**Focus group schedule**

Please note that focus group questions will be confirmed following the Introductory Co-Production Workshops in each study site. Should the questions identified differ substantially from those listed here, we will inform and gain approval from the relevant REC before any data are collected.

**Introduction**

* Thank participants for coming
* Go through the participant information sheet and answer any questions
* Negotiate written informed consent and agree groundrules (Chatham House rule)
* Get informed consent for use of audio recorder and/or video recorder.
* Explain purpose of the discussion. Remind participants that there are no right or wrong answers.
* Remind people that they do not have to answer any questions if they do not want to and that they are free to leave whenever they wish.

**Discussion**

1. What is it like living in [study site]?

Prompt discussion on:

* What it is like for different age groups; men and women; different types of household
* How has it changed over time
* What are the best and worst things
* What are the biggest challenges people face (prompt discussion on main sources of distress and unhappiness)
1. What are the main health and wellbeing issues in this area?

Prompt discussion on:

* Causes of health and wellbeing issues identified
* Who is affected, and how
* How this has changed over time
* Why people feel these changes have taken place (prompt discussion around deprivation and possible role of welfare reforms)
1. How do people perceive mental health issues in this area?

Prompt discussion on:

* What is meant by mental health. What is meant by mental distress or mental illness
* What are the main causes of mental distress in the area
* How do people in the area respond to mental distress (prompt discussion around normalisation, stigma, denial, use/non-use of medical interventions)
* Does this differ across social groups (e.g. age and gender), how and why.
* How do you think people should respond to distress. Why.
* How do you think that other people in this area think that people should respond to distress. Who, why.
1. What do you think other people from outside this area think of people in [study site] if they are distressed?

Prompt discussion on:

* Who would think this – prompt discussion around different types of people e.g. wealthier people, government employees, doctors
* Why would they think this
* What do you think these people think people who are distressed should do about it.
* What kinds of things influence the way people think about people here – prompt discussion around role of e.g. media, government rhetoric and welfare reform, key service providers such as health and social workers, job centres
* How and why this may have changed over time

5) What impact do these kinds of perceptions have on people’s health and wellbeing?

Prompt discussion on:

* How impacts may vary across social groups e.g. based on factors such as age and gender
* How different groups take on or resist these perceptions?
1. What services/mechanisms exist to support people who experience mental distress in this area?

Prompt discussion on:

* What services/mechanisms are people aware of
* Who uses them, who doesn't, and why
* Which services are least and most effective
* What would be an effective way of supporting people with mental distress
1. Ask participants if there are any other topics they wish to discuss

Thank participants for taking part in the discussion.

Ensure they have research team contact details in case of any queries.