

Number: WG26284



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Consultation Document

Consultation on draft non-statutory guidelines for collaborative working between Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and the counselling service

Date of issue: 16 October 2015

Action required: Responses by 11 December 2015

Consultation on draft non-statutory guidelines for collaborative working between Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and the counselling service

Overview	<p>This consultation seeks views on draft non-statutory guidance on collaborative working between Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and the local authority counselling services. The draft non-statutory guidance sets out how both services are organised, including their geographical footprint, and includes a number of case studies on collaborative working between the services.</p>
How to respond	<p>Responses to this consultation should be e-mailed/posted to the address below to arrive by 11 December 2015 at the latest.</p> <p>Stakeholders have been involved in the preparation of the draft guidance, which is non-statutory and relates to service improvement. For this reason an 8-week consultation period is deemed more appropriate than the standard 12-week consultation period.</p>
Further information and related documents	<p>Large print, Braille and alternate language versions of this document are available on request.</p> <p>The consultation documents can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at www.gov.wales/consultations</p>
Contact details	<p>For further information: Pupil Wellbeing Branch Support for Learners Division Infrastructure, Curriculum, Qualification and Learner Support Directorate Welsh Government Cathays Park Cardiff CF10 3NQ</p> <p>e-mail: WELLBEINGshare@wales.gsi.gov.uk</p>

Data protection

How the views and information you give us will be used

Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about. It may also be seen by other Welsh Government staff to help them plan future consultations.

The Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. This helps to show that the consultation was carried out properly. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then blank them out.

Names or addresses we blank out might still get published later, though we do not think this would happen very often. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 allow the public to ask to see information held by many public bodies, including the Welsh Government. This includes information which has not been published. However, the law also allows us to withhold information in some circumstances. If anyone asks to see information we have withheld, we will have to decide whether to release it or not. If someone has asked for their name and address not to be published, that is an important fact we would take into account. However, there might sometimes be important reasons why we would have to reveal someone's name and address, even though they have asked for them not to be published. We would get in touch with the person and ask their views before we finally decided to reveal the information.

Ministerial foreword

Across the Welsh Government, there is increasing emphasis constructing effective support around children and young people to help safeguard and promote their wellbeing. This support ranges from early interventions, aimed at helping children and young people to become more resilient and promoting their emotional wellbeing, to specialist mental healthcare.

Our all-ages mental health strategy for Wales, 'Together for Mental Health' sets out the aim of people of all ages experiencing sustained improvement to their mental health and wellbeing as a result of cross-Government commitment to all sectors working together. Local authority counselling services for children and young people and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are at the frontline for supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. Collaboration between services will ensure that children and young people experiencing emotional, social and psychological distress or mental health problems receive the most appropriate treatment to secure the best possible outcomes for them.

The intention is that the guidelines will provide clarity and consistency to service providers and ensure more joined up working between services, complementing the wider reconfiguration of CAMHS. This is in line with Welsh Government priorities for prudent healthcare. We want to ensure the most appropriate professional deals with the needs of children and young people, reducing inappropriate referrals to specialist CAMHS, and reducing stigmatisation and labelling of young people in receipt of specialist mental health services, when their needs could be met elsewhere.

In developing these draft guidelines we have engaged with CAMHS, local authority counselling services and other stakeholders. We sought their views at the outset on what should be included in the guidelines, and asked them to tell us about existing good practice. We are extremely grateful to all of the stakeholders who have been involved in this process, and for their invaluable advice in helping shape these guidelines. Their commitment to delivering the best possible service to children and young people is inspiring.

We welcome your views.

Huw Lewis AM
Minister for Education and Skills

Mark Drakeford AM
Minister for Health and Social Services

Draft non-statutory guidelines for collaborative working between CAMHS and the counselling service

What are the main issues?

Statistics show that 1 in 10 children between the ages of 5 and 16 have a mental health problem and many more have behavioural issues. There is evidence this is increasing. Approximately 50% of people with enduring mental health problems will have symptoms by the time they are 14 and many at a much younger age, demonstrating that mental illness can affect people across the course of their lives. Early intervention is universally recognised as the best form of prevention.

For children and young people who experience emotional, social and psychological distress or mental health problems, collaboration between Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and local authority counselling services for children and young people can ensure that they receive the most appropriate treatment. This is in line with Welsh Government priorities for prudent healthcare, to provide care for those with the greatest health need first, making the most effective use of all skills and resources.

Where are we now?

Local authorities are required to make reasonable provision of independent counselling services for all children and young people aged between 11 and 18 in their area and pupils in year 6 of primary school. Within schools, counselling complements the different approaches already in place to support the health, emotional and social needs of pupils.

This supports the provision of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), which can be defined in two ways. One applies specifically to specialist CAMHS at Tier 2, 3 and 4, and the provision of highly specialist mental healthcare to children and young people. On the other hand CAMHS can also be defined more broadly as embracing all services that contribute to the emotional wellbeing of children and young people, whether health, education, social services, or other agencies.

In April 2014 the Health Boards restructured their CAMHS planning and commissioning arrangements and established a single all-Wales CAMHS and Eating Disorders Planning Network to ensure provision is planned nationally, with community and tertiary provision working together for the benefits of the patient. In addition, work is currently underway to look at a wider reconfiguration of CAMHS, considering how best, and who is best placed, to meet the needs of vulnerable young people in a timely and effective manner.

There is no single approach to how CAMHS and counselling services are organised in the different parts of Wales.

Why are we introducing these guidelines?

These draft guidelines have been developed in order to facilitate cross-sector working between local authority counselling services for children and young people and CAMHS.

The guidelines have been developed through engagement with stakeholders from CAMHS, local authority counselling services, counselling providers and third sector organisations. In March, stakeholders attended workshops where they gave their views on what should be included in the guidelines and provided information on existing good practice in collaborative working.

The guidelines clarify the respective roles of local authority counselling services and CAMHS, they identify relevant legislation and set out key principles for collaborative working between the services, illustrated by good practice case studies.

Key principles for collaborative working

The guidelines identify good practice and suggestions for collaborative working as follows:

- Case discussions, to improve the quality of referrals into CAMHS
- Combined support for the child/young person, involving other agencies where appropriate
- Multi agency panels
- Training, to provide an opportunity to increase capacity and to build relationships between service representatives
- Forums, to help to build relationships
- Having a named contact for each service
- Putting processes in place for referrals from Counselling to CAMHS
- Local protocols in place to underpin joint working

The aim is to encourage collaboration between the services in order to secure the best possible outcomes for children and young people experiencing emotional, social and psychological distress or mental health