

Young Health Programme in the UK

In the UK, we are working to improve the health of young homeless people, in partnership with Depaul UK, the largest national youth homelessness charity.

Around 80,000 young people experience homelessness each year. They typically come from disadvantaged backgrounds and have suffered trauma and disruption in their childhood. This is compounded by the experience of being homeless, which has life-inhibiting economic, social and health impacts. The consequences of being homeless, such as poverty, isolation, and leading a chaotic lifestyle, are also risk factors for mental health problems.

With Depaul UK, we are working to make an impact on the health outcomes of this disadvantaged group of young people.



AstraZeneca 

Young Health Programme

A global community investment initiative

in partnership with





What do we want to achieve through the Programme?

- Understand the health needs and barriers to health faced by young homeless people
- Foster better mental health through creating a sense of purpose and increasing self esteem
- Further build health professionals' understanding of the different health needs and requirements of young homeless people
- Address the complex health needs of young homeless people through practical advice and solutions

What activities are taking place locally?

Health Research & Development: To start the Programme, Depaul UK and AstraZeneca undertook comprehensive research. The findings have shaped the health interventions that the two organisations are now implementing:

- **Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE):** A therapeutic approach and training system which enables Depaul UK staff to better support the mental health needs of their clients. After an initial trial, the proposal is to extend the project to other Depaul UK services in London, North West and North East of England
- **Meaningful Activities:** A standardised 'meaningful activities toolkit' has been developed enabling three regional Depaul UK co-ordinators to implement activities, including peer-led activities, tailored to individual client interests
- **Educating and Influencing for Better Health Outcomes:** This project, currently being developed, aims to give health professionals the knowledge needed to understand what young homeless people need

What has been achieved so far?

Creating an environment for change in policy and services:

- Health research and recommendations were launched in a report entitled "Making it Matter", in Parliament
- A health and public sector expert group turned health recommendations into practical guidance, Making it Matter: Putting it into Practice. This was then sent to over 400 key stakeholders across the UK

Health Interventions - development and implementation:

- Over 120 DePaul UK staff have received specialised mental health training through a roll out of Psychologically Informed Environments
- The Meaningful Activities programme underpins good mental health for young people

Recognition:

The programme has been shortlisted for two UK pharmaceutical industry awards.

Local Partner

Depaul UK is the largest national youth homelessness charity. Since it was founded in 1989, it has helped over 50,000 people and continues to work with over 3,500 young people a year, as well as over 2,000 more young people through their Nightstop (safe emergency accommodation) schemes. Depaul UK believes that no young person should have to sleep rough, and whilst they work to provide the accommodation that offers an immediate solution to homelessness, a vital part of their work is to prevent young people becoming homeless in the first place.

References

- (1) Annually an estimated 80,000 young people experienced homelessness (in 2008/2009) vs. 75,000 (in 2006/2007). Depaul UK (2011). New research shows youth homelessness has risen. (<http://www.depauluk.org/newsandresources/new-researchshows-youth-homelessness-hasrisen/>; accessed 11 November 2011)
- (2) Deborah Quilgars, Sarah Johnsen and Nicholas Pleace (2008). Youth Homelessness in the UK. Joseph Rowntree Foundation. www.jrf.org.uk/publications/youth-homelessness-uk