

Extract from Gofal news page

News

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Patients, professionals and politician call for renewed approach to eating disorders in Wales

A coalition of service users, families, carers, health professionals and politicians has today published their views on the key issues facing eating disorder services in Wales. Members of the National Assembly for Wales' Cross Party Group on Eating Disorders are calling on the Welsh Government to ensure that their voices are heard during work to refresh the Eating Disorders Framework for Wales.

Chaired by Bethan Jenkins AM, the cross party group provides a forum for people who use and deliver eating disorder services to discuss their views on policy, legislation and practice. Members have recently highlighted the need to refresh the Eating Disorders Framework for Wales, which was published back in 2009. Although progress has been made over the last six years, the group believes it is essential for the Welsh Government to consider the issues currently facing people with eating disorders and refresh their priorities accordingly.

During a series of cross party group meetings, members discussed the barriers that were preventing people with eating disorders from getting the support they needed – and their ideas for improving services in Wales. The resulting [document](#) was agreed by all members – including people who use and deliver services. It highlighted three overarching priorities:

- Review the Eating Disorders Framework for Wales
- Raise the profile of eating disorders in general mental health policy
- Improve attitudes and reduce stigma

The [document](#) then split the key issues into the following four areas:

Early intervention: primary care and education: Improving understanding, awareness and early identification in school and primary care – to ensure that people are able to access the treatment and support they need in a timely manner.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS): Improve the skills, relationships and transitions between CAMHS and specialist eating disorder services – to ensure children and young people get the best possible treatment and support.

Skills and attitudes on general, mental health and paediatric wards: Improving understanding and knowledge of eating disorders on general, mental health and paediatric wards – to reduce stigma and improve the patient experience.

Support for people with ongoing experience of eating disorders: Ensuring that people with an eating disorder receive high quality, recovery focused support – which builds self-esteem, enables people to live fulfilled lives and helps them to overcome barriers to housing, education and employment.

The [document](#) has been sent to Public Health Wales, which has been asked by the Welsh Government to refresh the framework. The Cross Party Group on Eating Disorders strongly believes that the refresh process must be open and transparent and provide people who use and deliver services with clear opportunities to share their views and contribute to the development of the new framework. Members understand that there will be a 30-day consultation period for people to submit their views and that further information will be made available on the Public Health Wales website.

Chair of the Cross Party Group on Eating Disorders Bethan Jenkins AM said:

“Although progress has been made, it is clear that much more can be done to improve eating disorder services and the experiences of patients in Wales. It is crucial that Welsh policy is refreshed and reflects the priorities of people using eating disorder services, as well as ensuring that our fantastic healthcare professionals do not face unnecessary barriers to delivering excellent care.

“I am very proud to publish this document, which represents the collective views of service users, family members, carers, health professionals and third sector representatives in Wales. With one voice, we are highlighting the key issues that we believe need to be addressed in the new Eating Disorders Framework for Wales. It is now crucial that the people who use and deliver eating disorder services are given the opportunity to contribute to the development of the new Framework and I encourage everyone with an interest to share their views.”

James Downs, service user, volunteer and campaigner said:

"Investing in expanding the recently-created specialist services based on a thorough review of the EDFW needs to be a key priority of the Welsh Government moving forward. Appropriately resourced services that keep people out of hospital and support people effectively in the community are desperately needed in Wales

now. I am looking forward to participating in the Welsh Government review alongside other service users, families and carers."

Manon Lewis, service user, volunteer and campaigner said:

"I am very grateful to have been given the opportunity to be involved in the development of the cross party group 'key issues' document as it addresses the challenges that I and many others have experienced. We need to improve knowledge and understanding throughout all parts of the health service so that people can get the appropriate support as soon as possible. We also need to challenge the stigma and discrimination that sufferers face and ensure that people with a longer term experience of eating disorders are supported to live fulfilled lives."

Ewan Hilton, Chief Executive of mental health and wellbeing charity Gofal said:

"It has been incredibly rewarding working with a group of people from a variety of backgrounds who are all deeply committed to improving eating disorder services and the experiences of people using them. We know that a good or poor experience of services can have a significant impact on people's lives and it is essential that the Welsh Government and Health Boards get this right."

Dr Menna Jones, Chair of the Eating Disorders Sub-Group of the Wales Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and Eating Disorders Planning Network:

"Services for those with eating disorders have undergone a great deal of improvement since 2009 when the Eating Disorders Framework for Wales was first published. There remain key areas that need further development across the wide range of services that people with eating disorders come into contact with, and the work of the Cross Party Group on Eating Disorders has been valuable in enabling professionals to collaborate closely with service users and their families to identify priorities for ongoing work to ensure that sufferers and their families receive timely and appropriate support and treatment."

– See more at: <http://www.gofal.org.uk/news/2015/08/18/patients-professionals-and-politician-call-for-renewed-approach-to-eating-disorders-in-wales/#sthash.3XoCwYIQ.dpuf>