

# Annual Public Health Report 2020

## Time to Change: Working Towards Better Health For All in Suffolk

Transcript: Nathen (39) Unemployed. Part of Romany community. Lives in different locations around Suffolk

### **Q: How has COVID-19 affected your life?**

**Nathen:** There's been a lot going on through this time with me and my family. There's been a lot of deaths in my family these last few months. And I only lost my mum last month. I haven't really had time to... I don't know process anything I suppose. I just go through the day just, blanking everything. If I blank it, I'm not going to worry about it. And I do my best just today. Just about. I forget about tomorrow.

### **Q: How has your physical and mental health been affected during this time?**

**Nathen:** There's CPD that runs through my family. It's not really caused from smoking, that's hereditary. The cancer that's running through my family is... it's bad at the moment 'cos I feel they've got it. I err... mental health-wise. That's, something you never talked about because... I was a manic depressive for a long time. I just... well, I don't really know when I'm doing it, at the minute to be honest with you, I just... everybody says it's bad nerves... Bad nerves that's what we call it in the family, that thing. Nothing else is mentioned. Because we all know what it is, and what it can cause. And we know, that this one does run through the family. And it's not bad nerves it's bipolar disorder and, Schizophrenic, but... I keep a lid down on everything. Just what the family call it, because it does run through my Dad's side and a lot of them do have it. But nothing is spoken of it, it's a taboo subject. You can't talk about it, can't mention it... bad nerves that's it. End of conversation, do you know what I mean. You cannot control emotions, everything in your head is like... getting hold of a big puzzle and throwing it in the air. That's your mind- you can't... function- somebody's talking and all that, talking to you and... if you was talking to you that time you'd just be going blah blah blah... to me it's nothing. You just wouldn't be there do you understand? We don't live past 50. We don't really, reach any age like that, once that starts... you die.

### **Q: What would help improve your health and that of your family over the next few years?**

**Nathen:** Feeling secure. I'd like to feel secure. Not just... I don't know being part of a Romany traveller community, sometime in your life you reach a certain age you don't want it anymore. It's not just about travelling. It's not just about... being with your own kind of people. It is that- [inaudible] after you reach a certain age, most can't do it anymore most don't want to do it anymore. The Romany community is changing quick.



Its outlook, its views. Most are conservative anyway but... as a whole I suppose, because some of them are married into the settled community you know.

**Q: Do you think your health is affected by who you are, where you live or how much money you have?**

**Nathen:** Money means nothing. It's funny, most people will worry about money. I never did. Not when I was young I don't, I assume I do I suppose, but... I never worried about it. As long as I had twenty pound in my pocket I didn't care. I went to work, as long as I had something on the weekend I didn't care, but now... [groans] money would play security part of it I suppose... no it wouldn't. It don't really make any difference to be honest with you. Because a lot of my family, are wealthy. But enough-wise, it don't make any difference. The work they used to do... tells on them now. Hard work. Field work, winter. But over the years of doing that, other problems set in and there's nothing they can do. So really it hasn't done them no good. Living that sort of life and I suppose they've only just started realising but that's what they've bought up to, that's how it's been for generations. I suppose if it's for other people, but then some people have desk jobs, it's easier. If you know what you're doing. If you've had an education... I mean I can read alright, but I can't write. To save my life, but... that helps me a lot. But for some they can't read. Because they've never been to school. All they've done is work from the age of ten. Some nine. My mum was ten when she worked, dad eight... when he started working. That's how it was back then I suppose, not so much now. The travelling people. Most go to school, well nearly all I know go to school now, that's a good thing.

