

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru | National Assembly for Wales
Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg | Children, Young People and
Education Committee

Ymchwiliad i Gwella Iechyd Emosiynol ac Iechyd Meddwl Plant a Phobl Ifanc -
Gwybodaeth Bellach | Inquiry into The Emotional and Mental Health of
Children and Young People – Further Information

EMH FI 12

Ymateb gan: Heddlu Gogledd Cymru

Response from: North Wales Police

- The College of Policing has estimated that 40 per cent of police time is taken up with dealing with people with mental health issues. Have you an idea of what proportion of time is spent on children and young people with such issues?

A point in time data collection exercise suggested that for a given day children and young people accounted for 5.2% of mental health related incidents. In numerical terms this means that of the fifty-seven mental health related incidents reviewed during the data collection exercise three related to children or young people. Similar percentages are obtained when reviewing the use of Section 136 powers for the most recent financial year.

- Anecdotally, we have heard that police officers can spend many hours in A&E departments or in the back of ambulances with patients because of the lack of beds or available care. Is there anything happening to try and manage this better and to co-operate more effectively or to come to some arrangement with local health boards to find another way of dealing this issue.

The data collated over a 24hr period suggests that police spent an average of five hours dealing with a mental health related incidents. It is not possible to derive from the data if any of this time was spent waiting in an ambulance or an A&E department. Anecdotally it is fair to suggest that a significant amount of police time is spent waiting with the person in crisis until suitable mental health intervention can be provided.

North Wales Police are working with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board to develop a more effective and efficient way of working in a number of different ways.

The new S136 legislation has necessitated the implementation of a 24hr system that allows police officers to communicate and seek advice from a mental health professional attached to one of the three place of safety across North Wales.

It is acknowledged that a triage service is key to ensuring that these vulnerable children and young people are receiving the support they require in a timely and professional manner. To this end a number of triage options have been evaluated and tested. Details of the pilot and the proposed model for implementation across North Wales are described in more detail below.

- Are you using a triage services and do you have a preferred model that you would like to see implemented across the four police force areas?

North Wales Police and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board have been working collaboratively to pilot and evaluate a number of triage options. A street triage operating model which consisted of a mental health professional and a police officer being in a triage vehicle has been piloted and evaluated. The evaluation suggests that the most efficient and effective model for North Wales Police will be the locating of health care professionals in the police control room to provide a triage service across all of North Wales. This model is currently being developed and will be implemented in North Wales.