from the Health Team programme budget for 2021-22 (specifically the Social Prescribing budget) under the ‘Mental Health and Wellbeing’ mission.
- 5.3. This decision approving £16,000 from the Social Prescribing budget, will be combined with £20,000 previously approved by MD2852. The total expenditure of £36,000 is proposed to be spent as per the table below

	2021-22	2022-23	TOTAL
Tailor staff training to FE and HE Settings	11,000		11,000
Upskill Papyrus staff to deliver the training	7,000		7,000
Tailor data collection and evaluation materials for FE and HE Settings	4,000		4,000
SPEAK & SPEAK+ Sessions offered to FE and HE Settings		12,000	12,000
Post-training refresher		1,000	1,000
Evaluation report		1,000	1,000
TOTAL	22,000	14,000	36,000

- 5.4. The expenditure incurred in 2022-23 will follow the standard accounting procedures for the financial year end.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Timescale	Activity
Tailor staff training to FE and HE Settings	February 2022
Upskill Papyrus staff to deliver the training	February 2022
Tailor data collection and evaluation materials for FE and HE Settings. Pre-Evaluation conducted.	February 2022
SPEAK & SPEAK+ Sessions offered to FE and HE Settings. The bulk of the SPEAK+ sessions will be delivered in March these are longer sessions at a higher cost. Post Evaluation conducted.	March – May 2022
Post-training refresher (this is a short refresher training session for staff)	December 2022
Evaluation report	March 2023

Appendices and supporting papers: None

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** This form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

Part 1 – Deferral

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

Part 2 – Sensitive information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under the FoIA should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form – NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to
confirm the
following (✓)

Drafting officer:

Daniel Lescure has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Corporate Investment Board

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 14 February 2022

✓

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

Signature

Anna Eastcott

Date

14/2/22