



## **PRESS NOTICE**

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 00.01 Tuesday 13 September 2011**

### **Leading charities call on political leaders to turn the tide for the most excluded in our society**

Around 60,000 (i) adults facing multiple needs and exclusions are being let down by services, living chaotic lives and facing premature death because as a society we fail to understand and coordinate the support they need, say leading charities.

Revolving Doors Agency and the Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) coalition - formed of Clinks, DrugScope, Homeless Link and Mind - are today launching a vision paper setting out how the situation and its huge social and financial costs can be addressed and urging political leaders from all parties to take action.

People facing multiple needs and exclusions experience a combination of problems such as mental ill health, substance misuse, homelessness and contact with the criminal justice system. At the same time communities suffer from crime and anti-social behaviour; local services are disrupted for other users; and there are large bills for the public purse through frequent arrest, prison sentences and ambulance call outs.

Published today, *Turning the tide: A Vision Paper for multiple needs and exclusions* sets out how this damage can be prevented. It outlines our vision: that in every local area people experiencing multiple needs and exclusions are supported by effective, coordinated services, with small teams helping people access the support they need and all agencies being flexible in their responses to this group. In the current financial climate it makes sense for all agencies to find new ways of working and collaborating.

*Turning the Tide* suggests that despite some good progress it is clear that local services cannot achieve this vision alone. It calls for a new approach from national government to create an environment in which it becomes the norm for leaders in local areas to put coordinated services in place.

The paper sets out five building blocks on which the government can base this new approach. These are:

- Communicating a clear message that tackling multiple needs and exclusions is a government priority
- Defining and identifying people experiencing multiple needs and exclusions
- Creating accountability, leadership and transparency
- Making outcomes and commissioning work for this group
- Getting the finances right in local areas

It is clear that the public would support such action. In a 2010 YouGov poll, 63% agree that “if government and local services had a stronger focus on people with multiple needs and exclusions and worked better for them it would help improve the situation of this group” (ii)

*Turning the tide* is being launched by Revolving Doors Agency and Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) today – 13 September 2011 – at a parliamentary reception hosted by David Burrowes MP and addressed by The Rt Hon Oliver Letwin MP, Minister for Government Policy and Roberta Blackman-Woods MP, Shadow Minister for the Cabinet Office.

**Dominic Williamson, Chief Executive, Revolving Doors Agency said:**

*“David Cameron has committed to protect society’s most vulnerable individuals. This must include people experiencing multiple needs and exclusions, who are among the most marginalised in our society. Across the country, organisations and individuals are striving to put in place the coordinated services that have been shown to work for this group. But too often they come up against national barriers. A real step-change is needed to address this, and the government has a crucial role to play.*

*“We believe that with the right information, incentives and strong leadership, every community across the country could achieve the vision of effective, coordinated support. Turning the Tide sets out how we can make this happen”.*

**Oliver Hilbery, Project Director, Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) said:**

*“Coordinated local responses can change the lives of even the most excluded individuals. However, such services can be very difficult to provide. Local areas wanting to develop the practical, financial and strategic partnerships that are needed can sometimes feel like they are swimming against the tide of policy and battling for political engagement.*

*“To make coordinated services a reality in every local area government must make it much easier – indeed the norm - for leaders in local areas to put coordinated services in place. That is what Turning the Tide is about and we look forward to working with government to make the vision a reality.”*

**Andrew Barnett, Director, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation UK, said:**

*“We have been pleased to support this collaboration between Revolving Doors Agency and Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM). The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation has a particular interest in assisting individuals to fulfill their potential and contribute to society and nowhere is this more important than for those at the margins of our society. The actions outlined in the Vision Paper are a vital part of the solution and we look forward to their implementation”*

**\*\*ENDS\*\***

## Notes to editors

- (1) A number of local areas are already providing high quality coordinated services for people experiencing multiple needs and exclusions. Case studies of services and of individuals in Cambridgeshire and Brighton are available on request. For more information, interviews, comments or initial enquiries on case studies please contact Anna Page at Revolving Doors: [anna.page@revolving-doors.org.uk](mailto:anna.page@revolving-doors.org.uk) 020 7253 4038 or Oliver Hilbery at MEAM [oliver.hilbery@meam.org.uk](mailto:oliver.hilbery@meam.org.uk) 020 7012 1407.
- (2) **Revolving Doors Agency** is a charity working across England to change systems and improve services for people with multiple problems, including poor mental health, who are in contact with the criminal justice system. Revolving Doors Agency works with prisons, the police and partners across England. We also run a national service user forum of people with direct experience of the issues. [www.revolving-doors.org.uk](http://www.revolving-doors.org.uk)
- (3) **Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM)** is a coalition of four national charities – Clinks, DrugScope, Homeless Link and Mind – formed to influence policy and services for adults facing multiple needs and exclusions. Together the charities represent over 1,600 frontline organisations working in the criminal justice, drug treatment, homelessness and mental health sectors. [www.meam.org.uk](http://www.meam.org.uk); [www.clinks.org](http://www.clinks.org); [www.drugscope.org.uk](http://www.drugscope.org.uk); [www.homeless.org.uk](http://www.homeless.org.uk); [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)
- (4) **People facing multiple needs and exclusions** are in every community in Britain.
  - **They experience several problems at the same time**, such as mental ill health, homelessness, drug and alcohol misuse, offending and family breakdown. These problems often develop after traumatic experiences such as abuse or bereavement.
  - **They have ineffective contact with services.** People with multiple needs usually look for help, but most public services are designed to deal with one problem at a time and to support people with single, severe conditions. This leads to people not getting the help they need.
  - **And they are living chaotic lives.** Facing multiple problems that exacerbate each other, and lacking effective support from services, people easily end up in a downward spiral of mental ill health, drug and alcohol problems, crime and homelessness. They become trapped, living chaotic lives where escape seems impossible, with no one offering a way out.
- (5) ***Turning the Tide: a Vision Paper for multiple needs and exclusions*** is launched today at Portcullis House, Westminster, London. Journalists are welcome to attend. Please register your interest with Anna Page at Revolving Doors: [anna.page@revolving-doors.org.uk](mailto:anna.page@revolving-doors.org.uk) 020 7253 4038. Embargoed copies of the paper are available on request.
- (6) **The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation:** The Vision Paper was funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, an international charitable foundation with cultural, educational, social and scientific interests. Based in Lisbon with branches in London and

Paris, the Foundation is in a privileged position to support transnational work tackling contemporary issues in Europe. The purpose of the UK Branch in London is to connect and enrich the experiences of individuals, families and communities with a special interest in supporting those who are most disadvantaged. [www.gulbenkian.org.uk](http://www.gulbenkian.org.uk)

## Sources

- (i) The 60,000 figure is taken from Making Every Adult Matter (2009) [\*A four-point manifesto for tackling multiple needs and exclusions\*](#), Making Every Adult Matter, London p.8. This is a snapshot figure, with more people constantly moving in and out of the group. It conservatively assumes that 40% of the prison and homeless populations are experiencing multiple needs and exclusions at any one time. As other populations, for example sex workers, will also include people facing multiple needs and exclusions this is an indicative figure only. While relatively small in number, this group imposes disproportionate costs on government and society.
- (ii) The YouGov poll mentioned above was published in Fabian Society (2010) [\*Hardest to Reach? The politics of multiple needs and exclusions\*](#), Fabian Society, London