



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE **Publication of the Together for Mental Health Delivery Plan - 2019-22**

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BY **Vaughan Gething AM, Minister for Health and Social Services**

As one of our key Prosperity for All cross government priorities, improving mental health and well-being continues to be a priority for me, as Minister for Health and Social Services, and for all my Cabinet colleagues. This challenges all of Welsh Government to consider its impact on mental health in all that it does. The profile of mental health continues to grow and we will all have been touched by the impact of poor mental health, either through family, friends, work colleagues or in our communities. Our new [Together for Mental Health Delivery Plan](#), which we have published today, reflects this level of priority and the cross-Government working required to improve the mental health and well-being of our population in Wales.

The new delivery plan is the third and final plan underpinning the Together for Mental Health 10 year Strategy, which was published in 2012. We have come a long way since the publication of Together for Mental Health, for instance, we have significantly reduced the number of children waiting longer than four weeks to access treatment and reduced mental health hospital admissions, through an emphasis on more support in the community. Changes are already evident in some areas, including remodelling of provision to meet the emotional well-being needs of children, young people and their families, an example of this would be the Gwent transformation programme. We have also increased the range of support available by establishing new services including CAMHS and adults crisis intervention teams, psychiatric liaison in hospitals and community mental health teams - but there is more to be done, and the new delivery plan places a greater emphasis on the protective factors for good mental health through cross-government and multi-agency working. At its heart, the new delivery plan recognises that in the face of rising demand for mental health support we must do more to prevent and protect against mental ill health as well as continue to invest in specialist services.

In my previous statement I reflected the good response to our consultation with over 240 written responses and over 150 people attending the three formal consultation events that we held across Wales. The responses reflected a broad range of stakeholders including

service users and carer representatives, local authorities, the NHS and professional bodies. I am grateful to all those who took the time to either attend the events or submit comments on the draft delivery plan. Whilst respondents generally supported the priority areas, the focus on protective factors and the emphasis on children and young people, particularly through our Whole School approach, the consultation steered us to a number of areas that needed to be strengthened in the final plan. In response to this feedback we have made a number of changes. For instance, we have broadened actions from an emphasis on rough sleeping and homelessness to a wider set of actions to improve mental health through housing support. We have also included actions to reflect how improving access to green spaces, cultural activities and outdoor recreation can support our mental health and well-being. We also heard through the consultation the need for more targeted action to support the mental health workforce and in response we have included a new commitment for Health Education and Improvement Wales and Social Care Wales to develop a cross-sector workforce plan for mental health. The new plan also places greater emphasis on the importance of learning from research and strengthening data and outcomes, and we have committed to a thorough and independent evaluation of the Together for Mental Health Strategy so that we can assess the impact we have made to date but – crucially – ensure that we are taking the right actions in what is a complex and challenging agenda.

This is an ambitious plan, taking us to the end of our 10 year Strategy. During this period we have increased our investment to support the improvements needed and since 2016-17 we have increased the ring fenced mental health funding in the main NHS allocation by £75m or 12.5% - in 2020-21 this will rise to over £700 million. This is significant and meaningful investment to improve services, but of course this doesn't capture our broader investment to protect mental health through our cross-Government working, for instance on prevention, employment, education and housing.

Our Together for Mental Health Strategy is based on the principle of partnership working across Government, public and third sectors in recognition that no single body or sector can transform services and improve the mental health and well-being of our population. I hope we can continue to build on the multi-agency partnership working and collaboration that has already been achieved in the previous delivery plans to deliver the commitment in the new delivery plan and the ambition of Together for Mental Health.