



William Powell AC / AM  
Chair, Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales

28 February 2013

Dear Mr Powell,

## Petitions Committee consideration of Petition from Action for Mental Health

We welcome the opportunity to give our view on the above petition that urges the *'National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to adopt and implement the NICE quality standard for service user experience in adult mental health in its entirety'*.

We fully agree with and support the principles within the NICE Quality Standard which is a useful tool in helping to improve the experience of care for people using mental health services. The accompanying NICE clinical guideline makes it clear that NICE quality standards set out 'aspirational, but achievable, markers of high-quality, cost-effective care'.

However, we believe the main drivers for both ensuring improved service user experience in mental health services, and indeed for ensuring a greater voice for people who use services in Wales is firstly the Mental Health (Wales) Measure 2010 and then the new strategy for Mental Health and Wellbeing in Wales, *'Together for Mental Health'* and its related Delivery Plan.

The Mental Health Measure is neither aspirational nor merely another policy. It is a piece of primary legislation that Health Boards and Local Authorities are duty bound to implement. There is a legal requirement to ensure that peoples' care, support and treatment is comprehensive, holistic and person-focused, and the legislation makes it clear that mental health professionals need to engage with patients/service users to identify and plan the delivery of a wide range of services to meet their needs.

We believe the focus in Wales must be on implementing the legislation, policies and strategies that have been developed in Wales in collaboration with service users and carers and third sector organisations. The NICE Quality Standard is an important tool to help and assist with that, but it is the Mental Health Measure and associated Strategy and Deliver Plan that are the primary drivers.

Please let me know if you would like any further information or views.

Yours sincerely

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