

Equally Well UK Strategic Plan: Activities for 2024 to 2027

<p>Priority One</p>	<p>Promoting equitable access to physical health services for people with severe mental illness which addresses inequalities and diversity.</p>
<p>Activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will promote early intervention and the uptake of annual physical health checks by reducing the barriers against accessing GP appointments, annual health checks and services. • We will advocate for free access to flu and Covid vaccinations and priority access to NHS dentists. • We will promote destigmatised access to affordable gyms and places of exercise, and weight management programmes. • We will promote equality in access to programmes that target healthier diet, weight management and early diagnosis and treatment of diabetes, such as the type 2 diabetes prevention programme. • We will continue to address, speak out and seek solutions to poverty, cost of living and food insecurity as major drivers of physical health inequality. • We will update our charter to reflect our new priorities and embed our anti-racism policy throughout the work we do to tackle racial inequality, and the wider social and environmental determinants, to make services equitable for everyone living with severe mental illness. • We will work with the Royal College of Psychiatrists to create a high level ‘vision statement’ coproduced with people living with a severe mental illness or caring for someone with a severe mental illness. This will focus on what the priorities of people with lived experience are and how they would like care and support to look and feel. This work will contribute to a Royal College ‘position statement’ naming some clear and achievable evidence-based recommendations to bring about health equalities. • We will engage with primary and secondary care networks and continue to gather case studies of best practice and share these across our membership.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will work to attract funding to develop projects and research opportunities across aspects of physical health needs with an income strategy that reflects our priorities and will keep our work sustainable. • We will address digital exclusion for people living with severe mental illness and promote equitable access to primary and secondary resources. • We will use NHS's Core25Plus5 initiative, which includes physical health and severe mental illness, as a lever to meet objectives. • We will pursue a new focus on inequalities in children and young people's health.
<p>Outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will see an increase in the uptake of annual physical health checks. • We will have a greater understanding of comorbidity and multimorbidity in the context of severe mental illness. • We will see better management of cardiometabolic risk, metabolic syndrome and cardiovascular disease* and better management of diabetes and consequential conditions. • We will see improved oral health, smoking cessation, increase in cancer screenings, healthier weight management and better understanding of nutritional needs and the effects of medication on our severe mental illness population. • People with severe mental illness will be given priority access to flu, Covid vaccinations and dental care, and better access to dieticians.
<p>Priority Two</p>	<p>Employing coproduction methodology to ensure everything we do is led by both experts by experience and experts by profession.</p>
<p>Activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will support and empower people with lived experience to speak out, flourish and make their voices heard.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to recruit experts by experience (our Expert by Experience Group) that represent a diverse range of people and includes the voice of carers. • We will involve our experts by experience and our experts by profession (known as the Clinical Group) in the design and delivery of all our projects. • We will provide training opportunities for our experts by experience to develop and improve on their skills. • We will highlight carer support needs. • We will facilitate improved communication between our experts by experience and our experts by profession by reviewing the effectiveness of merging the two groups to form an ‘Experts Group’. • We will facilitate communication between our ‘Experts Group’ and our members. • We will perform an annual audit of all our experts to highlight skillsets and areas of work that they are doing. • We will develop roles for our experts by experience favourable to their skillset. • We will provide speaker opportunities to our experts by partnering with members, stakeholders and external organisations.
<p>Outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have an active and effective diverse group of experts, with lived and professional experience. • All our work is coproduced, informed and led by our experts. • We provide consultancy on lived experience involvement for partner organisations. • Our experts by experience are able to provide workshops and training sessions, and this training offer is marketed. • Improved and effective communication between our experts by experience, experts by profession and our member organisations is facilitated. • Opportunities open up for local service funding for Expert by Experience group involvement. • A culture of lived experience is embedded into all of Equally Well UK’s work and values.

<p>Priority Three</p>	<p>Campaigning and influencing for changes in national policy to improve the physical health of people with severe mental illness.</p>
<p>Activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will advocate for physical and mental health equity through government consultation responses and manifesto influencing. • We will work with our international partners Equally Well Australia and Equally Well Aotearoa New Zealand to produce a policy scorecard for our respective countries and work with Centre for Mental Health’s policy team to scale up our influencing. • We will work with stakeholders to perform research into the causes and remedies of the mortality gap and improving the quality of data on preventable risk factors. • We will work with our Clinical Advisors to share evidence for the appropriate withdrawal of antipsychotic medication to improve outcomes. • We will partner with NHS, charities and stakeholders on projects to provide evaluation and peer research to improve services. • We will build links with Integrated Care Boards and Integrated Care Systems across England. • We will provide speakers at national conferences.
<p>Outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our campaigning will raise greater awareness of the mortality gap and lead to changes across the policy and commissioning landscape. • A policy scorecard will determine where policy gaps are and help us target policy development. • There will be more policy presence in our comms. • Our work will have influence across the UK and worldwide.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equally Well will be known as a source of expertise and information.
<p>Priority Four</p>	<p>Supporting our members and partners in creating equal physical and mental health by sharing ideas, information and evidence across our network.</p>
<p>Activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will work with our members and stakeholders to run a programme of webinars that reflect our joint priority areas of physical health such as healthy weight management, smoking cessation, diabetes, cancer screenings, oral health, food insecurities, and physical health checks (to name just a few). We will highlight the work of our member organisations and partner with other charities' campaigns to amplify the messaging via a series of podcasts, blogs, case studies and resources, and share in our monthly newsletter and on social media. We will perform an annual audit of our membership to highlight areas of work that our members are doing, to keep up to date and better engage with them, and to match them with others working on similar themes. We will work with our members on joint funding bids and evaluations for research projects. We will work in collaboration with health and non-health organisations and make sure their work is known. We will develop assets from projects and webinars to create information and guidance for different audiences. We will bring the Equally Well community together via the Global Leadership Exchange and an annual in person event to learn from each other and share knowledge. We will continue to expand our membership and work collaboratively with our members.
<p>Outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will have a more complete digital library of work and resources which creates and supports equal health. Research outcomes are shared across our platforms.

- We contribute to sector-wide activities which promote parity of esteem between mental health and physical health.
- Member organisations will take their own actions to reduce physical health inequality, supported by Equally Well's resources.

Glossary of Terms:

- **Cardiometabolic:** a group of common but often preventable conditions including heart attack, stroke, diabetes, insulin resistance and non-alcoholic fatty liver disease.
- **Cardiovascular disease:** a disease of the heart or blood vessels.
- **Equitable:** Recognising that we do not all start from the same place and must acknowledge and make adjustments to imbalances.
- **Expert by Experience:** A group of people with lived experience of severe mental illness and carers of people with severe mental illness.
- **Expert by Profession (Clinical Group):** A group of professionals who practice medicine, psychiatry, or psychology and specialise severe mental illness.
- **Metabolic syndrome:** a cluster of conditions that occur together, increasing your risk of heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes.
- **Severe mental illness (SMI):** People with psychological problems that are often so debilitating that their ability to engage in functional and occupational activities is severely impaired. Schizophrenia and bipolar disorder are often referred to as an SMI.

Priority areas of physical health that we will highlight include:

- Healthy weight management
- Smoking cessation
- Diabetes
- Cancer screenings
- Oral health
- Food poverty and food insecurities
- Harmful effects of alcohol and recreational drugs