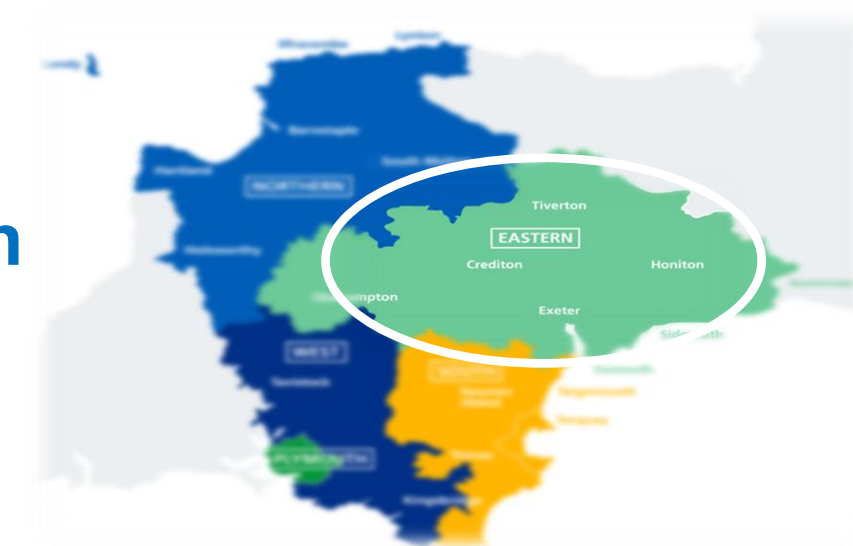


EASTERN DEVON MENTAL HEALTH PARTNERSHIP

Building trust to fuel the collaborative improvement of mental health provision



What we discussed & why	Impact of the discussion	Current themes
On 17 September 2026, your group explored updated Staying Safe from Suicide guidance and what a person-centred approach means across Eastern Devon. Partners discussed moving away from risk categories towards compassionate conversations, shared understanding of safety, and collaborative safety planning. The discussion considered how referral processes, handovers and gaps following crisis assessment can leave people without continuing support. Partners also explored what staff and volunteers need to feel confident supporting people experiencing suicidal thoughts. Updates included expanded Family Hub support, a new TalkWorks group for depression and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), school-based suicide prevention initiatives, and a forthcoming community wellbeing event.	The discussion strengthened shared understanding of relational safety and the importance of continuity between services. TalkWorks shared progress in replacing static risk labels with dynamic safety assessments and collaborative planning. Partners highlighted the value of warm handovers, where services work together with individuals rather than relying on signposting alone. This could help address gaps following crisis assessment and improve access to appropriate community support. Family Hubs identified opportunities to strengthen links with adult mental health services and review staff training. The group also recognised the need for better information-sharing and suicide prevention training across voluntary and community organisations. The chair offered to circulate relevant training opportunities and resources to support further learning.	Relational safety, trust and continuity of care remain central themes, particularly for people whose needs fall between specialist mental health services and community support. VCSE are increasingly supporting people experiencing mental distress alongside poverty, social isolation, disability and long-term health conditions. Accessible training, appropriate information-sharing and stronger connections with clinical services are needed to support this work. Workforce pressures and service changes continue to affect partnership working. Developing integrated neighbourhood approaches and strengthening relationships across organisational boundaries offer opportunities to improve continuity and access to support.

Co-Chairs: Andy Stapley (andy.stapley@nhs.net) and Matt Merriam (matt.merriam@colabexeter.org.uk)

In attendance:

- Devon Mental Health Alliance, CoLab, Devon Partnership Trust, Talkworks, Devon County Council, Westbank, Eastern Primary Care Collaborative Board, Wellbeing Exeter, Brave Spaces, Mobilates, NHS Devon, Imagine If

Our next conversation:

- 15 October 2026, 0900

Don't forget to use DMHA's Digital Learning Network to find community activities suitable for those you are working with:

<https://www.mentalhealthdevon.co.uk/learning-network>

