

Easy Read



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

# Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy

What you told us about our plans



It is an easy read version of 'Consultation – summary of response: Draft Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy'.

October 2024

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# How to use this document



This is an easy read document. But you may still need support to read it. Ask someone you know to help you.



Words in **bold blue writing** may be hard to understand. You can check what all the words in blue mean on page 34.



**NHS 111** **Wales**

If you need support with your mental health you can ring the CALL Helpline: **0800 132 737**. Or for urgent support please call the NHS on **111** and press **2**.

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Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Where the document says **we**,  
this means the **Welsh Government**.  
For more information contact:



Website:  
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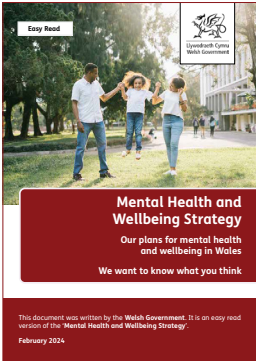
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# What this booklet is about



In February 2024, we published our **plan** called the **Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy**.

Everyone has **mental health**. It is about how someone is feeling in their mind. It is about our feelings, thoughts and **wellbeing**.

**Wellbeing** is about feeling comfortable, healthy, and happy.



This was a draft plan because we wanted to get people's views about it. And use these views to make the final plan.

We have now collected people's answers to our questions.

This is a report of what people said.



People who responded come from different backgrounds. For example, people with mental health issues, organisations, staff, carers and others.



We also got views from children and young people. 405 young people between the age of 4 and 25 years shared their views.



Click on this link to view the **Draft Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy** plan.

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# Some views shared at events

We held events for health boards, and the Mental Health Service User and Carer Forum.

The main points discussed at these events were:



- People felt the current plan does not have the right balance between health and social care. They want more focus on social care.
- People using services and carers need to get involved in how services are run.
- There are concerns about making the strategy work in local areas.

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- More focus should be on **neurodiversity** and **substance use**.



**Substance use** means using things like alcohol, illegal drugs, or medicines even when it is badly affecting you.



**Neurodivergent** means people whose brains work differently. For example, autism is a neurodivergent condition.

- There should be more focus on serious **mental health conditions**.



**Mental health conditions** affect our feelings, thoughts, and behaviour.



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- Support services which help recovery.
  - Services should clearly explain what people can expect from them.



- Improve facilities. Not just buildings but also things like internet access.



- More work needed in areas like staffing, online services and information.



- There should be more focus on prevention. Especially for young children.



- The goals need to be shared in a way that is easy to understand.

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# What people said



**Community**



## Overall idea for the strategy

We want people in Wales to live in communities that support:

- their **mental health**
- and **wellbeing**.

We want people to be treated fairly and to have the support they need. Services should support all people and with whatever needs they have.

We asked what you thought about this overall idea.

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## What you told us



Most people agreed with this overall idea for the strategy.

Many people felt more needed to be added to the overall idea. Like:



- The importance of early years.
- The role of the community to support **mental health**.
- Prevention and early intervention: This means taking steps to stop mental health issues from happening.
- The needs of certain groups, like young people, older people, people from different backgrounds, and disabled people.



Many people said it needed to be clearer with more details, and to use language that included everyone.

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## Principles

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This strategy is built on 10 principles. This means ideas the strategy is based on.

We asked what you thought about the 10 principles.

## What you told us



Most people agreed that the 10 principles are the right ones.



People agreed with the strategy being for **all ages**.



There were mixed feelings about whether the strategy was too focused on certain age groups, like children. Some people felt it did not focus enough on the needs of adults and older people.

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People felt there should be more focus on:



- people with learning disabilities
- and people living outside of towns and cities.

People supported the **no wrong door** approach.



**No wrong door** means whichever service someone turns to, they get directed to the right help.

Some people had ideas for other principles that could be included. Like:



- funding
- spotting health issues early
- patient choice
- working together.



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# Vision statement 1

1. People can protect and improve their **mental health** and **wellbeing**.

## What you told us

Most people agreed with vision statement 1.



**Community**

People agreed with the focus being on community.



But some were concerned that the strategy did not talk about the money pressures on community services.

Some people felt we should talk more about the work of other groups.

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Like:



- voluntary organisations

- community groups



- faith groups

- Police



Young people said spending time with friends is very important for their **mental health** and **wellbeing**.



They want more places and groups that support play and activities.

Some spoke about how **advocates** and peer support workers can make people aware of what is available.



An advocate is someone who **supports** you to help you say what you want to say.

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Some people worried that there were things that can affect our mental health and wellbeing missing from the strategy. For example:

- poor housing
- poverty
- the cost of living
- climate change
- inequality.



A lot of people agreed that **mental health** support needs to improve during pregnancy and early years.



Many people believed that awareness about **mental health** will help reduce fear. It will give people confidence to get support.





People agreed with the steps to tackle talking about **mental health** without shame.



People suggested the strategy should focus on the benefits of green spaces and clean environments.



## **Actions**

People agreed with the actions for vision statement 1. But wanted more detail on how these would happen and how they would be measured.

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## Vision Statement 2

2. The Welsh Government works together to improve mental health and wellbeing.

### What you told us



Most people agreed with vision statement 2.



A lot of people said that we could achieve the goals by working well together.

People said the focus should be on things that can affect **mental health**.



For young people, understanding the things that affect **mental health** was very important.



There should be clear information on what is happening across government.



We need to get better at listening to views of people and their families.

People said we need to find ways to work together well across different departments and with other organisations.

## **Actions**

Overall, people supported the actions for Vision Statement 2.

They agreed that the actions were good but wanted them to be clearer.



They also wanted a delivery plan with clear responsibilities.

Some people were worried that the actions might not be achieved.

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## Vision Statement 3

3. People get support from whoever they speak to. They get the right support when they first ask for help.

### What you told us

Most people agreed with vision statement 3.



People agreed that it is important for all services to work together.

People wanted clear information about who is responsible. They want to know how we will make sure the right support is provided.

People felt that there were gaps in services for **neurodivergent** people. Including children and young people.



People were concerned that there was not much focus on older adults.

It was important for services to meet the needs of people and understand **trauma**.



**Trauma** is any experience that can cause distress or anxiety. Trauma can be a one-off event, a number of events. Or it could be an ongoing situation.



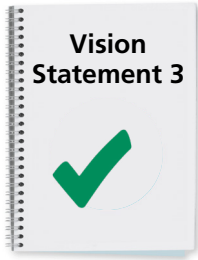
People said that waiting times must be lowered. That we must improve how people move between different services.



People spoke about the need for better systems to collect and share information.

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## Actions



People supported the actions written for Vision statement 3.

People want to know how these actions will be achieved.



People said we need enough money and resources are needed to make the actions work.

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## Vision Statement 4

4. People get the support from services that is right for them. They get this support as quickly as possible, and in the right way.

### What you told us

Most people agreed with vision statement 4.

Many people are worried that it will be hard to achieve with the money we have. People felt it was important to:

- use money well
- have skilled and trained staff
- improve buildings.





Some people think there is not enough money for research.

People supported therapies for less serious **mental health conditions**.

They are worried about not having enough resources to support a **recovery focussed** approach.

**Recovery focussed** means supporting people to decide what recovery means for them. Developing their strengths to help them achieve that recovery.

People agree with using a **Person-Centred Approach**.



**Person Centred Approach** means support focusing on what each person wants and needs.



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People are worried that the **no wrong door** approach may make services too busy.



People felt it needs to be clear how we can support **neurodivergent** people with **mental health** needs.



People agreed that family and unpaid carers need support.

Young people want to get more involved in shaping **mental health** services.

People felt that services need to be easy to use for different groups of people.

Services should be better at finding and supporting people at risk.



Some people said services should be easy to use for deaf people in Wales.



There are concerns about how to support parent and baby relationships. The strategy needs to show how services will work together.



People should be able to get support in their own language.

It has to be clearer on how Vision Statements 3 and 4 are connected.

## Actions

Most people liked the actions for Statement 4.



People want more details on how these actions will be done. They asked for clear plans, resources, and goals to be set.

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# Improving the mental health system

## What you told us

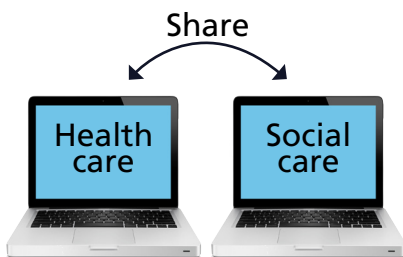
Most people agreed that these were the right areas to focus on.



People agreed that online systems and technology are important. But said that not everyone can use online systems.

People want us to find ways to support online services. Some examples given were:

- Online patient records.
- Shared systems between health and social care.
- Making appointments online and text messages to confirm appointments.





People strongly agreed with improving ways to collect information and to measure results.

People said it is important to have information on **protected characteristics**. This will help to plan and deliver the right services.



**Protected characteristics** is a term used to describe some groups of people who are often treated unfairly. For example:

- disabled people
- people who may have a different colour skin, different religion or may come from another country
- people of different ages
- lesbian, gay and bisexual people
- a number of other groups of people.



People want information to be available to everyone.

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This way, people can track and check how well things are going.



People recognise and support the efforts made through the **Strategic Mental Health Workforce Plan**. They want us to continue this work.



People said staff need time for training. They said other services should also get training. For example, staff in housing and education.



People want a clear plan to improve buildings for **mental health** services.

People want research to be better. Including:

- Funding for research.
- Learning from research and using it in practice.



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- Funding for trials. This means to test new ways to improve **mental health** and **wellbeing**.

People agreed that we need a clear way to talk about **mental health**.



Information should be available in different languages, including British Sign Language (BSL).

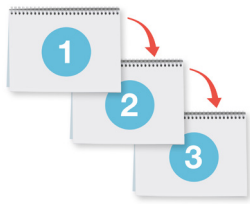
## Delivery plans

### What you told us

People want the delivery plans to include ways to track how well the strategy is working.



People with experience of **mental health** and staff from other sectors should help to check the strategy.



Delivery plans should show clear steps for different types of care.

Delivery plans should look at the needs of groups that do not get enough services.



Improve how information about services is shared to the public.

## All age group approach

### What you told us

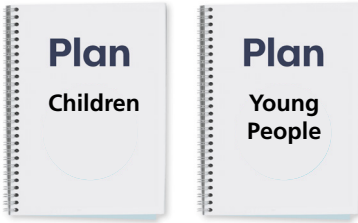


Many people felt the strategy was not clear enough on how it will work for all age groups.

People wanted more details on how support will be provided from birth to older age.



Some people felt the strategy did not talk about the needs of older people clearly enough.



People felt there should be a separate plan for children and young people.

There were concerns about how transitions between different age groups would be managed.

## **Impact assessments**



Impact assessments are documents which explain our thoughts on how the strategy might affect people. These documents are based on what we found out through research.



With the draft strategy, we also shared draft impact assessments. We asked what you thought about this.



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## What you told us

We need to think more about how the strategy affects minority groups.



Impact assessments should cover everyone and be based on rights of people of all ages.

Some people think we should check if the strategy might leave out certain groups.



People said it was important to make sure everyone gets easy to understand information.



People thought it was important to think about how the strategy affects countryside and town and city areas.



We need to think more about how other laws and rules might affect the strategy.

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## Welsh Language



We asked if the plan would have any effect on the Welsh language. We wanted people to tell us what could be done to change this.

### What you told us



Many people think the strategy will improve services in Welsh.



Some people believe the strategy might not have a big impact on Welsh. Unless there is proper funding to hire staff and for training.

People felt that services should be offered in Welsh without needing to be requested.

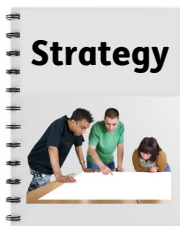


Some people pointed out that translation services are important. The strategy should also consider other languages and British Sign Language (BSL).

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# What happens next

We will use the feedback to help:



- shape the final version of the strategy
- and its delivery plan.

We will publish the strategy and delivery plan together.



We will work with our partners to make sure there are clear, measurable actions in the plans to achieve the goals.

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## Hard words

### **Advocate**

An advocate is someone who supports you to help you say what you want to say.

### **Mental health**

Everyone has mental health. It is about how someone is feeling in their mind. It is about our feelings, thoughts and wellbeing.

### **Mental health conditions**

Mental health conditions affect our feelings, thoughts, and behaviour.

### **Neurodivergent**

Neurodivergent means people whose brains work differently. For example, autism is a neurodivergent condition.

### **No wrong door**

No wrong door means whichever service someone turns to, they get directed to the right help.

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**Person Centred Approach** Person Centred Approach means support focusing on what each person wants and needs.

**Protected characteristics** Protected characteristics is a term used to describe some groups of people who are often treated unfairly. For example:

- Disabled people
- People who may have a different colour skin, different religion or may come from another country
- People of different ages
- Lesbian, gay and bisexual people
- A number of other groups of people.

**Recovery focussed** Recovery focussed means supporting people to decide what recovery means for them. Developing their strengths to help them achieve that recovery.

**Substance use** Substance use means continued use of things like alcohol, illegal drugs, or medicines.

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## **Trauma**

Trauma is any experience that can cause distress or anxiety. Trauma can be a one-off event, a number of events. Or it could be an ongoing situation.

## **Wellbeing**

Wellbeing is about feeling comfortable, healthy, and happy.