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## **Mental Health Stigma Survey**

**May 2017**

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## Introduction

### Healthwatch Bury

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 stated that Healthwatch would be established in April 2013. Healthwatch Bury is an independent company with its own Board and membership.

The aim of Healthwatch is to give adults, children and young people (both individuals and communities) a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care are provided in the locality and to help people to get the best out of those services. We believe that the best way to do this is by designing local services around people's needs and experiences.

Everything we say and do is informed by our connections to local people and our expertise is grounded in their experience. We are the only body looking solely at people's experience across all health and social care services. We are uniquely placed as a network, with a local Healthwatch in every local authority area in England and clear links to Healthwatch England, the Health and Wellbeing Board and Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

As a watchdog with statutory powers, our role is to ensure that providers of local health and social care services and commissioners put the experiences of people at the heart of their care.

Healthwatch Bury will provide the evidence base for decisions at all levels; helping to improve health and social care services. Healthwatch Bury will also facilitate the flow of information in the opposite direction, signposting patients and the public to information that will help them make choices about their care.

Healthwatch Bury guiding principles are:

- People First – We listen carefully to users of health and social care.
- Partnership – We work in partnership with other groups, seeking a stronger voice together.
- Inclusion – We seek the views of those who are not often heard.
- Critical Friendship – We celebrate excellence, support service improvement and speak out when we have concerns.

### **Healthwatch Bury list of key priority areas are based on the Bury Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy's top five priorities (2015-18):**

Priority 1: Ensuring a positive start to life for children, young people and families.

Priority 2: Ensuring comprehensive advice and support is available to enable people to adopt healthy lifestyles and enjoy positive wellbeing.

Priority 3: Helping to build strong communities, wellbeing and mental health.

Priority 4: Promoting independence of people living with long term conditions and their carers.

Priority 5: Supporting the creation of healthy, sustainable environments.

## Purpose of the report

As part of Mental Health Awareness Week (8<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> May 2017). Healthwatch Bury created a survey to assess people's views on mental health stigma and its negative consequences.

*Stigma is defined as a 'strong feeling of disapproval that most people in a society have about something, especially when it is unfair'*

Healthwatch Bury collected 26 responses via a link to an online survey which was sent to the Healthwatch Bury membership and shared via social media.

Paper copies of the survey were used during our engagement with the public at a Marketplace which was hosted by the council and partner organisations at Bury Market, on 10th May.



Mental Health Awareness Week is a national campaign that takes place every year and is organised by the Mental Health Foundation.

The campaign this year was 'Surviving or thriving' and it asked why so many people are living with mental health issues rather than enjoying good mental health. The campaign focused on why so many of us struggle to cope with the demands of modern life and, in some cases, just get through the day. The campaign also looked at steps we can all take to look after our mental health, build resilience and cope better with the demands of modern life.

Bury has an estimated 27,000 people experiencing a mental health condition, at any given time and the council and its partners are keen to emphasise to residents that they are not alone. Local organisations are on hand to offer advice and support.

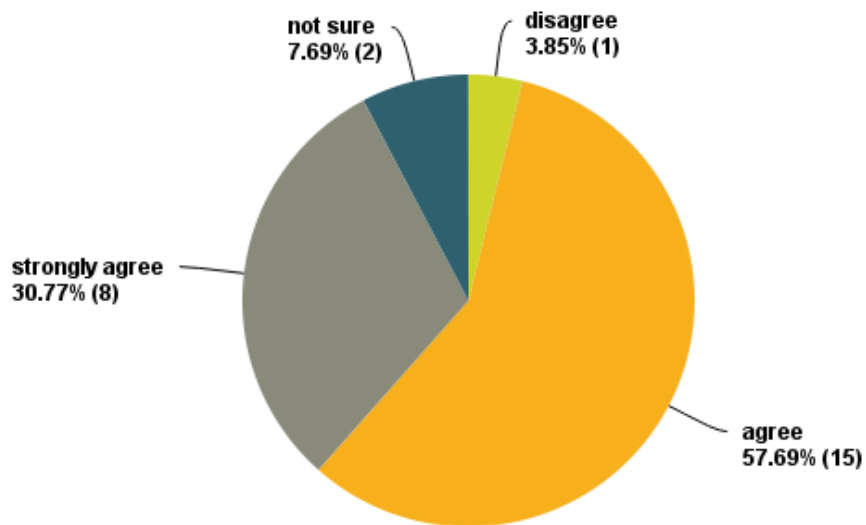
Andrea Wilson  
May 2017

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## What our survey told us

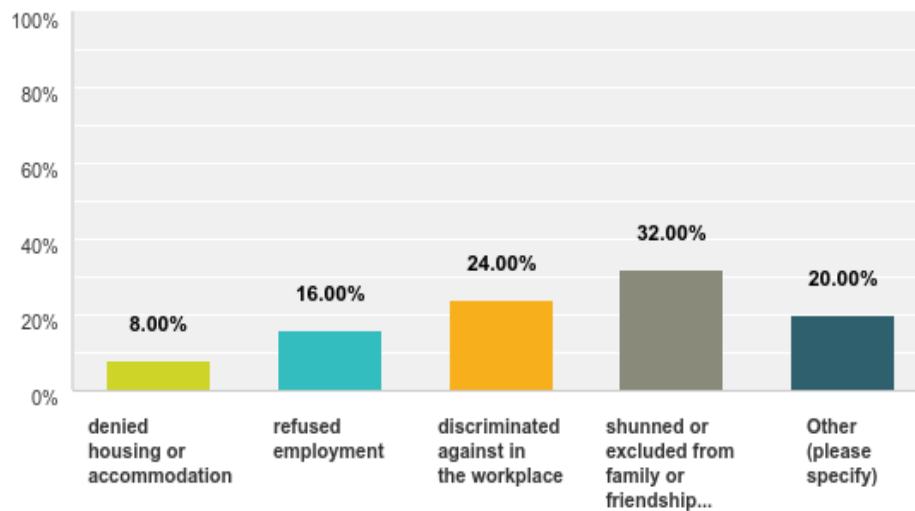
### Q1 Do you agree that people's mental health in Bury is being affected by stigma?

Answered: 26 Skipped: 0



### Q2 In what ways do you think mental health stigma can be demonstrated?

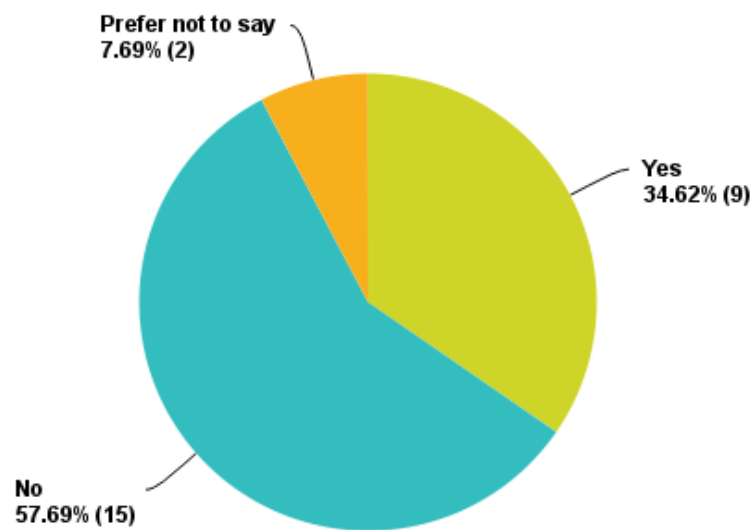
Answered: 25 Skipped: 1



- Discriminated in the workplace and shunned
- Many aspects

### Q3 Have you been affected by mental health stigma?

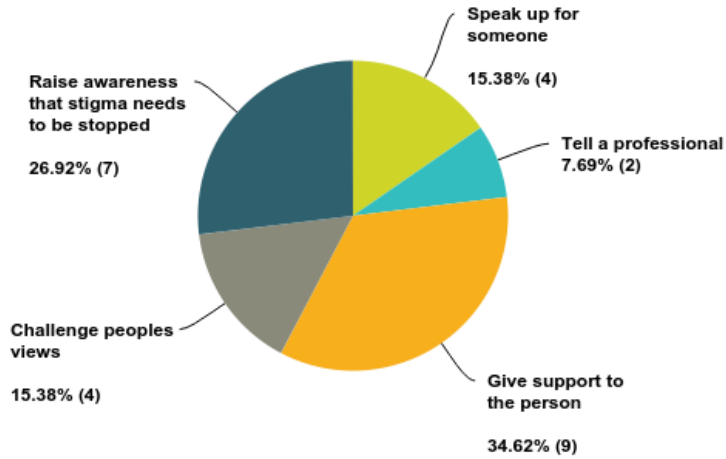
Answered: 26 Skipped: 0



- In my previous job in the health sector, I found patients' and clients' attitudes towards this very negative
- My son
- From class mates

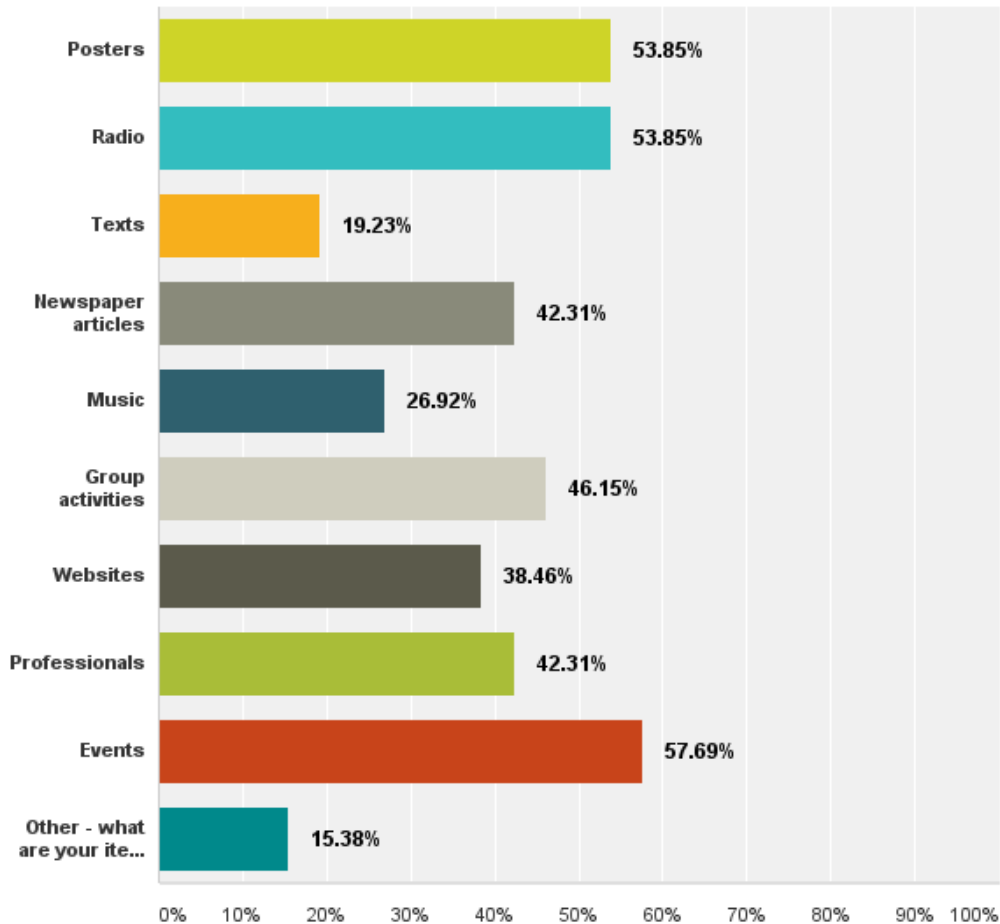
### Q4 How would you challenge mental health stigma?

Answered: 26 Skipped: 0



### Q5 How could Bury raise awareness on metal health stigma?

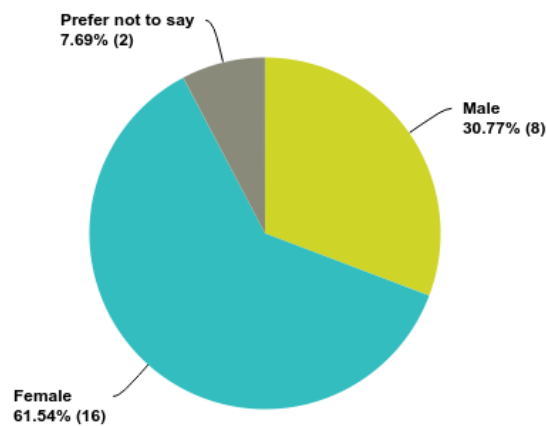
Answered: 26 Skipped: 0



- Education - schools, colleges etc.
- Educating others to understand and try to reduce the stigma
- Case studies of how people have been supported and recovered, or how integrated back into employment and social life. Also how people have been effected by stigma.

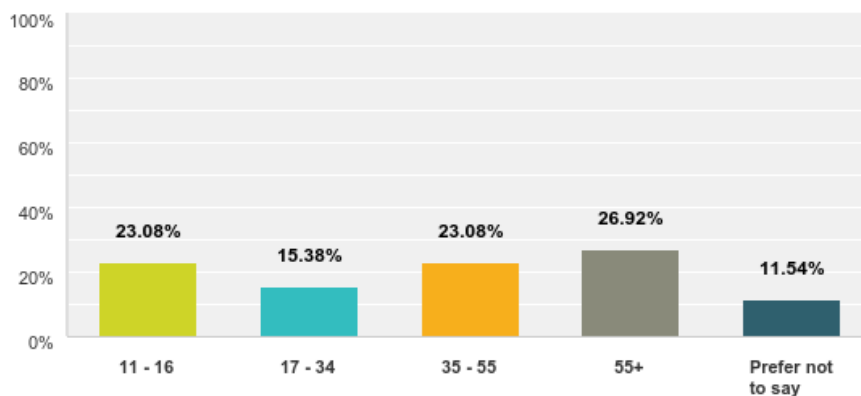
**Q6 Which of the following best describes you?**

Answered: 26 Skipped: 0



**Q7 Please select an age group:**

Answered: 26 Skipped: 0



## Conclusions

As well as the on line survey, Healthwatch Bury staff engaged with the public both at the Market Place and at a Health and Wellbeing Event held at the Jinnah Centre. Conversations were held regarding the experiences of family or friends that have poor mental wellbeing.

The majority of people surveyed agreed that people's mental health in Bury is affected by stigma (58% agreed). The people surveyed had a choice of how this was demonstrated from being denied housing or accommodation, refused employment, discriminated against in the workplace, or shunned and excluded from friends or friendship groups. The majority of people surveyed found that stigma is demonstrated through being 'shunned or excluded from friends or friendship groups' (32%).

58% of the public who completed the survey selected 'no' to the question, 'Are you being affected by mental health stigma'? 34% answered yes and 8% of people selected 'Prefer not to say'. At least one person completed the survey as a carer of someone who was effected by mental health stigma.

Surprisingly, only 36% chose the 'Give support to the person' option when asked 'How would you challenge mental health stigma?' Only 15% said they would speak up for someone or challenge people's views. This would support the stereotyped views that many people believe those with mental health are violent and dangerous and are concerned about the risks to themselves of getting involved. The real probability is that people with mental health are more at risk of being hurt, or harming themselves, than harming other people.

The final question was a multi-choice question on how Bury could raise awareness of mental health stigma. Events, poster and radio campaigns were rated the highest, followed by group activities, professional support and newspaper articles.

Three people who completed the survey did not select their age group or selected 'Prefer not to say'. In the over 35 years category, stigma was demonstrated through 'discrimination in the workplace' or 'refused employment' (40% combined). 'Shunned or excluded from family or friends', also affects people between the ages of 35-55.

We shall be seeking more detailed views on mental health over the coming year and hope to drill down further into the issues and concerns raised in this mental health stigma survey.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1 – Healthwatch Bury Mental Health Awareness Week Survey



#### Mental Health Awareness Week 8th - 14th May - MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA

Healthwatch Bury Mental Health Awareness Week Survey

**As part of Mental Health Awareness Week we are assessing people's views on mental health stigma and its negative consequences.**

**Stigma is defined as a 'strong feeling of disapproval that most people in a society have about something, especially when it is unfair'**

**This is a completely anonymous and confidential survey.**

**Please read the statements below and tick one of the boxes:**

1. Do you agree that people's mental health in Bury is being affected by stigma?

- disagree
- strongly disagree
- agree
- strongly agree
- not sure

2. In what ways do you think mental health stigma can be demonstrated:

- denied housing or accommodation
- refused employment
- discriminated against in the workplace
- shunned or excluded from family or friendship groups
- Other (please specify)

3. Have you been affected by mental health stigma?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

If yes are you able to tell us how?

4. How would you challenge mental health stigma

- Speak up for someone
- Tell a professional
- Give support to the person
- Challenge peoples views
- Raise awareness that stigma needs to be stopped
- Wouldn't know what to do
- Would be to embarrassed to do anything

5. How could Bury raise awareness on metal health stigma?

- Posters
- Radio
- Texts
- Newspaper articles
- Music
- Group activities
- Websites
- Professionals
- Events
- Other - what are your iteas? (please specify)

6. Which of the following best describes you:

- Male
- Female
- Transgender
- Prefer not to say
- I identify my gender as:

7. Please select an age group:

- 11 - 16
- 17 - 34
- 35 - 55
- 55+
- Prefer not to say

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