

## Policy Briefing for Assembly Members

National Assembly Debate: Tuesday 10th June 2014

### Improving Mental Health

#### Delivering High Quality Cost Effective Services

The Mental Health (Wales) Measure 2010, the new Mental Health and Well-being strategy ('Together for Mental Health'), and the continued ring-fencing of mental health funding in NHS Wales have established a solid platform for better meeting the needs of people who have a serious mental illness. We think it essential that there is a continuing focus on ensuring that people who are vulnerable and in greatest need receive the most appropriate level of service - **at the right time, from the right person, and in the right place** - and that all of our services provide best value for money and demonstrate how they are cost-effective and delivering improved outcomes for people

#### Early Intervention

The concept of preventing the onset of a serious mental illness such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder amongst the general population is problematic. It is crucial for services to intervene decisively at the right moment, not too early, especially for children and young people, as it may be damaging to identify "at risk" people and provide them with an explicit mental health service that may be expensive and ineffective, but not too late. Health Boards and Local Authorities must not wait for a crisis to occur before providing services. The evidence is clear - **ensuring intelligent and effective interventions at the right point prevents later deterioration**

#### Mental Health Services Fully Integrated Across Health and Social Services

We think there needs to be far greater integration between the NHS Wales and local government in the design, planning and delivery of mental health services over the next five years. We think this should include working towards single line management structures, single information systems and single performance management processes across mental health teams and services. Crucially we believe there should be integrated budgets.

#### Transition of people from CAMHS to Adult Mental Health Services

We have found that young people who develop a mental illness are much more likely to see a decline in their educational and employment opportunities. People tell us that it is absolutely essential that at this crucial stage in a young person's vocational development they are fully supported in engaging with educational services and/or getting into employment as part of their recovery. We think this must continue to be the focus when a person moves from a CAMHS service to Adult Mental Health Services, and that proper use of Care and Treatment Plans should ensure a more seamless transition



## Funding Mental Health Services

The Welsh Government has ring fenced mental health expenditure across all age groups since 2008 with the intention of protecting mental health expenditure and facilitating investment in services. This has been widely welcomed and supported by people who use mental health services and by carers, and has sent out a very strong message to Health Boards that they should protect these valuable services for a highly vulnerable group of people. However, there appears to be a lack of openness and transparency in recording and reporting how and where money is spent

### We want to see the Welsh Government commit to:

- **Insisting on the use of Care and Treatment Plans, for people using secondary mental health services, as the central tool for delivering integrated services and driving up standards and ensuring most cost effective services**
- **Establishing a single integrated national performance framework and single outcomes framework for mental health services in Wales and work towards integrated mental health budgets across health and social Care**
- **Reducing the inequalities in health and social care outcomes for people with a mental illness through a concerted and co-ordinated effort to increase people's physical health and mental wellbeing**
- **Protecting expenditure on mental health services, and ensuring greater cost efficiencies through earlier interventions and more community based services**

#### About Hafal

*Hafal (meaning 'equal') is the principal organisation in Wales working with individuals recovering from serious mental illness and their families. We are managed by the people we support - individuals with serious mental illness and their families. Our 191 staff members and 150 volunteers provide help and support to over 1500 people with serious mental illness and 1600 carers. The charity is founded on the belief that people who have direct experience of mental illness know best how services can be delivered. Our mission is to empower people with serious mental illness and their families to enjoy equal access to health and social care, housing, income, education, and employment, and to achieve a better quality of life, fulfil their ambitions for recovery, and fight discrimination.*

For more information please contact **Peter Martin, Head of Public Affairs** 01792 816600 / [petermartin@hafal.org](mailto:petermartin@hafal.org)

The logo for Hafal, featuring the word "hafal" in a lowercase, bold, sans-serif font. The logo is contained within a white rounded rectangle with a blue border. The background of the entire page is a blue and green wavy pattern.