

Welsh Government's Evidence Paper on the Minister for Mental Health and Early Years' Ministerial portfolio priorities

Health and Social Care Committee – 6 June 2024

Children and young people's rights

I am proud of the collective progress we have made in upholding and embedding children's rights in Wales. Wales has led the way on children's rights in the UK – we were the first part of the UK to enshrine the UNCRC in law through The Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011.

However, the continued impacts of the pandemic, cost-of-living crisis, and effects of high inflation on our public services and budgets mean, now, more than ever, we must do everything within our powers to improve the experiences and opportunities for all children and young people in Wales.

Our Children's Rights Scheme provides the strategic framework to ensure children's rights are at the core of decision-making, policy and practice for Welsh Government Ministers and officials.

The participation of children and young people will continue to be key in the development and delivery of our legislation, policies and programmes. Listening to, hearing and acting on the views of children and young people is at the heart of our approach.

We have published a Raising Awareness of Children's Rights Plan, aimed at children and young people; their parents and carers; and professionals working with children and young people, to set out what we will do to raise awareness. We are making good progress on delivering against the actions set out in it but there is still work to be done to support our wider public services. This will include promoting the Right Way – this is the framework developed by the office of the Children's Commissioner for organisations to adopt a children's rights approach.

Children and young people are experts in their own lives. We support their right to participation through funding *Children in Wales* to run *Young Wales*, Welsh Government's primary participation model, to bring the views of children and young people into policies, programme and legislation development.

Early years.

I want to ensure that all babies and young children, irrespective of their background, are supported to have the best start in life and an opportunity to reach their full potential as set out in our [Children and Young People's Plan](#). Childhood experiences play a significant part in shaping individuals' futures and are critical to the chances of leading a healthy, prosperous, and fulfilling life. Positive childhood experiences,

particularly in the first 1,000 days, can help lay the foundations for children to be able to go on to live long, happy, healthy, and prosperous lives.

I want to focus on prevention and early help. *Parenting. Give it time* promotes the importance of positive parenting for parents with children up to age 18. We know such an approach is likely to ensure improved outcomes for children, and this is why it underpins our universal parenting support offer. Our Families First programme also places an emphasis on early help by supporting a multi-agency approach to working with the whole family to stop issues escalating towards crisis.

Through support for Family Information Services (FIS) and our new [Teulu Cymru](#) web pages we are ensuring families and parents have access to free and impartial help, support, guidance and advice on a range of family issues including childcare, costs of childcare, family programmes, health and financial matters, which can all help support positive home environments in which children will be able to develop and thrive. Our early help programmes help to avoid or mitigate the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences by working with families to build on their strengths and resilience.

The Welsh Government continues to place great value on Play and its importance in the lives of children in our society. Access to high quality play opportunities is critical for the social, emotional and physical development of all children. I will take forward short, medium and long-term actions in response to the Ministerial Review of Play report in securing improved opportunities for children to play, championing and protecting children's right to play.

High-quality, accessible and inclusive childcare can be transformational for children. It brings opportunities for parents – particularly mothers – and is key to our efforts to tackle child poverty and reduce inequalities. Childcare is critical to tackling poverty. High-quality nursery education and early help services help counter the effects of poverty on children and families by supporting children's development and improving educational outcomes. Flexible, affordable childcare provision is central to supporting parents to improve their income through work or by accessing education and training. In our investment within the Childcare and Early Years programme we are committed to strengthening and supporting the childcare infrastructure. The capital programme supports the expansion of childcare places and meets our Programme for Government commitment to fund childcare for more families where parents are in education and training or on the edge of work; deliver a phased expansion of early years provision, to include all two-year-olds, with a particular emphasis on strengthening Welsh medium provision; and continue to support the flagship Flying Start programme

Flying Start is the Welsh Government's flagship early years programme supporting families from some of our most disadvantaged communities. It continues to make a real difference to the lives of children with the greatest need and the Welsh Government has reaffirmed its commitment to continue to support the programme throughout this term of government. We are committed to continuing to support the core Flying Start programme and expanding the reach of early years provision to include all two-year-olds across Wales.

Flying Start includes health visitors, childcare staff, community nursery nurses, and speech and language therapists. This approach – and the learning and good practice from our Early Years Integration Transformation Programme pilots – will help shape our strategic thinking on how we can best support the integration and transformation of maternity and early years services in the medium and longer term, adopting a whole system approach, where services are aligned and meet the needs of children and their families.

The *Talk with Me* delivery plan focuses on universal support for children’s speech, language and communication development which is critical for long-term wellbeing outcomes.

We also support a number of policy interventions aimed at supporting parents, particularly women, to work and retrain. The Childcare Offer is one of those. While this policy has a focus on improving economic prospects for families, the quality of provision is ensured because all settings providing the Childcare Offer must meet the quality standards set out in our National Minimum Standards. We will be reviewing the current funding rate for the Childcare Offer to help ensure it remains sustainable for providers and accessible for parents.

And, to ensure the childcare element of the offer is inclusive to eligible children who need additional support, help has been made available via a separate funding stream called the Childcare Offer for Wales Additional Support Grant. Local authorities can draw on this funding to help ensure that eligible children with additional needs are able to access the childcare element of the offer in the same way as other eligible children.

In addition, local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure there is sufficient childcare available to help parents to work or train, including families with children with additional needs. The Welsh Government provides funding to local authorities through the Childcare and Play element of the Children and Communities Grant to help address gaps in provision. In using this funding local authorities are asked to give special consideration and support to the childcare and play needs of low-income families; families with children with additional needs; and families wishing to access provision through the medium of Welsh.

All those working with babies and young children in Wales have such an important role to play in supporting them to be themselves, play, learn and grow. We want our workforce to thrive, be equally valued and mutually respected across education, childcare and playwork. We want to attract the right people into the childcare, playwork and education sectors with the skills and behaviours to provide high quality play, learning and care opportunities for babies and young children. We need to ensure training and qualifications are accessible for our workforce and are based on effective practice and standards. We need training which supports the workforce to fully understand how babies and young children learn and develop, and we want to support the existing workforce to gain the skills they need to progress in their careers and access more employment opportunities.

First 1,000 Days

Key to my commitment to early years, the first 1000 days centres around providing children with the best possible start in life. It was established in response to strong evidence that suggests the **period during pregnancy up to the child's second birthday** offers the greatest potential for impact in both improving outcomes and reducing inequalities. During this time, the foundations for future health, mental well-being and social developments are laid. Evidence highlights the significance of this early phase, shaping not only individual lives throughout the life course but also impacting on generations to come.

The Healthy Child Wales Programme (HCWP)

The HCWP is a key Welsh Government commitment and sets out the strategic direction for health boards in Wales to deliver a universal health visiting programme for children and their families, from maternity service handover and continuing through to the first years of schooling. The programme offers universal support to all families in Wales, with services tailored according to need. These universal contacts focus on three key areas:

- screening;
- immunisation; and
- monitoring and supporting child development.

The **implementation of the HCWP commits us to supporting the health and welfare of all children aged 0-7 years** and aims to achieve to the following key priorities, to:

- deliver key public health messages from conception to 7 years, so that families are supported to make long term health enhancing choices;
- promote bonding and attachment to support positive parent-child relationships resulting in secure emotional attachment for children;
- promote positive maternal and family emotional health and resilience;
- support and empower families to make informed choices in order to provide a safe, nurturing environment;
- assist children to meet all growth and developmental milestones enabling to achieve school readiness;
- support the transition into the school environment;
- protect them from avoidable childhood diseases through universal immunisation;
- ensure early detection of physical, metabolic, developmental or growth problems through an appropriate, universal screening programme.

The Welsh Government has recently introduced a unified operating model to underpin the existing school nursing framework in Wales. This model **extends the current Healthy Child Wales Programme, offering universal public health services to all compulsory school-aged children, regardless of their**

educational setting. NHS Wales aims to fully implement this model across Wales within the next 2 years.

Mental health.

The Welsh Government has recently published a new all-age [draft Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#) for public consultation. In drafting this document, a wide range of reviews, evidence and committee reports informed this work. Its overarching vision is that people in Wales will live in communities which promote, support and empower them to improve their mental health and wellbeing, and will be free from stigma and discrimination. The implementation of our final published strategy will take a rights-based approach to ensuring that everyone has the best mental health possible. There will be a connected system of support across health, social care, third sector and wider, where people can access the right service, at the right time, and in the right place. Care and support will be person-centred, compassionate and recovery-focused, with an emphasis on improving quality, safety and access. Care and support will be delivered by a workforce that feels supported and has the capacity, competence and confidence to meet the diverse needs of the people of Wales.

This strategy has been developed with the understanding that there will need to be a way of setting priorities, ensuring best use of existing resources and an opportunity to be clear about what can realistically be delivered. The published strategy will be accompanied by a delivery plan which, over the life of the strategy, will be renewed and refreshed and will be developed in close collaboration with our stakeholders. This work will be key to driving work that supports the vision outlined in the strategy.

To assure progress against the new strategy we have established a Joint Ministerial Assurance Board, which I will jointly chair with the Minister for Social Care. Following the consultation period, which ends on June 11, these responses will be key to informing our priorities within the final strategy and the initial delivery plan which will accompany it.

Alongside this work, the 111 Press 2 service is now available to everyone in Wales to access urgent mental health support, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The implementation of 111 press 2 is part of broader improvements to services for urgent mental health support, including mental health sanctuary spaces for adults and children and a conveyance service providing transport arrangements for those who need it. Work is also underway to integrate these services and provide a truly joined-up, no wrong door approach to delivering mental health support – underpinned by the aims of the new Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the principles of the [NYTH / NEST Framework](#).

We have also established the *Strategic Programme for Mental Health* within the NHS Wales Executive. The programme is working to improve safety and outcomes by reducing unwarranted variation across mental health services in Wales, whilst working towards equity and parity between physical and mental health services. A

key priority will be to look at focusing on work that enables our mental health services to run sustainably and efficiently. This will include the development of a mental health digital and data plan, work with organisations to develop a prioritised capital and estates strategy and continue to invest in the implementation of the Strategic Mental Health Workforce Plan.

Suicide and self-harm prevention.

Preventing suicide is a priority for the Welsh Government and we have targeted additional funding to support this agenda, transforming the infrastructure in Wales to prevent suicide and self-harm. This includes strengthening the local multi-sectoral partnership arrangements through regional co-ordinators and driving national action with our national suicide and self-harm prevention lead in the NHS Wales Executive.

The Welsh Government's [draft suicide and self-harm prevention strategy](#) is currently out to public consultation. The draft strategy includes a focus on strengthening our understanding of the risk factors associated with suicide and self-harm and targeting efforts to support the most vulnerable. Its overall vision is that people in Wales will live in communities which are free from the fear and stigma associated with suicide and self-harm and are empowered and supported to both seek and offer help when it is needed. The strategy also recognises that suicide is preventable and never inevitable, and that we all have a role to play. The strategy has been developed following significant stakeholder engagement and the current consultation provides another opportunity for stakeholders to shape the strategy and our actions over the next 10 years.

Other developments include introducing real time suspected suicide surveillance ([RTSSS](#)) in Wales in 2022 to improve the quality of data and intelligence to inform and target suicide prevention through partnership working, and to ensure support is made available. The first [RTSSS annual report](#) on deaths by suspected suicide was published on 11 January 2024.

We will be publishing new guidance about 'Responding to people bereaved, exposed, or affected by suicide'. This is aimed at services which meet people impacted by a sudden or unexplained death which could be a possible suicide to provide a more compassionate response. We have also recently commissioned a new National Liaison and Advice Service for those bereaved or affected by suicide. This new service will enhance provision across Wales, ensuring timely support to those impacted by the tragic loss of someone to suicide.

Our wider improvements to mental health support also contribute to our suicide and self-harm prevention programme. This includes making services much easier to access through our CALL helpline, online Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, and national developments such as 111 press 2 for urgent mental health and funding the provision of sanctuary services supporting those in crisis locally.

Social Prescribing.

As outlined in our Programme for Government, we are committed to developing a [National Framework for Social Prescribing](#) which delivers a vision of social prescribing in Wales that is of a consistent high-quality standard across the country.

The National Framework for Social Prescribing aims to develop a common understanding of the language used and the approach taken to social prescribing in Wales; support social prescribing practitioners and drive-up skills; set out the outcomes expected from a user, organisation, commissioner, and referrer perspective; and ensure a quality of provision by community assets. It will also monitor and evaluate the development of social prescribing as it continues to grow across Wales.

Several component parts of the National Framework have been completed, including an [explainer video](#), a [report](#) containing a suite of case studies, [competence framework for social prescribing practitioners](#), and a [glossary of terms](#). However, several component parts are to be completed, with work ongoing regarding development of core data set guidance, guidance for community assets, and development of national specification for social prescribing in Wales.

Dementia.

The Dementia Action Plan, which was published in February 2018, outlined our vision for dementia care and support in Wales. This included a focus on action across the pathway – from raising awareness and understanding; recognition and identification; assessment and diagnosis; living as well as possible, for as long as possible with dementia to supporting those who need increased support. This plan was refreshed, with a companion document published in September 2021, which reaffirmed our priority areas considering the impacts we had seen as part of the pandemic. Our priorities for the successor arrangements are being confirmed.

When the plan was published in 2018 its implementation was supported by funding allocated to Regional Partnership Boards (RPBs). The RPBs now receive £12m annually, through Regional Integration Funding (RIF), to support the implementation of the plan's vision and to develop a joint health and social care approach to dementia support.

The Welsh Government has commissioned Improvement Cymru to deliver a dementia programme which provides support to health and social care colleagues, through the established RPBs. The dementia programme has had five work streams: community engagement, memory assessment services, dementia connector, hospital charter and workforce development and measurement. These are aimed at supporting consistent practice and where appropriate, once-for-Wales approaches. Improvement Cymru hosts a number of resources, including its work plan, on their webpages for those working with people living with dementia.

A key component of this dementia programme has been the establishment of the all-Wales dementia care pathway of standards. These were published by Improvement

Cymru in 2021, following extensive engagement with individuals living with dementia, carers, voluntary organisations and health and care professionals. The co-produced pathway promotes a whole systems integrated care approach with each region's dementia board having the standards as a core agenda for advancing dementia care locally. Improvement Cymru continues to work with RPBs to implement these standards through their work streams. We have also provided funding for a national consultant allied health professional lead for dementia. A key aspect of the role is to support increasing the role and profile of allied health professionals within dementia care by providing advice and support to health boards and local authorities to drive forward service improvements and share best practice to support consistency across Wales.

I want to build on the work that has been undertaken already. Statistics tell us that the predicted figures of people living with dementia will increase, and we need to face up to the challenges that this will present. In the short time in my role, I have heard about the importance of increasing access to timely diagnosis and to ensure that our system is able to react to the positive advancements in research, such as emerging models of care and treatment options. Continuing to work to support person-centred care will be a key priority for me.

Work has begun on the successor arrangements to the dementia action plan. This will be informed by an independent evaluation of the plan, which is continuing to assess its impact on dementia care and support in Wales. An interim report has been received, with a final evaluation due at the end of the year. We will also be engaging over the summer months with colleagues across Wales about how people can be involved in developing the priorities for our successor plan. We are keen to ensure that people have a range of ways to be involved in this work and we will develop our engagement plan with the Dementia Oversight of Implementation and Impact Group (DOIIG).

Neurodivergence.

Wales has a strong record of improving services for neurodivergent people and significant improvements have been achieved in awareness raising, the provision of supporting resources and in workforce training. In 2016, we established the Integrated Autism Service for adults and families, and we published the Statutory Code of Practice on the Delivery of Autism Services in 2021. However, despite significant additional investment, services for children and young people have been unable to meet the continuous rising demand for assessment and support. The three-year neurodivergence improvement programme was established in 2022, to tackle fragility in some service areas and to develop sustainable and integrated services, and we are reviewing the achievements already made and considering options for future improvement.

The growing awareness of autism, ADHD and other neurodivergent conditions has led to unprecedented demand for assessment and support. We undertook a demand and capacity review of services, which confirmed our understanding that despite the additional investment made through the Together for Children and Young People programme, much more is required to build integrated and sustainable services for

the future which could meet increased need.

The three-year neurodivergence programme started in 2022. Backed by £12m, the programme is focused on reducing assessment waiting times, improving capacity in existing services, improved access to information, advice and support pre-diagnosis. It is also targeted towards developing post diagnostic support and addressing significant gaps in support for conditions such as ADHD and Tourettes Syndrome.

The programme has just entered its third and final year. Tackling waiting times and improving the experiences and outcomes of neurodivergent children, young people and adults continues to be a significant priority for Welsh Government.

This year, £5m has been allocated through RPBs to drive forward transformational change and take an integrated and whole system approach. We are working in partnership with RPBs to deliver improvement on the ground and we have also provided guidance and a set of principles to underpin service improvement.

As well as tackling waiting times, we continue to focus on meeting presenting needs when they first arise. Supported by the National Neurodivergence Team we are working with partners such as local authority information advice and assistance services, Families First, third sector organisations to improve access to information, advice and develop models of early help.

The NHS Executive has conducted a review of children's neurodevelopmental services, and each health board has received a final report with recommendations for further improvement. This year we will continue to work with the NHS Executive on assessment pathways, data and capacity and demand modelling.

We will also continue our work with Social Care Wales and Health Education Improvement Wales in respect of workforce issues. An outcomes report on our recent workforce workshop held in March will be available shortly. We will continue to upskill and train the wider workforce to support the delivery of services to the neurodivergent population, reducing reliance on specialist services. We will work with specialist services to diversify the workforce and better utilise prescribing pharmacists and nurses, assistant psychologists and support workers.

We are working with education to support the implementation of the additional learning needs transformation to develop an improved offer of professional learning to education staff, and to align with the whole school approach. We aim to explore, understand, and further reduce barriers and improve enablers to pathways between education and health.

There is more to do across the wider system such as housing, employment, social welfare, GPs, and the criminal justice system to ensure staff within these services are skilled at adapting their approach and making reasonable adjustments to better support neurodivergent individuals.

We know that neurodivergent people are more likely to experience a range of co-occurring physical and mental health conditions. We are working with colleagues in primary care and mental health services. We have aligned with the NEST/NYTH framework for children's mental health and well-being. We have also worked with

mental health policy colleagues on the development of the mental health strategy and suicide and self-harm strategy, which are currently out for consultation. Our neurodivergence Ministerial advisory group will be providing a robust consultation response.

Alongside the neurodivergence improvement programme, we have commissioned an evaluation of the impact of the implementation of the autism code of practice. The first phase, which focused on practitioners' evidence, is now complete and a final report was published on 30 April. The main highlight is that the implementation of the code is enabling us to build on an already improving service context and that the code has had a significant influence on raising awareness and training in both health and social care services. The evaluation makes a series of improvement recommendations for RPBs and each RPB has received a report detailing compliance with duties of the code.

The second part of the evaluation will be undertaken in summer 2024, and will engage with people who have accessed neurodivergence services. The learning from this evaluation will support the development of the new neurodivergence code of practice which will be delivered this Senedd term.

Policy advice for the development of services is provided through the neurodivergence Ministerial advisory group, which is co-chaired by neurodivergent people and membership includes people with lived experience and carers.

Learning Disability.

Wales has led the field in improving the lives of people with learning disabilities for more than 40 years since the closure of the long-stay learning disability hospitals in 1983 and re-settling residents into the community.

We know that disadvantages persist, and I am committed to the delivery of the Welsh Government's health and social care learning disability policy priorities set out in the Learning Disability Strategic Action Plan 2022-26. I will also be closely monitoring and providing Ministerial oversight on delivery of the wider cross-cutting policies within this action plan.

It is vitally important that we address the significant health inequalities and reduce the levels of avoidable deaths experienced by people with a learning disability while improving the services they use and increasing opportunities for them to live healthy, active, productive, and happy lives as valued members of their communities.

I am pleased I have already had the opportunity to meet with the chairs of our learning disability Ministerial advisory group and representatives of people with learning disabilities, including parents and carers to discuss some of the issues of greatest concern to them.

We want to see improvements to adult learning disability inpatient provision to reduce the number of people being cared for in a hospital setting, improve early

intervention and crisis management, reduce length of stay, explore issues around pathway of care delays, and reduce overmedication and restrictive practice.

This work-stream has arisen from the 2020 *Improving Care, Improving Lives* review of adult learning disability inpatient provision, which made 70 recommendations for the Welsh Government, health boards and local authorities. It is being overseen by the learning disability national implementation and assurance group. I have asked the group to provide me with an interim report on progress of delivery of these recommendations, and will make this available to all interested parties when received.

Annual health checks and other initiatives can improve physical health through prevention, detection and early intervention, we need to increase the uptake of these checks. A significant amount of work has been done with health boards to test new approaches to the delivery of health checks on a cluster basis rather than a GP-led service. Much work has also been done to update GP learning disability registers to ensure that as many eligible people as possible have access to a health check.

We are about to commence two pilot projects. The first will test a delivery model, led by a multi-disciplinary community learning disability team, and the second will explore the benefits of health checks for children aged 14 to 17. These pilots will also test a new electronic health check process that could be rolled out nationally.

We are increasing learning disability awareness training for health and social care staff. Staff will have improved skills levels, necessary for their roles enabling them to recognise and understand the needs of people with learning disabilities and to make reasonable adjustments to meet these needs for people accessing services. We have successfully rolled out the foundation phase of the Paul Ridd learning disability awareness training programme, which is mandatory for all NHS staff in a public-facing role. To date, more than 55,000 staff have completed this training. We are finalising the adaptation of this training to be rolled out to social care staff.

We have worked with Health Education Improvement Wales (HEIW) to develop tier 2, enhanced training for health and social care staff and this will be launched in the coming months. HEIW have also been commissioned to develop the tier 3 advanced training programme to be launched in 2025-26.

Learning disability services for children and young people are inconsistently provided across Wales and have traditionally lacked a joined-up approach across the public sector. We are at a relatively early stage in this work, and we are concentrating on reviewing current children and young people's services across health, social care and education, with a view to develop a more integrated approach to delivery. This work has a specific focus on transition services. Working closely with partners, we aim to develop a national vision for the future of children and young people's learning disability services.

We have worked with the former Improvement Cymru team, now part of the NHS Executive, to undertake a review of mortality among people with a learning disability between 2012 and 2022. This was published last month. It provides clear evidence that people with learning disabilities continue to die around 20 years earlier than the

general population, from issues that are potentially avoidable. A learning from deaths process is being developed as a result of this work.

The [Learning Disability Strategic Action Plan](#) brings together cross government action to improve services improvement and support. In addition to the key priorities, I have already highlighted for health and social care, the strategy also focuses on the wider priorities identified by people with learning disabilities, which will all have an impact on individual well-being. We will shortly be publishing an annual progress report on all the actions in the action plan.

The learning disability Ministerial advisory group also provides the Welsh Government with expert advice on learning disability policy. We are re-establishing the group. Membership includes people with learning disabilities and lived experience and third sector organisations, health professionals and public sector service providers. I have met the new chairs, and I will be attending the next meeting on 3 June.

Substance misuse

Tackling substance misuse – drugs and alcohol – is rooted in a harm reduction approach, which recognises addiction as a health and care issue rather than one which is solely related to criminal justice. I want to ensure people in Wales are aware of the dangers and the impact of substance misuse and to know where they can seek information, help, and support.

We have protected and increased funding for frontline substance misuse services, which has risen this year to more than £67m, with a further £2m allocated directly to substance misuse area planning boards which commission services in their areas.

A current priority for me is how we are responding to recent increase of synthetic opioids, particularly nitazines. We are working closely with partners on this agenda to ensure harm reduction messages are being given out, particularly through our WEDINOS programme.

The distribution of Naloxone continues to be a key part of tackling this issue as all areas are being encouraged to provide more than one naloxone kit to individuals. We are also continuing to work with peers and police forces across Wales to further increase the distribution of naloxone.

Another priority area for me is the ongoing implementation of injectable buprenorphine (Buvidal). This has significantly reduced the need for service users to attend community pharmacies and clinics. More than 1,700 service users across Wales are now benefitting from this treatment and there is significant anecdotal evidence that many are experiencing significantly improved outcomes. We continue to monitor the impact.

We will continue to work with our area planning boards to ensure a range of services and support is in place to support people who are experiencing alcohol problems. I believe the introduction of the minimum unit price (MUP) for alcohol will help reduce alcohol-related harm and support people to drink responsibly. The intended effect of

this legislation is to tackle alcohol-related harm, including alcohol-attributable hospital admissions and alcohol-specific deaths in Wales, by reducing alcohol consumption in hazardous and harmful drinkers.

Gambling

The Welsh Government supports a preventative, early intervention and public health approach to protect people from gambling-related harm. Harmful gambling has links to mental health, it impacts families and communities, and even leads to suicide in extreme cases.

We are working closely with the UK Government following its review of the Gambling Act 2005 and its plans to reform gambling legislation. This includes the development of a statutory levy on industry to secure long-term funding for gambling research, education, and treatment. We are also working closely with our stakeholders in Wales and have established a stakeholder advisory group to support the policy changes in Wales.