

Report to Hackney Health and Wellbeing Board

Item No:		Date:	21st June 2017
Subject:	Health and Wellbeing in the Private Rented Sector		
Report From:	Rebecca Smith		
Summary:			
Recommendations:	The Health and Wellbeing Board to note and comment on progress made so far The Health and Wellbeing Board to comment on the approach outlined for taking the project forward		
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1 Introduction

Housing is a key determinant of health. Links between poor quality housing and both mental and physical health are well documented. Children living in bad housing are twice as likely to suffer from fair, bad or very bad health as children in good housing, and are more likely to suffer from poor respiratory health and sleep disruption. Working age adults in poor quality housing are more likely to suffer from poor general health, low mental wellbeing, and respiratory problems. Poor standards of housing have a particularly acute impact on very young and older people.¹

Around 30% of Hackney's housing stock is privately rented. While the vast majority of council and housing association properties meet the Decent Homes Standard, many properties in the Private Rented Sector (PRS) do not, and are in poor condition. Overcrowding is also an issue in Hackney – on the 'bedroom standard' measure,² Hackney has the 5th highest rate of overcrowding in England. 39% of PRS tenants live below the poverty line, which is more than in the social rented sector.³

¹https://england.shelter.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/726166/People_living_in_bad_housing.pdf

² The 'bedroom standard' defines overcrowding as a dwelling with at least one bedroom too few for the number and composition of people living in the household.

³ http://www.hackney.gov.uk/media/8181/society-and-environment-section-6-housing-and-homelessness/pdf/JSNA-society-and-environment-Section_6_Housing_and_homelessness

As the cost of renting privately in Hackney continues to increase, so does the pressure on tenants, and impacts on mental wellbeing. Research has found housing costs to be a large cause of stress and depression.⁴

Public Health has funded a post within the Private Sector Housing team fixed term until March 2018, to lead on a project looking at how we can provide better support to tenants in the Private Rented Sector to improve their housing conditions and health and wellbeing.

The overall aim of the project is to reduce health inequalities and address unmet health and wellbeing needs amongst vulnerable tenants in the PRS, by building capacity in the PSH team and wider public sector to identify and meet these needs more effectively. This is in recognition of the fact that there are several projects providing support to social housing tenants, but there is not currently the same offer for those in the PRS, and that professionals who work with PRS tenants are in a good position to provide advice on health and housing if supported with the skills and knowledge needed.

The project covers three main, interrelated work streams as follows:

- Provide training and support to colleagues in the PSH team that enables them to provide advice to tenants at risk of poor health, and to signpost or refer tenants to relevant services
- Develop a network of public sector agencies that engage with tenants in the PRS (focused primarily on those who provide home visits)
- Identify, collect and analyse data that will help to identify vulnerable tenants and their health needs more easily and quickly

Below is an update on progress of the project to date:

Training and support for colleagues in PSH team and network of agencies:

- The proposed training programme has started, with a Mental Health First Aid Lite session delivered to the PSH team at the start of May.

⁴http://england.shelter.org.uk/news/january_2013/housing_costs_cause_stress_and_depression_for_millions

This was in line with the stated need from team members for support around working with residents experiencing mental health issues.

- Research has been conducted into the best approach to delivering Making Every Contact Count training to staff, and potential providers have been identified. MECC would be delivered to PSH staff who have been identified as particularly engaged, and motivated members of the network who work with PRS tenants
- Potential 'champions' within the PSH service have been identified, who could act as representatives for PH within their team and provide support to colleagues around PH issues.

Development of network of agencies who engage with PRS tenants:

- Successfully applied to the Design in the Public Sector programme for support in developing the network of agencies, and have taken part in four of the total five workshops of the programme. Design in the Public Sector is delivered by the Design Council, and sponsored by the Local Government Association. The programme has worked with different Local Authorities across the country, and is currently working with a cohort of London boroughs, who applied to take part through a competitive process. The programme supports council teams to apply rigorous design thinking to the development of services.
- Conducted research into how the network of agencies could develop through semi structured interviews with service managers for the agencies we want to engage, and observations of home visits to PRS tenants
- Conducted thematic analysis of qualitative data gathered through semi structured interviews to look at emerging themes to develop the network around
- So far engaged with: Children's Social Care, Adult's Social Care and Safeguarding, Pause and Multiple Needs Services, commissioned services (Seasonal Health Interventions Network (SHINE) / Shoreditch Trust / Health Visiting / Family Nurse Partnership / MRS Independent Living), housing charities (Crisis), London Fire Brigade, Occupational Therapy
- Plans to meet with: home meals delivery, community libraries service, Homerton's ACRT team, HCVS, CAB's Money Smart project, Connect Hackney, CHSCB, Police, London Ambulance Service

Direct support for tenants

- Working with PSH management and SHINE service (who are commissioned by PH to provide support to residents around fuel poverty and energy efficiency) to deliver targeted support to residents

with cold homes, or experiencing fuel poverty, and residents over 65 through the ECO energy efficiency scheme⁵. This will provide home improvements to vulnerable residents

- Working with Shoreditch Trust health coaches to incorporate a health coach visit into Environmental Health checks on Houses of Multiple Occupation, including hostels and temporary accommodation
- Communications with landlords around the importance of good quality housing for positive health and wellbeing through presentation to Landlord's Forum and working with Housing Supply team around PH content in landlord newsletters

Identify, collect and analyse data that will help to identify vulnerable tenants

- Working with the Public Health intelligence team to analyse data captured by the PSH team to demonstrate the benefit of home adaptations for other stakeholders. The 'housing and health cost calculator' measures the financial value of these improvements to the NHS and wider society, together with a return on investment over a fixed time

The proposed next steps for the project are as follows:

Training and support for colleagues in PSH team and network of agencies:

- Further consultation with PSH team on their training and support needs, looking at more in depth or specific training around working with people with mental health needs.
- Investigate development opportunities for team 'champions'
- Arrange for talks to PSH team from support services that work with residents, to build awareness of options for signposting tenants with support needs.

Development of network of agencies who engage with PRS tenants:

- Hold series of workshops for those agencies who have engaged so far to consult on the design of the network
- Conduct structured surveys with agencies engaged with network to assess current knowledge, skills and confidence in talking to service

⁵ <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-programmes/eco/support-improving-your-home>

users about and signposting for housing conditions, and health and wellbeing

- Research and develop a training offer for staff in the network, which agencies can access through the council or external providers (including commissioned training where appropriate)
- Develop a flow chart of 'red flags' that agencies look out for during home visits, including how to start conversations about each and where to signpost or refer for each
- Research models of information sharing across agencies
- Research the suitability of developing a health and wellbeing checklist for home visits, and a health and wellbeing signposting resource for professionals conducting home visits

Identify, collect and analyse data that will help to identify vulnerable tenants

- PSH have commissioned a stock modelling exercise of conditions within the PRS in Hackney. The draft report is now available, and PH intelligence team will be conducting initial analysis of addresses where poor housing conditions and vulnerable tenants exist

Direct support for tenants

- Develop work with health coaches and trial joint HMO inspection and health coach visit
- Liaise with Housing Supply team to incorporate PH content into pre tenancy training for residents moving from social housing to the PRS
- Use BRE stock modelling data to identify households that could benefit from ECO energy efficiency scheme, and deliver targeted comms

2 Financial Considerations

The recommendations arising from this report have no direct budgetary impact. Public Health have allocated a small, flexible budget to the project, and any initiatives to arise from the project requiring financing will be funded from this budget.

3 Legal Considerations

The report and its contents are noted including the recommendations. There are no legal implications arising out of this report.

4 Equality Impact Assessment

This programme aims to support those most vulnerable in the Private Rented Sector (tenants on lower incomes and housing benefits, experiencing fuel poverty, older tenants and those with unmet health needs). However, activity as part of the programme should benefit all those in Hackney's PRS.

5 Attachments

Officer Responsible: *(to be completed by the report author)*

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