

Grwp Traws Bleidiol ar Iechyd Meddwl Cross Party Group on Mental Health

Minutes of Cross Party Group on Mental Health

2nd February 2022

11.30 – 12.30

Virtual - Teams

In attendance:

Ken Skates MS	Chair
Simon Jones	Mind Cymru (secretariat)
Rhun ap Iwerth MS	Ynys Mon
Suzanne Duval	Diverse Cymru
Sue O'Leary	Mind Cymru
Nia Evans	Mind Cymru
Eleri Cabbage	Office of Lynne Neagle MS
Emily Wooster	Mental Health Foundation
Richard Jones	Mental Health Matters
James Radcliffe	Platform
Emma Gooding	Samaritans
Kate Heneghan	Papyrus UK
Ffion Edge	Adferiad
Lisa Williams	Adferiad
Sarah Hatherley	Assembly Research Team
Lisa Roberts	RCPCH
Liz Williams	RCPsych
Linda Newton	Cardiff and the Vale Action for Mental Health
Gwyneth Sweatman	FSB
Sara Moseley	GMC
George Wallace	GMC
Prof. Ian Jones	National Centre for Mental Health
Valerie Billingham	Office of Older People's Commissioner
Ian Price	CBI
Rachel Suff	CIPD
June Jones	Time to change Wales
Amy Bainton	Barnardos
Linsey Imms	Wales TUC
Rhianydd Williams	Wales TUC
Madelaine Phillips	Welsh NHS Confed
Dai Davies	Royal College of Occupational Therapists
Alfred Oyekoya	BAME Mental Health Support
Elinor Crouch Puzey	NSPCC
Becky Ricketts	NUS Wales

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Jyles Robillard-Day	The National Counselling Society
Ceri Reed	Parents Voices in Wales
Caroline Walters	Royal College of Speech & Language Therapists
Sarah Williamson	Royal College of Nurses
Penny Gripper	Wales Mental Health and Wellbeing Forum
Gerald Cole	Wales Mental Health and Wellbeing Forum
Angie Darlington	West Wales Action for Mental Health
Charlotte Knight	Office of Jayne Bryant MS
Geroge Watkins	Office of Jenny Rathbone MS
Vicki Evans	Office of Jeremy Miles MS
David Goodban	Office of Ken Skates MS
Rhiannon Moore	Office of Julie Morgan MS

1. Welcome and Introduction

Ken Skates MS (KS) welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular thanking Lynne Neagle MS (LN), Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing for her time. He highlighted that members of the group were keen to hear her reflections on her time in post and priorities for the rest of the Senedd

2. Lynne Neagle MS, Deputy Minister for Mental Health & Wellbeing

The Deputy Minister thanked KS for the invitation to come to the group and outlined how important mental health is and would be in the future as we continue to tackle the challenges presented by the pandemic.

LN outlined her priorities around early intervention and that building resilience among children and young people was a particular priority as this had the potential to impact on the entire life course. Identifying people in need of support earlier had to be central to the work and needed a cross governmental approach, as many of the root causes of poor mental health sat outside of the health service. The need to deliver improved outcomes for people on the ground was of central importance and the focus needs to be on delivering what has already been committed to as part of the Together for Mental Health strategy, in particular around perinatal support, eating disorders, CAMHS and access to psychological therapies. LN recognised that there were workforce challenges as well with the pandemic taking its toll on frontline staff. LN spoke about her continued personal commitment around suicide prevention and her intention to strengthen governance arrangements around delivery of Welsh Government strategies.

LN highlighted it is her intention to apply the principles of her approach as a committee Chair in the last Senedd to her work as a Minister. She is keen to meet with organisations and people to understand their experiences and greatly values the role of the third sector. LN spoke about placing lived experience at the centre of everything the Welsh Government do, particularly that of children and young people.

3. Discussion

Ceri Reed (CR) thanked LN for her advocacy and always being prepared to listen to the voice of lived experience and asked how joint working can be increased with the third sector. Angie Darlington added that there is a need to balance commissioning guidelines with creativity in order to reach those most in need. LN thanked CR for her comments and agreed that improving partnership working was key and Regional Partnership Boards would be asked to demonstrate how they are engaging their third sector within their areas.

Ian Jones (IJ) highlighted that we have some world class mental health research in Wales, which more could be made of in developing support for people and making a difference to their lives. LN agreed and stated she would like to do more with the research community in Wales, citing the work undertaken by Ann John as an example of the difference that can be made.

Linsey Imms (LI) spoke about workplace mental health and the importance of taking a whole workforce approach. This meant policies and practices needed to be in place alongside a positive working culture. Too often there continues to be a gap between management and employees on their experiences and perceptions of support. LN highlighted that despite some significant strides being taken stigma continues to be an issue for many. Tackling improved mental health in the workplace is high on the agenda of Welsh Government, recognising the diversity of workplaces presents a challenge to a uniform approach

Da Davies (DD) highlighted the important role occupational therapists play in support the patient journey, particularly beyond rehabilitation. LN welcomed and valued the role occupational therapists play.

Amy Bainton (AB) raised the issue of appropriate referrals and professionals being trained to respond effectively to young people displaying poor mental health. LN highlighted the importance of a 'no wrong door' approach to avoid gatekeeping within services. LN went on to highlight the importance of upskilling those in schools who have a particularly key relationship with young people.

Emma Gooding (EG) highlighted the desperate need for a cross governmental approach to mental health as inequality has grown significantly. There was a need to tackle the social determinants of mental health, for example, debt, insecure employment, housing, etc, if we are to effectively reduce the impact of poor mental health. LN agreed,

4. Next Steps

KS thanked LN for her time and engaging so positively with the discussion. All members looked forward to supporting her in the coming Senedd term and to welcoming her back to a future meeting to update on progress.