

Changing Futures Sussex Impact Briefing 5

Trauma Informed & Reflective Practice



A report outlining the transformational impact of Changing Futures Sussex in strengthening best practice across services

Trauma-Informed & Reflective Practice

The Changing Futures Programme Sussex has enabled and strengthened best practice across services

Changing Futures Sussex has driven system-wide adoption of trauma-informed practice, strengthening organisational responses to trauma and deepening shared understanding of trauma-informed approaches.

This has improved the quality of support available to people with lived experience of trauma, including those experiencing multiple compound needs (MCN), enabling more respectful, dignified, and trauma-informed care. Alongside this, the programme has supported a more resilient workforce through dedicated reflective practice sessions that offer safe spaces for professionals to reflect and debrief.

*"We can be as kind as we like,
but we can't reduce the pain
they've dealt with."*

***Changing Futures worker,
reflecting on their work with
clients***



1) Raising the profile and promoting adoption of trauma-informed practice across services and organisations

Through an extensive programme of outreach and engagement, including training, consultations, presentations, networks, and forums, Changing Futures Sussex has significantly raised the visibility, understanding, and adoption of trauma-informed approaches across local authorities, public health, and voluntary sector organisations in Sussex and beyond.

Key achievements

Launched the Trauma-Informed Framework 2025

The framework is a practical resource guiding frontline teams and system leaders to embed trauma-informed approaches in everyday practice and decision making. Changing Futures Sussex played a key role in coordinating the framework alongside multiple health and care organisations across Sussex. The framework provides clear, practical guidance to help bring trauma-informed thinking into everyday work, policies, and organisations. Additional implementation tools and resources are available through the Trauma Informed Practice toolkits in the [Changing Futures resource library](#).



The framework also sets out the following **Calls to Action** to enable the embedding of trauma-informed practice across Sussex:



- **Champion dedicated coordination capacity** to embed trauma-informed approaches across complex systems.
- **Unite diverse expertise** – from frontline workers to strategic leaders – to co-create inclusive, effective solutions.
- **Build and act on robust evidence** to sustainably embed peer support and relational care into the fabric of our services.

Delivered training, presentations, and specialist consultations, including 'train the trainer' programme

Building capability in trauma-informed care among a large number of staff and helping embed a shared trauma-informed approach across local authorities, health services, police and justice settings, voluntary and community sector organisations, libraries, and universities.

Trained 6,000+ frontline workers and senior leaders in Trauma-Informed Care



Through an extensive programme of training & support

"I intend to be more conscious of reframing 'disruptive' behaviour as someone potentially having a need that is not being met."

"I would like to have a conversation with my wider organisation around the languages we use."

**Participants feedback, Changing Futures Sussex
-led trauma-informed training**

2) Promoted shared learning and understanding of trauma-informed approaches

Changing Futures Sussex has enabled cross-agency learning and deepened understanding of trauma-informed approaches through ongoing dialogue, peer learning, shared reflection, and problem-solving across services, including primary care networks.

Community of Practice

An Integrated Care System (ICS)-wide forum with members from 70+ organisations across Sussex. Facilitated by Changing Futures since 2022, it has strengthened connectivity between organisations in the pursuit of trauma-informed practice. It has also directly supported improvements in workforce wellbeing and operational practice across NHS providers, Local Authorities, police, voluntary sector organisations, and academic institutions.

"Interactive and engaging- so helpful to have practical application of the approach discussed in more detail and lots of things to consider both for service users and myself as a practitioner!"

Participant feedback, Changing Futures Sussex led Trauma-Informed training

The Practice Network

Delivered by JustLife - a Sussex-wide hub for trauma-informed practice that has strengthened workforce capability across services through free training, resources, podcasts, web spaces, and learning bulletins. Further details can be accessed via [The East and West Sussex Practice Networks](#) here.

Webinars and learning events

Addressed a range of complex themes, including unacceptable behaviour, staff wellbeing, trauma and moral injury, racial traumatisation, and violence prevention and reduction. They **helped strengthen organisational culture around trauma-informed practice** by deepening awareness and shared understanding of trauma-informed approaches and enabling more thoughtful and respectful engagement with people who may be vulnerable to retraumatisation.



March 2025

Changing Futures Sussex delivered a webinar to 87 GPs across Sussex on trauma informed and reflective practice



3) Strengthening staff wellbeing through reflective practice

Changing Futures Sussex has strengthened staff wellbeing, connectedness, and resilience by embedding reflective practice and ongoing support across the programme and beyond, creating safer, more supported conditions for emotionally demanding frontline work.

Reflective Practice Sessions

Provide protected, facilitated space for Changing Futures Sussex team, including frontline practitioners and senior leaders, to reflect on and process the emotional demands of working with people facing high levels of vulnerability and multiple complex needs.

Positive feedback from participants shows that these sessions are now a valued component of multidisciplinary team (MDT) working, strengthening staff resilience and supporting safer, more thoughtful practice with people who may be at greater risk of harm.

90+% of participants reported improved practice

90+% said the sessions relieved feelings of isolation

90+ % felt more resilient at work

"Trying to convince someone that their life is worth living is exhausting."

Changing Futures worker

"It enables me to make sense of the thoughts, feelings, and emotions that my work creates in a safe, confidential, supportive space."

Changing Futures worker on Reflective Practice

80+ Reflective Practice sessions delivered between 2024 and 2025 to frontline practitioners and senior leaders

"Having someone that listens has been helpful, even to my negativity, most people don't have the time and just want to end the conversation as soon as possible. I am always low but try to stay happy. I keep getting referred to new services and workers and this makes me angry, and I always feel lost. It feels like no one has the time to actually help, but the Trauma-Informed Navigator is still here ..."

Changing Futures client

Reflective Practice Facilitator Training

more than 30 facilitators trained since May 2023, building local capacity within the voluntary sector to sustain and expand Reflective Practice spaces.

Workforce wellbeing and retention outcomes

within Changing Futures Sussex multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) show a strong association with the programme's trauma-informed and reflective practice approach.

Around 38% lower staff turnover rate

7.5% in Changing Futures MDTs vs 12% national average for adult social care teams (2024/25)

Around 43% lower staff sickness rates

An average of 6.2 sickness days per employee within the Changing Futures MDTs vs 10.8 days across local authority adult social care services (2024/25)



Enablers / Optimised Conditions

Below is a list of enablers and optimised conditions that have allowed the impacts to be achieved:

- Programme team resource including a dedicated System Change and Learning Co-ordinator acted as trauma informed system convenor
- National Community of Practice
- Funding for reflective practice

Risks / Red Flags

Below is a list of risks and red flags that highlight a return to practice before Changing Futures:

- Loss of funding for dedicated convening / facilitator roles
- Trauma-informed practice will be restricted within each organisation
- Lack of support for staff could lead to burnout and sickness
- Reflective time seen as optional or secondary



Links for further reading

Changing Futures Sussex Impacts Reports:

1. [Introduction & Summaries](#)
2. [Service Transformation](#)
3. [Governance & Commissioning](#)
4. [Data & Evidence](#)
5. [Co-Production](#)
6. [Trauma Informed & Reflective Practice](#)

Impact Reports Supporting Data

Area Data Packs:

- [Brighton & Hove](#)
- [East Sussex](#)
- [West Sussex](#)

[Pressure Maps Insight & Learning](#)

'Voices of Changing Futures Sussex' - Client voice Project

[Voices of Changing Futures You Tube Playlist](#)

Further Learning & Resources

[Changing Futures Sussex Learning Archive](#)

[Changing Futures Sussex System Resources Archive](#)

Changing Futures Sussex

www.changingfuturesussex.org.uk



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Impact Briefings authored by Amrita Limbu, Jo Rogers, and Martin Powell