



College of
Policing



Public health and police communities are joining forces across the globe. Why?

Many of us in policing understand the need for society to tackle the underlying causes of the issues we deal with every working day. These present themselves as vulnerability, crime and many other symptoms of people failing to thrive. They may result in violence, mental and physical health deterioration and an intergenerational cycle of trauma.

But how do we effectively shift the focus from dealing with the symptoms to the root causes?

A public health approach to policing uses the science and art of public health at a strategic and tactical level to reduce vulnerability and thereby demand. This approach involves effective use of evidence and intelligence. This means focusing on the needs of the population rather than just individuals, taking a view that prevention is better than cure, and dealing with root causes. Working in partnership enables us to do this effectively.

By combining a policing passion for taking action with the analytical prowess of public health practitioners, you have a formidable partnership that can catalyse effective outcomes. By drawing on the strengths of other statutory agencies, the voluntary sector and, most importantly, communities, we can make our future generations stronger, safer and healthier.

DCC Julian Moss

NPCC lead for public health approaches in policing

Principles of a public health approach to policing

- 1 Seeking to prevent an issue for your population as a whole, and intervening early with at-risk groups to reduce the harm caused by the issue, including by promoting recovery and increasing resilience.
- 2 Developing a detailed understanding of the nature, extent, and impact of an issue – including the evidence of what is likely to cause or prevent it in the short, medium and long term – using shared data and intelligence.
- 3 Understanding that the police, their partners and communities can work together to address the causes and impact of an issue by taking a whole system approach.
- 4 Working with partners to coordinate tailored and targeted action that, together, aims to prevent:
 - an issue emerging in the first place or re-emerging by focusing on social determinants/the causes at a population level (**primary prevention**)
 - an emerging issue from becoming an established problem (**secondary prevention**)
 - an established problem getting worse and becoming a crisis, and mitigating the immediate impact of the problem (**tertiary prevention**)
- 5 Assessing how well interventions are implemented, and how effective they are at preventing the issue for your population and/or reducing the harm to relevant groups.
- 6 Learning from the implementation and effectiveness of actions, and making any changes that are necessary at an individual, organisation or system wide level.
- 7 Building leadership across public services and communities to work together to address an issue, its causes and harms, by aligning strategy, leadership and resources.

*We have used the word 'issue' throughout these principles to refer to any of the challenges, risks, harms or conditions which impact on policing and/or communities.

Find out more at college.police.uk/pages/public-health.aspx

These principles have been developed from and should be used in conjunction with **Public Health Approaches within Policing** (Public Health England and College of Policing)