



Trauma Informed Practice Bulletin - November 2021

Kent, in partnership with Medway, is working towards a vision of becoming trauma informed by 2023. This new bi-monthly Bulletin aims to keep partners up to date with local and national developments, information, and research. We hope you join us in our vision for Kent and Medway.

What is SPACE MATTERS?

The SPACE Matters is a quality improvement programme and was developed in Kent. The aim was to bring about long-lasting system change to reduce the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and unresolved trauma, that can impact on the physical and mental health of adults. The programme was developed in partnership with public health, Darzi Fellowships, Youth Justice and Community Leaders. Together they developed a model of working that includes workforce development and training, standardised tools, and co-production. An ACE Ambassador Programme was then piloted in East Kent, to support people to learn together, share knowledge and ideas and test out possible solutions with leadership across multiple organisations to enable a shift in thinking and practice that benefits people's health and wellbeing outcomes.

The initial focus of SPACE Matters related to understanding the effect of ACEs. Now the trauma and adversity suffered by so many because of the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the need to take a holistic trauma informed approach to support people dealing with stressful situations including (but not limited to) domestic abuse; illness, bereavement; unemployment and homelessness.

What is a Trauma Informed Care System?

Adopting trauma-informed care into practice means making changes that will benefit both staff and service users. It includes training people to actively listen, enhance their professional curiosity, and identify what keeps them safe. Critical to this way of working is gaining a person's trust. Many workers already do this but much in the health care system is variable. The aim of Trauma Informed Care is to make good

practice, routine practice. And as this means supporting front line workers, it's important to train managers and senior leaders too.

This is why we take a public health approach to mobilising multiple sectors and communities to understand ACEs and deliver trauma-informed care - providing a non-medical solution wherever possible. **Trauma informed care is good public mental health**, and by making this offer universal it will be possible to see impacts for the whole population. Both [Wales](#) and [Scotland](#) have already adopted this approach into national policy with a commitment to embed this across public services and an increasing number of local authorities in the UK, such as [Plymouth](#) and [Islington](#), are now following suit.

We want to enable Kent to be with the best in the UK for trauma informed practice. Kent Resilience Forum's Covid Action Plan identified the need to ensure that training for front line workers, managers, and leaders was based on trauma informed ways of working.

What's happening in Kent now?

After the successful evaluation of the initial SPACE Matters pilot, a new post, ACE's Programme Manager, was established within KCC's Public Health team. Sue Gower took up this role in June 2021 and is leading this area of work for Kent.

Workforce Development

Trauma Informed Practice is nationally recognised as a critical preventative approach to support the mental health of both children and adults. A key element of adopting a trauma informed approach is to ensure that the workforce has the necessary confidence, skills and understanding, a new, **FREE**, multi-agency training offer is currently being developed that includes:

- a new e-learning module 'Becoming Trauma Informed'
 - L2 Multi agency Trauma Awareness course (Face to Face) with Train the Trainer option
 - Tiered training offer by KCA including webinars, online resources and additional training for Trainers and Champions
 - 3 New Ambassador programmers for North, West, and South Kent
 - A new 'Ambassador Plus programme for East Kent to build on the success of the original Ambassador pilot
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Dates for all the above will be confirmed in the next Bulletin.

New Network of Trauma Informed Leads

Frontline managers and staff who work with service users are key to the development of a trauma informed approach and both on-going training on trauma, and peer-support are essential.

It is proposed to develop a network of Trauma Informed Leads across Kent to come together on a quarterly basis and share good practice from our Ambassadors. If this is of interest, please confirm your details to: sue.gower@kent.gov.uk.

‘Talking Trauma’ – Resources

Online Learning opportunity: Introduction to Adverse Childhood Experiences and Early Trauma This free 50-minute course has been funded by the Home Office Early Intervention Fund. It is aimed at practitioners, professionals and volunteers who work with children, young people and their families. You can access the [online course on ACE Online Learning](#).

Please also find attached documents (PDF- A Trauma Approach to Workforce and PDF - Understanding Trauma leaflet).

Opening Doors Trauma Informed Practice for the Workforce – you can watch the [video on YouTube](#).

We hope you’ve found this Bulletin useful. If you have any queries or would like to share information in a future Bulletin, please email sue.gower@kent.gov.uk