



Public mental health in cities: Thrive LDN and Thrive NYC

The Thrive LDN and Thrive NYC programmes involve taking a public health approach to improving the mental health and wellbeing of the populations of London and New York City respectively. Although the two programmes differ in a number of important ways, they both share an emphasis on mobilising local communities to promote positive mental health and reduce stigma.

Thrive NYC was launched by the Mayor and First Lady of New York City in 2015. The programme is based on the premise that good population mental health is critical if a city is to thrive socially, civically and economically. A key question at the heart of Thrive NYC is whether city governance can support community life, social ties and civic participation in ways that promote mental health. The programme is framed around 6 guiding principles and 54 specific initiatives, supported by more than \$850 million of city funding over its initial four years. One of the major themes running throughout the programme is empowering communities and strengthening the voluntary sector organisations that work with them. For example, one of the initiatives, Connections to Care, involves integrating mental health support within community-based organisations by giving non-specialists the skills and knowledge they need to deliver basic mental health interventions. Thrive also aims to train 250,000 New Yorkers in 'mental health first aid', initially prioritising police officers, firefighters, health professionals and other city employees involved in delivering frontline services.

Thrive LDN was launched in 2017 with a mission to start a city-wide movement around mental health. In its first year the emphasis has been on engagement and awareness-raising, including through a multimedia campaign, community workshops, and the use of creative techniques such as 'problem-solving booths' to encourage people to talk about their own mental health and wellbeing. Those leading the programme believed that developing its contents in a highly emergent, bottom-up way had helped to establish a richer understanding of the needs of different communities in London, as well as helping to secure the support of a wide range of different partner organisations across the city. The London-wide programme has catalysed the development of local Thrive programmes in a number of boroughs, and also a Black Thrive programme focusing on the mental health of black Londoners. In subsequent years of the programme, the intention is to identify a small number of 'once-for-London' initiatives to be implemented at city level. The programme is hosted by the Healthy London Partnership (see section 4) and supported by the Mayor.