

P-05-857 Create a National Taskforce for Children's Mental Health

Pwyllgor Deisebau | 29 Ionawr 2019
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Research Briefing:

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We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to create a National Task Force to investigate which cultural, societal, and political factors may be contributing to the number of children in Wales experiencing poor mental health; and that this National TaskForce:

- 1) Include in its membership: children; representatives from organisations working with children; representatives from all political parties represented in the National Assembly for Wales; academics involved in researching social policy, political science, culture, society, and economics;
- 2) Is chaired by the Children's Commissioner for Wales in post when this task force is created and that they should remain the Chair of the task force for its duration, should they agree to do so (regardless of whether they remain the Children's Commissioner for Wales for the duration of the life of the task force - except in exceptional circumstances);
- 3) Should be tasked with producing a report based upon its investigations that includes recommendations for the Welsh Government based upon its findings;
- 4) Should have all of its recommendations examined by the Welsh Government in consultation with this National Task Force, the National Assembly for Wales, and the residents of Wales (including children).

Additional information:

The National Organisation for Children's Mental Health Ltd is a newly established social enterprise. Our objective is to support the development of a national culture that enables children to sustain excellent mental health by helping organisations working with and/or for them to create the best environment in which every child's mental health can flourish.

Background

On 14 January 2019, the Minister for Health and Social Services [announced](#) an additional £7.1 million to protect, improve and support the mental health of children and young people in Wales. The new investment will support the implementation of the Welsh Government's response to the recommendations made by the National Assembly's Children, Young People and Education Committee in its Mind over Matter report.

The National Assembly's Children, Young People and Education Committee published its report ['Mind over matter. A report on the step change needed in emotional and mental health support for children and young people in Wales'](#) in April 2018. In response to that report, which called for the emotional and mental well-being of children and young people to be a stated national priority, the Minister for Education and Minister for Health and Social Services announced in September 2018 [a Joint Ministerial Task and Finish Group](#) to advise the Welsh Government on what more it could do to accelerate the pace, and to achieve a whole system approach to children's health and wellbeing.

The Welsh Government's Joint Ministerial Task and Finish group is jointly chaired by the Minister for Education and Minister for Health and Social Services. It draws together a range of stakeholders, including the Children's Commissioner for Wales, and Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee, which comprises Assembly Members from all the political parties.

The Joint Ministerial Task and Finish Group is supported by a stakeholder reference group, made up of representatives from a broad range of agencies, as well as a youth stakeholder reference group, ensuring that children and young people have the opportunity to directly feed in their views to inform activity which directly impacts upon them.

The £7.1 million investment is in addition to the £1.4 million invested by the Welsh Government in a programme of [mental health in-reach support for schools](#) to strengthen the support from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) in schools in four pilot areas across Wales. The CAMHS in-reach pilots have a specific focus on consultation, liaison and advice and providing early identification and intervention.

The Children, Young People and Education Committee has publicly committed to following up progress with the Minister for Health and Social Services and Minister for Education in implementing the recommendations of its Mind over Matter report this year.