

# BoroManCan

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The view from stakeholders



# Sample characteristics

Category	Characteristics	Staff/volunteers (n=6)	Other stakeholders (n=12)
Gender	Male	4	7
	Female	2	5
Sector	Public/Statutory	6	3
	Voluntary and community	0	8
	Private	0	1

# The Boro male identity

## Influences from fathers, teachers, women, and fellow men

- Because those, those middle-aged men, now that've got those reservations, they're dads, you know they, they bringing their sons up so there is a lot of that being passed down as well. - BMCP02
- *Oh, you know, boys don't cry things like that, and I still see that you see it in schools as well from teachers. You think so, especially the older teachers.* BMCP02
- for me it was just a case of this is how I am, this is how I treat men, this is how I have treated young male children in my family. And am I doing some damage without even knowing? So, it was a very personal thing for me - BMCP05

- *I think too often men and society, maybe forces up on us that you know we can't express our feelings and we can't be sure that any wouldn't [show] and we need to keep everything inside - BMCSV3*
- I'd always put a face on where [name of partner] and the kids were, but I'd get in the bath at 10 o'clock at night and I'd sit and cry my eyes out in the bath, just worried sick about what was going on. Then, I'd come back out of the bathroom and I'd be like, "Yeah." BMCJL11

# Boro men at work

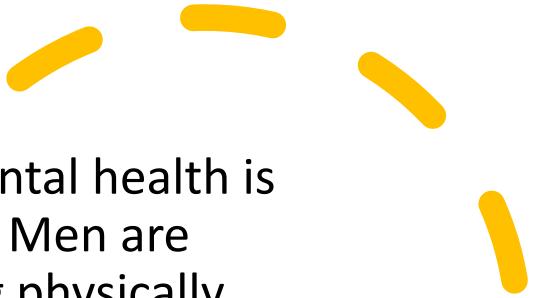
## Employment and welfare conditions

- You look at working males and you break down, look at the evidence from working males. What you see is that a lot of working males don't necessarily access health services at times they are open because they're at work. So basically, they prioritize their work, particularly self-employed. Very high, were self-employed who don't access our services, it's because they have to prioritize their work over their health - BMCSV1
- *I mean there's a lot of contract work and to be able to work, to put your hands up and say you're struggling with a mental illness or any other illness, it's it's hard to do that, knowing that in six months' time, you will need another contract at work.* - BMCID4
- ...we have issues where people don't want to become physically active or healthy because they fear that they may lose their benefits so that we have big issues around that of trying to get people to remain active but not lose benefits and things because they're worried that they're going to lose things. - BMCP04

# The stigma of mental health



- I think it's because I mean this mental health is still a taboo thing, isn't it? I mean. Men are usually terrible. If there's anything physically wrong with them, we're straight away to the doctor, but if it if it's something that you can't explain, mental health is. It's an unexplainable and there's a bit of mystery behind it and you don't want people to think that that you're going mad. You don't want people that you are less than capable of being in company and talking about your your daily business, your daily life. I mean you. If you got a broken leg, it's obvious and people are looking at your broken leg and think oh poor lad we'll give him a hand across the road but. It's it's harder to to accept that there's something wrong mentally - BMCID7



# Ways to male health and wellbeing

## Avoiding stigma by avoiding formal pathways

- 'Cause sometimes I think people think it's easier to go to a charity or a voluntary sector than it is to go to your own GP because it somehow becomes like official, doesn't it? You know you doctor's gonna write down that you've got poor mental health or something and it stays on your record. - BMCP02
- *I believe the way to help men is to show them ways that they can get in touch with organizations that will help or BoroManCan helps, Samaritans, so many organizations, but you do it through social events. You do it through yeah whether they meet at gyms, it's men social clubs, it's football grounds, because I believe they'll take more notice in a social atmosphere than what they would do at work because at work they try to live up to that man that image of a provider. - BMCID4*

- *Men are less likely to go to the GP to get support. They're more likely to go online and particularly when it comes to embarrassing issues and much more like if it involves things like testicular or whatever it could be, then they're more likely to go online and search like you speak to them, to the men's health forum about what their most accessed pages are, and it tends to be the ones that are most embarrassing. Or most mi- maybe more uncomfortable for men to talk about. And so on. - BMCSV1*
- From my experience, once you hear other people talking about it and when you kinda can relate to sort of it, a, things that have been going on and things that have happened to them that you can kind of relate to. I think men kind of realize that it's OK to chat about this stuff and they're not the only one. - BMCID3

## Providing a sense of purpose

- So I was doing my spiel about physical activity and they and the guy's saying. Why do you want? Why should I do it? And I said well, because you know it'll make you live longer, it will help you make, make you live longer. Why do I want to live longer? .... it kind of came down to him saying my life's absolutely rubbish. I've got nothing going on, wife left me, you know why do I want to live any longer? - BMCP04
- *Because sometimes, if people feel like they're getting therapy or if they're coming to someone for help, they can feel that, they feel a little embarrassed about that but if they feel like they're helping someone else or the environment or they're giving something, but they're actually gaining in return, I think that's probably key.* - BMCID2

## Having a trusted confidant

- they knew you know they sort of knew if. It if I thought sharing was OK then it was OK, but I've been with them in in in all other aspects and and they got that trust and. Men men need to know that. If they want it to be confidential that it is confidential. - BMCID7
- *we're non-judgmental, we won't break a confidentiality unless of course it goes totally against our safe-guarding rules but, so that the person could share, knowing that it's not going to go any further, and then by sharing and discussing exploring their concerns, they will get the confidence to move that step further, to actually go to a professional. - BMCID4*

# Male oriented intervention delivery

- so it's kind of giving a man the information with them to go away, but letting them know that they can come back in. And it's simple and easy. And, "Did you know, Bob the pharmacist is always here as well? You know, it's not just me", you know, you know that type of thing. - BMCP05
- *So I think it's just. Offering a specialized approach for messages that will resonate with men better than better than women. Just those touch points that would be, that would work better and you need that thought behind any public health campaign - BMCSV4*

# Ownership and space

- that's what we try and do on the men's shed I think 'cause I think they have a lot of skills that they want to share. And I think it's nice to see them share it, because I think for them that's their. You know, it's like that sense of ownership as well, and that they're giving something back so - BMCID1
- *I think I think the men need their own space. They don't need. You know that the the need to be able to talk and to to swear and blaspheme and you know they just need without without women there saying oh you shouldn't be saying that* - BMCID6

# Stakeholder views of BMC

- I can't emphasise it enough because when people feel anxious they're feeling alone and BoroManCan. It was a way forward for them not to feel alone and to be able to share their story and find a way forward, 'cause BoroManCan it leads onto other things. - BMCID7
- *I think BoroManCan comes into that area of work which, which allows us space for people to kind of think about men's health. Think about uh men to think about mental health and to be quite directed toward that rather than it - can't just be all you know and then can be often be a little bit blasé about what they're doing and how they should be, and feel that it's maybe not their place to kind of talk about it. And I think men's health and BoroManCan being, it being a driver for that and opening things up with that is, you know, it's really important - BMCP04*

# Meeting

- *whenever I have been have always been really well run, really well organized and when there's been like speakers, all of the speakers have been really informative, engaging, really good. - BMCP03*
- *because I think sometimes you can go on a training course and everything can really hit home and you can go away with all these amazing ideas that you want to do, but actually it's then what you do after uhm, so the champion kind of get together days were really helpful - BMCID1*

# Networking

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- I mean, we started going to a lot of Middlesbrough networking meetings and trying to learn how we can get best get referrals. .... by speaking to Richie he obviously knew kind of the initiatives that were going on at the time. What we could get involved in. And we just kind of started that partner network from there, really. - BMCID1
- *we've been working with BoroManCan to try and take men from Middlesbrough and from deprived areas and try to get them to reconnect with nature, to try and access the sort of the restorative, healing benefits of, of green spaces.... they were looking for opportunities for their uhm obviously their clients to access a whole range of activities to improve health and wellbeing, and we obviously gave them a, a description of what we do, and I think they obviously publicized that on their network to try and get people to engage in this project* - BMCID2

# Supporting

- *Yes, he's invited me to seminars online and webinars and linked me into other training venues.... he has been inclusive so I can. If if I would if I needed to be more diverse then, then there are ways of learning other skills. So, you know it didn't just sort of sign me up and not offer me any support [Mmhm] He has involved me and made me feel welcome to Redcar & Cleveland Council and that. That was the greatest thing, he made me feel welcome, and of value. So, you can say he was very supportive. He's been very supportive and. Yeah, that is, that is important. - BMCID7*

# Partnership

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- Yes, partner is is more just supporting it. I think we, we recognize the importance of it and and we we support the BoroManCan project or anything else that these guys are involved in really. It doesn't necessarily mean it has to bring any money to the door and certainly doesn't mean that we have to get something set in stone and structured I think. Just being a partner means that we can be called on, you know. - BMCP01

# Training

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- So by now, I got involved in a course that was how to better engage men to improve their health and we became like ambassadors for that and we we we attended like a training course. But then the idea was that we develop that course ourselves and delivered it to people that were working in services that men would possibly attend. So and it, it kind of just grew from there - BMC P01
- *there was kind of people who would engage as the BoroManCan's champion and that was a chance I guess for people to meet and talk about what they'd done differently in their organization, following the training - BMCID1*

# Impact



- *It was just a natural kind of thing for us to get involved with for us to try and support all because it mirrored up with what we were trying to do and it matched up with something that we were struggling to to really impact on. We could do it at a level with the session going on, and that's great, but you can only fit so many people in the session. We needed a much wider you know impact in a much wider tool to be able to get to more people, and that's what BoroManCan can achieve because it's a much wider, much larger movement than what we would be able to kind of achieve by our, by ourselves. - BMCP04*

# Looking forward

- Now that things are getting more back to normal. It's it, it's time to start off group meetings, I think. [Yeah], now that that can happen. You know it's it's great having a website. It's great having things online, but there's nothing like real contact so that when when groups of men can get, get together, you know this has happened before - BMCID7
- *I think one way will be to contact all, all the major uh firms and workplaces around Middlesbrough. And make them aware of the BoroManCan campaign. And try and get them to publicize it in their workplaces so that, so that more people know about it. Say it it is online and and it has been on. Uh, on the radio. But it maybe needs to be in the foyers of of factories - BMCID7*

- We need to make sure that it does continue and it does really kind of really make that that big you know, sort of impact into into us going forward. And I think that that's a challenge that's a challenge to kind of. Keep it going and keep it moving and keep it. Keep it progressing, but ultimately everything that we find that is short term-ism, which does happen because of funding cycles or whatever it is. They're the things that they're great sort of like a tease for people that are, oh it's great and but they're also the things that people are kind of, a bit sick of. - BMCP04
- *I think the I think you sort of hit the nail on the head in keeping it fresh and it's about making sure it's up to date with things that are going on. It's about making sure that it links into national campaigns that it's just part of that bigger picture as well. If you're not feeling it's a separate entity on its own, but it it actually stays part of what's going on with it, with things that are coming up and that are new, and I think it, it can get tired.* - BMCP04

# Why the campaign is so needed

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- *I think what we need to be doing, certainly in Middlesbrough, is catching people before they're at the level where they're needing to phone Samaritans or where they're thinking of ending themselves. We need to catch it earlier, so I think that there probably needs to be more intervention at an earlier stage. Certainly, when a man's wellbeing is good, that's probably the time to make the connections so that they feel they have a support net for when it isn't. - PRNC4*
- I think what we need to be mindful of is that and as horrendous as this sounds this might not be the only time we end up in one of these, you know, lockdown scenarios these kind of thing in our lifetime. We need to make sure that these kinds of projects are there to support people as well with it. When and if this might happen again, it's either, using it to make people more robust so that potentially healthier when things like this do come about. - BMCP04

# Summary points

- The Boro male stereotype
- The stigma of mental health
- Ways to health and wellbeing
  - Avoiding formal pathways; signposting; online help; trust and confidentiality
- Male-oriented service delivery
- Stakeholder views of the campaign:
  - safe space; meeting; networking, support; partnership; training and impact
- Looking forward