From: Annette Worthing/Eastern/DHS

To: Sandy Austin/North and West/DHS@DHS,

Date: 04/11/2015 01:06 PM

Subject: FOR ACTION - What's Important to YOUth? Inner East response

Hi Sandy

Please find below comments from the Inner East Health team regarding the

"What's Important to YOUth? " discussion paper. There were a number of priority areas that we could choose to comment on. I selected mental health, drug and alcohol and employment as being most relevant to our current work and sphere of influence.

Draft Objectives

Most of these we would agree with. One suggestion is that the focus should be

on the person and not on the need, and that to achieve this we could remove

needs from the base statement and build in to the first dot point as below:

Currently reads To ensure that the diverse and specific needs of young people, particularly those who are disadvantaged, disengaged or face particular challenges, are heard and engaged by government in matters that affect them.

Change to To ensure that young people, particularly those who are

disadvantaged, disengaged or face particular challenges, have their diverse and specific needs heard and are engaged by government in matters that affect them.

What do you think should be done to improve mental health

Education regarding impacting factors and lifestyle choices commences in

primary school and continues throughout secondary school, including mindfulness and positivity skills

Improved access to youth focussed mental health supports through schools,

community facilities (such as Head Space) and community health outreach

programs

Increased investment in on-line information regarding coping strategies, access pathways and supports

Education and support programs to assist parents and carers to recognise early signs of mental health issues. This is particularly important when the child has a parent with a mental illness as genetic risk factors may exist.

Professional development for teachers to increase their skills in recognising, managing and escalating (where appropriate) indicators of mental health issues

Increased resources (beds, treatment options, in-patient/ outpatient support,

community/family/peer education and support services, targeted support to 'at

risk groupings.' Recent reforms do not go far enough to realistically address

the needs or to be pro-active/ preventative.

Use of positive terminology to identify and interact with individuals and

services available.

Improved awareness and understanding of mental illness amongst school children, particularly secondary school age, so that they know what to do or who to contact if they sense that something is not right with one of their mates

What do you think should be done about tackling drug and alcohol issues

Comprehensive education regarding risks and impacts through schools and media, similar to the approach to smoking

Review of legislation regarding access to alcohol - opening hours of liquor

outlets, alcohol sales at 24 hour stores stopped or significantly restricted.

Review of legislation regarding trading hours of venues with liquor licences

Quality assurance programs around vendor checking of age prior to liquor sales and sales of alcohol to someone who is intoxicated - serious monitoring/enforcing/policing of the requirements and big fines etc if breaches occur.

Education and support programs to assist parents and carers to recognise early signs of drug or alcohol use

Professional development for teachers to increase their skills in recognising

and escalating indicators of drug and alcohol use

Increased education/ training/ resources for police, ambulance, healthcare

professionals, child protection, and other community contacts to identify and

redirect at an early stage as well as respond when person is at risk of harm to themselves or others.

Increased resources (beds, treatment options, in-patient/ outpatient support,

community/family/peer education and support services, targeted support to 'at

risk groupings.' Recent reforms do not go far enough to realistically address

the needs or to be pro-active/ preventative.

What do you think should be done to increase employment opportunities

Increased focus on work readiness skills - work placement opportunities earlier than year 10, more placement opportunities so that young people are exposed to a range of employment options

Build placement opportunities between large employers/employers of choice and

universities. Government can lead this by increasing placement opportunities in government services

Intervention focused on generational unemployment - target children with long

term unemployed parents / grand parents

Increase flexible working arrangements, part time and job share for trainees to facilitate young people working while they study

Review of best practice recruitment to shift the focus of short-listing from

applicants with experience to applicants with appropriate skills and interests, to prevent discrimination against young people with less experience

Expose trainees and students on placement to a full range of work to gain a

broad understanding of the organisation, rather than restricting to entry level tasks

Apply minority group encouragement in advertising "young people welcome to

apply" in the same way that we do for ATSI

Look at transportation - costs, availability, support to obtain a licence (120 hours of supervised driving is difficult if there is not a stable family/adult or family has no car to use)

Increase the payment supports for low income/ entry level youth workers to

include support for transport ie Myki cards that are automatically topped up or other types of initiatives.

Increase the payment supports for low income/ entry level youth workers to

include support for uniforms/ tools etc

Increase in apprenticeships especially in the trades area. Support for

employers and apprentices, including incentives for employers to take on

apprentices.

Regards

Annette

Annette Worthing

Manager, Inner East, Eastern Metro Health

Regional Manager, Primary Health and Aged Care

Department of Health and Human Services

883 Whitehorse Road Box Hill, Victoria 3128

t: 98431710 m: 0408608771 e: annette.worthing@health.vic.gov.au

www.dhhs.vic.gov.au