

Together for Mental Health

Updated Action Plan: 2019-22



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Hello



Mental Health:

- is important
- is linked to physical health
- can change
- can be difficult to understand
- is worth looking after
- affects everyone.

Good mental health means you can:

- cope with normal stresses and challenges
- take opportunities
- enjoy family life and being part of your community.

Mental health is everyone's business

Mental health issues happen for all kinds of reasons. They can happen to **anyone**, from **any background**, at **any age**.

Mental health issues aren't a sign of weakness or something to hide.

In 2012 the Welsh Government published a strategy called **Together for Mental Health**. It's our 10-year strategy to improve the mental health of everyone across Wales. We hope to ensure people can get the right support at the right time and in the right place.

You can read more about it here:

gov.wales/together-mental-health-our-mental-health-strategy



Action plan

The 10 years of this strategy are divided into 3 action plans. This is our **3rd** and it tells you about:

- our response to the Covid-19 pandemic
- our 6 priority areas for the next 3 years
- what we want to achieve
- some of the things we want to do
- the changes you can expect to see.

Covid-19

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected all of us. Many people have felt stressed, frightened, isolated, or worried.

Goals

We want to:

- make sure people can get the help they need from services
- make sure mental health across Wales recovers from the impact of the pandemic



Outcomes

Evidence will show:

- services are meeting people's needs
- services are continuing to use new systems that worked well during the pandemic
- services are using data and other information to plan support
- people will get support quickly without needing to move to specialist services.

You can say:

Professionals know how to support even when there are restrictions.

I got an appointment to see someone quickly.

There are lots of new ways for me to get help.

Actions

We will:

- work with partners to make sure people get the support they need as quickly as possible
- update our priority areas so they deal with the impact of the pandemic
- work with health boards to review the systems used during the pandemic like referral systems, digital solutions and Telehealth
- keep checking our priority actions are helping people recover from the impact of the pandemic
- write guidance and advice so services can give people mental health support while following restrictions like social distancing or whatever future challenges arise.

Things we've done so far

- ★ We've made sure other plans, like the Tackling Poverty Plan, also work to improve mental health. This helps us make a bigger difference.
- ★ We've started new services and programmes including the Healthy Working Wales and the Wales Network of Health Schools.
- ★ We've put even more funding into mental health services. This has helped:
 - reduce stigma using the [Time for Change Campaign](#)
 - reduce the number of children and young people waiting for treatment
 - increase support in the community
 - reduce the number of people going into hospital with mental health issues
 - increase awareness of mental health
 - and more!

Involving people

- ★ We talked to lots of people and they told us what matters most to them.

We've focused on these from the beginning and will make sure they're part of future planning. We call these our **cross-cutting themes** because they're part of everything we do.

Our 5 cross-cutting themes:

1
2
3
4
5

Reduce health inequalities – so everyone can get the help they need and in the language they want.

Involve people in planning, delivering and checking services – so people can take part in decisions that affect their lives.

Develop the workforce – so we have a stable, caring workforce that people can rely on across Wales.

Improve how we use information – so we can learn from what works and get better outcomes for people using mental health services.

Support changes to the law – so that our rights are protected and so we have the freedom to develop plans and policies that improve our experiences.



Our 6 Priorities

Priority 1: Promoting well-being and reducing inequalities

Goals We want to:

- reduce stigma and the discrimination people face
- help people, families and communities be stronger
- improve mental health and resilience
- stop suicide and self-harm
- reduce the impact of the pandemic on people's mental health.



Outcomes

Evidence will show:

- mental health has improved across Wales
- people feel less lonely.

You can say:

I can take part in activities that help me to stay well.

I can develop positive relationships.

My community encourages good mental well-being and talks about it too.

Mental health is 'Everybody's Business'.

Actions We will:

- work to reduce stigma and discrimination through the Time to Change Wales campaign
- support people with mental health conditions stay in work or find a job
- to support people with physical health conditions to stay well
- to help people stay in housing and not become homeless by training for landlords and a new Housing First program.
- support rough sleepers and people with substance misuse issues with their mental health needs
- improve access to the outdoors and sporting activities for good health
- make sure services step in early to help children at risk of Adverse Childhood Experience (ACEs)
- deliver our Talk to Me 2 – Suicide and Self Harm Prevention Strategy
- improve the information, advice and support people have in local areas
- encourage people to talk about mental health and wellbeing
- look at the impact of the pandemic on loneliness and isolation across Wales
- make sure the Covid-19 funding for jobs and skills is used in the right ways
- help people who have housing issues and face homelessness issues because of the pandemic
- look at ways to support and advise people who are facing debt or money issues because of the pandemic.

Priority 2: Improving support for children and young people

Goals We want to:

- improve mental health support in school
- improve support in the community for children and young people
- improve children and young people's mental health services
- support children and young people who have been impacted by the pandemic.



Outcomes

Evidence will show:

- children and young people have better mental health
- services have improved
- services are available when they're needed
- waiting times are shorter.

You can say:

I can get the help I need, when I need it.

I have the support I need to cope better with everyday challenges.

Teachers and other people can spot when I need support and know how to get it for me.

Actions We will:

- help all the agencies working with schools and colleges to support wellbeing and prevent mental ill health
- support schools to deliver the health and well-being area of the new curriculum
- introduce training for all school staff on mental health
- make sure children and young people are listened to
- make sure families get the right help, at the right time and in the right ways
- have more community services
- work with local authorities to improve services that step in early to stop mental health issues getting worse
- have more online support for children and young people.
- improve the way young people move from child services to adult services
- make sure specialist mental health services support children and young people better
- make sure everyone has equal access to services including children who are looked after or have care experience
- increase funding for school counselling and support in light of the pandemic
- set up a new Youth Support Grant and National Voluntary Youth Organisation Grant.

Priority 3: Improving crisis and out-of-hours support for everyone

Goals We want to:

- improve the way services work together over 24 hours
- make sure people have support anytime they're feeling distressed.



Outcomes

Evidence will show:

- people are coping better in a crisis
- the right services are supporting people
- there is more support after hours.

You can say:

I can find support
when I'm distressed.

People know
how to support
me.

I can get services at any
time of the day.

Actions We will:

- put plans in place to help services work together better
- check urgent mental health services and find ways to improve them
- use investment to increase 24/7 crisis services across Wales
- support innovative ways of helping people such as community hubs (based on the evidence).

Priority 4: Improving the quality and range of therapies available

Goals We want to:

- improve the quality of mental health therapies that are available
- improve access to therapies
- provide more information on ways to take up support and manage your own mental health
- make sure people continue to get information and support when there are serious life events like the pandemic.



Outcomes

Evidence will show:

- health boards are meeting their waiting time targets
- people get an assessment within 28 days of a referral
- people start therapy within 28 days after their assessment
- people are reporting a good experience through outcomes work.

You can say:

I can get the right therapy that supports me in the best ways.

Professionals know how to help me.

I am involved in making decisions about my care.

Actions We will:

- support projects like the Reading Well Books scheme so libraries and schools have more information available to the public
- introduce a structure that improves therapy services across Wales
- improve workforce skills and leadership
- support staff delivering therapies
- use evidence about what works to improve services
- develop services that help people of all ages cope with traumatic stress
- look at the impact that the pandemic has had on how people access services
- look at ways to keep using any technology or digital solutions that worked well during the pandemic.

Priority 5:
Improving the quality of mental health services for pregnant women and new mothers

 **Goals**
We want to:

- make sure women get the support they need, when they need it, as close to home as possible.



 **Actions**
We will:

- set up a specialist in-patient mother and baby hospital unit in Wales
- work with the NHS to improve services
- improve information and advice services.

 **Outcomes**

Evidence will show:

- health boards meet the quality standards set by the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

You can say:



I can get the right support and don't have to struggle alone with my mental health.



I can get support close to my home, which lets me stay with my baby.

Priority 6: Transforming services to improve quality

Goals We want to:

- make sure everyone can get the right mental health support when they need it
- improve support for people with eating disorders
- improve support for people with mental health and substance misuse issues
- improve services that step in early and help people
- improve support for people in contact with the criminal justice system.

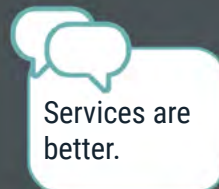


Outcomes

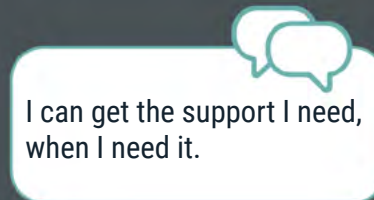
Evidence will show:

- more people can get care in their local community
- outcomes have improved in people's lives
- more people are supported at home.

You can say:



Services are better.



I can get the support I need, when I need it.

Actions We will:

- decide together what we want services to look like
- use evidence of what works to improve services
- make sure health boards develop better plans and improve services for patients that have to stay in a secure hospital
- work with communities, carers and health boards to develop new ways of delivering services
- improve mental health services in prison
- improve support for youth and female offenders.

Going forward

Milestones

Each of these 6 priority areas has a list of milestones so we can see how our actions are making a difference. You can see the milestones in the full plan:

gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-01/together-for-mental-health-delivery-plan-2019-to-2022.pdf



Over the next 3 years we will check this action plan is working and we will decide what happens at the end of the strategy in 2022.

Thanks for reading this

To find out more:

gov.wales/together-mental-health-our-mental-health-strategy



A few mental health tips:

- Connect with people
- Do something active
- Eat and sleep well
- Learn a new skill
- Give to others and be kind on social media
- Pay attention to the moment
- Tell someone you trust if you are struggling.

