

Mental Health Services

Get it Right - PUBLIC HEALTH PUBLIC SERVICE

updated 2009

The Royal College of Nursing believes that public services, business and local communities all have a role to play in maintaining good mental health and wellbeing. Work-Life balance is important. RCN Wales believes that the education curriculum should include the teaching of strategies to develop emotional resilience. Counselling services should be available and easily accessible for the young and old.

Mental Health Services are under great strain in Wales. Residential capacity is limited. Often children and young people are inappropriately placed. Patients face unacceptable delays in accessing treatment often because there are not sufficient numbers of healthcare professionals employed to provide an appropriate service. This is caused both by recruitment difficulties and also by an insufficient number of NHS posts. The Royal College of Nursing calls for a clear workforce planning strategy for mental health nurses in Wales, that will meet the future mental health needs of the people of Wales, be they children or adults.

RCN Wales believes that services should be designed around the recovery model. This model is optimistic, patient centred and contemporary. It looks beyond illness but rather a process of recovery which embraces the need for employment and relationships and social inclusion.

There needs to be sustainable funding for post-registration education. Specialist training is needed in

fields such as cognitive behavioural therapy, family work, and personality disorder. It is professionally frustrating and hinders the provision of an effective service for the public if nurses are unable to access this training.

The Welsh Assembly Government also needs to address the needs of women in the commissioning of mental health services and urgently needs to address their current safety in in-patient services. Often strategies for dealing with sexual harassment or assault are flawed or are unable to be implemented due to pressures on bed numbers. The Department of Health in England issued a Women's Mental Health Strategy in 2001 and has produced a number of reports and guidance on specific points since. Women in Wales also require these safeguards.

There should be development of drug, alcohol and substance misuse services in Wales with specific links to the Mental Health Service.

get it
right

cymryd y
camau
cywir

KEY POLICY ACTIONS

- Mental Health Services in Wales require increased and sustained investment. Funding should be ring-fenced by the Welsh Assembly Government.
- NHS Community Psychiatric nurses should have a post graduate qualification in community mental health nursing.
- A national workforce plan is needed to ensure the sustainability and development of the mental health nursing workforce.
- A Women's Mental Health Strategy is needed for Wales.
- Assertive outreach and crisis resolution teams should be developed, adequately resourced and be accessible across Wales.
- Transition services for adolescents transferring to Adult Mental Health Services should be developed and resourced.
- Unscheduled care services (such as drop-in centres, or A&E departments) should all be designed to have the facilities and expertise to engage with people in mental distress.
- Mental Health Services must be resourced and designed to adequately meet the physical health care agenda for clients.
- Counselling services should be available in primary care for young and old.