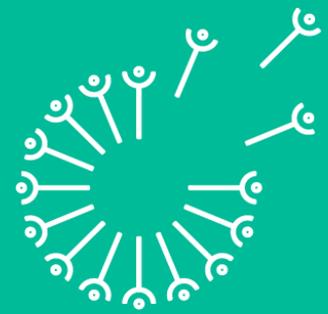


Executive Summary

Dual Diagnosis and access to support

A report exploring how to improve access to support for people with co-existing mental ill health and substance or alcohol needs in Lambeth.

Fulfilling Lives Lambeth Southwark Lewisham
May 2021



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Introduction

This report presents quantitative and qualitative data from Fulfilling Lives Lambeth Southwark and Lewisham, exploring the experiences of people in Lambeth who have a dual diagnosis - that is, a mental health diagnosis alongside known substance use - and who also experience multiple disadvantages.

It presents a local lens to the findings and recommendations outlined in the National Fulfilling Lives paper "Improving access to mental health support for people experiencing multiple disadvantage"¹ which was published last year. This paper seeks to support Lambeth Public Health in its work by identifying experiences, challenges and barriers, as well as offering recommendations.

Mental ill-health and substance use are both a cause and consequence of multiple disadvantage; substances are often used to self-medicate and manage the impact of poor mental health and complex trauma.

Key findings

1. Experiences of mental ill-health and substance use are interconnected

85% of the people supported by Fulfilling Lives LSL in Lambeth have a dual diagnosis of mental ill health and substance use. Substances are often used to self-medicate and manage the impact of poor mental health and complex trauma.

2. Dual diagnosis is experienced as part of a range of interacting multiple disadvantages

95% of people with a dual diagnosis supported by FLLSL in Lambeth have been in contact with the criminal justice system. 34% have had children removed from their care and 32% have no qualifications.

3. It is difficult to access support services if you have a dual diagnosis

6% of people we spoke to had more than seven different services working with them, making support hard to navigate. Those taking part in focus groups and interviews highlighted barriers and challenges, including in relation to: a lack of gender, trauma and culturally informed service delivery; specific challenges experienced during periods of transition; siloed service delivery and the ways in which services are generally commissioned.

¹ <https://fulfillingliveslsi.london/understanding-models-of-support-for-people-facing-multiple-disadvantage-a-literature-review/>

Our recommendations

In the light of our research, we are making four recommendations for the provision of services for people with a dual diagnosis, and experiencing multiple disadvantage, in Lambeth.

1. Develop a more informed-approach to service provision

We would like to see an 'informed' approach to service provision so that services are designed and delivered in a way that recognises the impact of trauma, gender and culture. This means that the physical, psychological and emotional safety and wellbeing of both people we support, and team members are considered in the design and delivery of a service. We would like to see services co-designed with people with previous or current lived experience of dual diagnosis.

2. Remove barriers to accessing services

We would like to see national guidance on co-occurring mental ill-health and substance use is followed locally. Local commissioners and service providers should ensure staff at all levels of the system are supported and challenged to ensure assessment and the provision of services for people with dual diagnosis. Services should include support specifically for pregnant women and those with children recognising the impact of those relationships in their treatment and recovery.

3. Trauma, gender and culturally informed approaches

We would like to see continued support of the development and delivery of a systems change pilot that focuses on providing flexible gender and trauma informed support women with dual diagnosis and multiple disadvantages.

4. Review funding and commissioning process

We would like to see an exploration of the funding landscape to identify how to best use resources for sustainable and collaborative change. Commit to commissioning and delivery which are co-designed, co-delivered and co-evaluated and supported by system thinking and tools to understand how the system responds to people facing multiple disadvantages to deliver effective change.

Fulfilling Lives LSL systems change activities

The following presents the key actions taken by Fulfilling Lives LSL for people experiencing dual diagnosis in Lambeth.

Embedding informed approaches:

We focus on understanding trauma, gender and culturally informed approaches, and what this means in co-produced practice and culture.

We have delivered training to support us in this journey and have worked with our research and evaluation partnership to produce a literature review² exploring the evidence on trauma, gender and culturally informed approaches, and are keen to share our learning across the borough.

We are developing a framework and resources for an 'Informed Champion role', to support the wider workforce in other organisations to embed informed approaches within their work and their teams.

Providing spaces for shared learning:

We have established a local shared learning forum for particularly focused on the women experiencing dual diagnosis, multiple disadvantages compounded by exploitation, commissioners and service providers to regularly come together to share experiences and learning in regard to accessing services. The forum strengthens communication and information sharing between key stakeholders.

Delivering systems change pilots to improve women's access to services

We are working closely with Lorraine Hewitt House in Lambeth as well as women with lived experience to co-design and develop a new system change pilot, with the aim of improving access to treatment for women experiencing multiple disadvantages. We have held a series of co-production workshops to co-design the pilot and are now working to support the pilot roll out and delivery.

Embedding coproduction and systems thinking

A culture of co-production and systemic thinking is embedded throughout service design and delivery at Fulfilling Lives LSL. We have a workstream focused on supporting systems thinking across boroughs, and with our research and evaluation partnership, we have published key resources to support systems thinking.

Read the full report [here](#) or connect with the FLLSL team on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

² <https://fulfillingliveslsl.london/understanding-models-of-support-for-people-facing-multiple-disadvantage-a-literature-review/>