

Mental Health Charter

Case study

September 2016



1. **Project name:** Mental Health Matters and Release the Pressure
2. **Organisation name:** Kent County Council and Kent County Football League
3. **Target group:** Men at risk aged 18 years and above
4. **Aims of project:**

Suicide is the leading killer of men under 45 in Kent. In 2013, only 20% of people who took their life in Kent were known to secondary mental health services. This means supporting men in the community who are at risk is difficult, as we don't know who they are.

In order to try and reach as many men at risk as possible, the Public Health Team at Kent County Council (Kent CC) has initiated several projects:

- **Mental Health Matters:** Kent CC linked-up with the Kent County Football League (KCFL) to use its communication channels (fixture lists, website, email etc) to raise awareness of Mental Health Matters, a 24/7 helpline. This helpline is commissioned by Kent CC to support individuals who are stressed, depressed or anxious with expert support and advice.
- **Release the Pressure:** Kent CC commissioned an agency to help develop the Release the Pressure campaign. This uses social marketing tactics to encourage men to call the 24/7 helpline. Striking visual images are displayed in places across Kent where men have time to reflect and take in the message, such as on petrol pump nozzles, in service station toilets and on pub beer mats.

Release the Pressure highlights life events (such as divorce, debt and bereavement) as the potential causes of pressure for men. It does not use the words 'mental health'.

League 1 Gillingham FC recently displayed Release the Pressure advertising hoarding around its ground and made the manager available for media interviews.

- **Mental Health First Aid Training:** Kent CC provided Mental Health First Aid training to football clubs to enable each club to have a mental health expert.



5. Impact of project

The campaign used existing services to reach approximately 6,000 men (players, officials, volunteers etc) across Kent on a weekly basis throughout the football season.

The campaign generated excellent media responses across print, online and radio. This convinced Kent CC that it was vital to create a larger campaign to reach men across the whole Kent population.

Calls from men to the helpline increased by over 35% during the first six months of the campaign.

6. Further information (e.g. website, contact details)

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