

Agreed Detailed National Action Plan for Adult Learning Disability Services

Achieving the recommendations of the Improving Care: Improving Lives Review (2021)

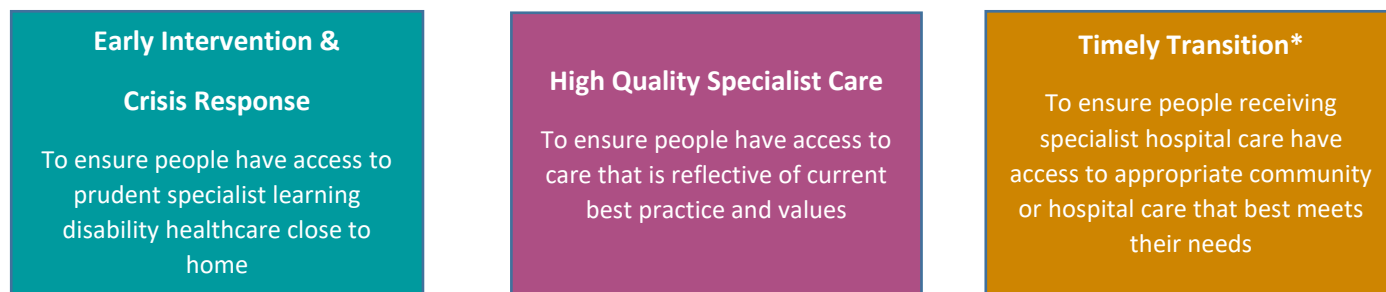
Remit

On the 8th December 2021, the Welsh Government’s Chief Medical Officer, Chief Social Care Officer and the Chief Nursing Officer, wrote to health boards, regional partnership boards and local authorities asking that local recovery plans included prioritising implementation of the recommendations from the review of specialist learning disability in-patient provision, undertaken by the National Collaborative Commissioning Unit (NCCU)¹.

Welsh Government asked Improvement Cymru to draft a national action plan that can support regional improvements and planning at a national level. The plan aims to take an All-Wales approach to resolving some of the issues identified in the report to secure consistency of approach across Wales and economies of scale. A new national group has been established to support and oversee delivery of the national plan, provide a communications channel between the local and national level, share learning from local actions and develop key indicators to measure quality which will be embedded in the Health and Social Care Outcomes Framework.

Aim

The underlying value being that a hospital bed is not a home. The priority is to ensure that people with a learning disability do not spend longer in specialist hospital than is needed, to provide high quality prudent assessment, intervention and support in the community to prevent admission and ensure sustainable discharge. The action plan reflects three main areas of the person’s journey through specialist learning disability services:



Identifying effective models of service delivery that provide prudent health & social care, delivering high quality, safe and sustainable care & support and ensuring timely admission, transfer and discharge from specialist hospital is required to improve the lives of people with a learning disability in Wales.

Introduction

The Improving Care: Improving Lives (NCCU 2020)¹ review found the majority of people (77%) in specialist learning disability hospitals have behaviour that challenges and the average length of stay is 5.1 years. The review identified seventy recommendations, sixty eight of which are for providers and commissioners of care. NICE guidelines² for people with a learning disability whose behaviour challenges recommends that local services need to shift their focus towards prevention and early intervention to reduce the need for people to move away from their home or community for care, education or treatment.

*For consistency with the Improving Care: Improving Lives review the term TRANSITION is used to reflect the admission to, discharge from hospital and transfer between hospitals

¹ [Improving Care, Improving Lives \(2020\)](#)

² [Learning disabilities and behaviour that challenges: service design and delivery](#)

As NHS Wales, local authorities and care providers emerge from the pandemic Welsh Government has set future priorities³ recognising the impact on health and social care and sharing lessons learnt. Organisations are asked to explore new ways of working as they formulate their recovery plans that will deliver prudent care that reduces harm and puts citizens at the centre of its design⁴. In summary, the priority areas for action are:

- Increase community based crisis care provision
- Strengthen care and discharge planning & review
- Increase locally based “step-down” provision
- Reduce reliance on pharmaceutical therapeutics (*anti-psychotics, anxiolytics and hypnotics medication*)
- Increase provision of non-pharmaceutical therapeutics in both community and in-patient settings
- Implement the Welsh Government’s Reducing Restrictive Practice Framework

Welsh Government have asked Improvement Cymru to support organisations to deliver on these priorities through supporting a culture where improvement can flourish, contribute to the capability of organisations to deliver skilled improvement and provide the networks to ensure sustainability. Such an approach is reflective of Improvement Cymru’s [Safe Care Together Strategy](#).

³ [Health and Social Care in Wales – COVID-19: Looking forward \(2021\)](#)

⁴ [The National Clinical Framework: A Learning Health & Care System](#)

National Action

Improvement Cymru have been asked by Welsh Government to identify a range of potential actions that can support regional improvements. This proposed range of actions will focus on reducing the use of specialist hospital care for people whose behaviour challenges over a period of four years with prioritisation to be determined in partnership with organisations and Regional Partnership Boards as appropriate.

1. A Model of Prevention/Early Intervention and Crisis Response for Learning Disability Services

A prevention and early intervention model would facilitate a person centred prudent response to people with a learning disability before they experience a crisis. The focus here is to design services that are easily accessible to people with a learning disability and their carers, can respond promptly to demand and have the capacity to allocate appropriate resources to a range of presenting needs. This will reflect organisational core business and eligibility criteria.

Aim	What	How	Lead responsibility	Provisional Measures	Risk	Key Partners	Timescale
For people with a learning disability to have access to the appropriate care and support in the community at the right time and place	Develop a set of national minimum standards for multi-disciplinary learning disability specialist health services	Consider utilising existing standards & measures e.g. RCP, Learning disability Senate, NHS Improvement To formally consult with stakeholders To develop monitoring systems To support testing and implementation through QI		% of people appropriately referred to specialist community learning disability health service % of people with a learning disability who receive an initial assessment of their needs within 28 days of referral received Incidence of people with learning disability admitted to specialist hospital Health Equality Framework Outcomes	Services predominantly respond to people at crisis that may have been avoidable Demand for hospital admission Failure to meet Care Closer to home Other unknown reasons impacting on achieving positive outcomes	Health boards Local Authorities Advocacy 3rd sector Professional forums and subject matter experts	
	Explore sustainable models of service design that evidence delivery of prevention & early intervention	Identify good practice in learning disability services that deliver prudent care Review literature Evaluate models through QI		rate of people accessing prevention and early intervention support % of people seen by the learning disability community specialist	Missed opportunities for early intervention Individuals experiencing increasingly	Health Boards Local Authority Independent providers 3rd Sector and subject matter experts	

	<i>Particularly for individuals whose behaviour challenges</i>	Skilled workforce		service who have a crisis prevention plan % of people receiving prevention and early intervention support who are admitted to specialist learning disability hospital within 3/6 months Health Equality Framework Outcomes	unmet health and social care needs		
	Explore sustainable models of service design that evidence delivery of an effective, prudent crisis response	Identify good practice in learning disability services Review literature Evaluate models through QI Skilled workforce		rate of people who experienced a crisis in their wellbeing or support rate of admission to specialist learning disability hospital Health Equality Framework Outcomes	Missed opportunity to prevent hospital admission and detention under MHA	Health Boards Local Authority Independent providers 3rd Sector and subject matter experts	
	Explore models of service that meet the needs of people with learning disability whose behaviour challenges	Bring stakeholders together to deliver services reflecting NICE guidance Evaluate models through QI Skilled workforce		Health Equality Framework Outcomes Lived experience % of people admitted to specialist hospital due to a deterioration in their challenging behaviour		Health Boards Local Authority Independent providers 3 rd Sector and subject matter experts	
	Explore models of service that meet the needs of people with complex physical health needs	Identify best practice Evaluate models through QI Skilled Workforce		% of people utilising the Once for Wales Health Profile Rate of people presenting to health services with a Once for Wales Health Profile Mortality Review Data Health Equality Framework Outcomes Lived experience	Missed opportunity to reduce avoidable deaths	Health Boards Local Authority Independent providers 3rd Sector and subject matter experts	
	Develop national forums to facilitate sharing, learning, cohort thinking and support	A national QI network for each learning disability services: community, inpatient, social care and behaviour teams.	Improvement Cymru		Missed opportunity to share best practice	Health boards Local Authorities Advocacy 3rd sector	

	evidence based improvement projects					Professional forums Independent sector subject matter experts	
	Consider alternative models of support and advice to people and their carers 24/7	<p>Explore the work of existing telephone helplines (MENCAP, LDW, CALL etc) and demand relating to LD</p> <p>Support delivery of best practice advice and support</p> <p>Explore extending availability of specialist community services</p> <p>Invest in accessible information</p> <p>Explore national resources on DEWIS</p>		<p>Range of quality data on people who seek help and support out of hours</p> <p>Outcome measures including % of people who are signposted to learning disability services</p> <p>Health Equality Framework Outcomes</p>	<p>Missed opportunity to build capacity</p> <p>Missed opportunity to provide consistent advice and support</p> <p>Independent resources emerging that are not aligned</p>	3 rd Sector CALL Helpline Welsh Government	
	Promote the use of the Lifespan Positive Behaviour Support Family Education pack	<p>Deliver a series of local workshops and media campaign in partnership with stakeholders to families</p> <p>Make resource accessible in a range of formats</p>		<p>Rate of carers using Positive Behaviour Support</p> <p>% of people receiving positive behaviour support who are admitted to specialist hospital due to a deterioration in their behaviour</p> <p>Health Equality Framework Outcomes</p>	<p>Missed opportunity for early intervention</p> <p>Potential increase demand on services</p>	<p>Families</p> <p>People with lived experience</p> <p>Health Boards Local Authority Independent providers 3rd Sector and subject matter experts</p>	
	To explore the demand for and effectiveness of providing short breaks for adults with learning disability whose behaviour challenges	<p>Undertake a review and collate findings to aid future planning</p> <p>Engagement with unpaid carers</p>		<p>rate of people using short breaks who experience behaviour that challenges</p> <p>% admitted of specialist hospital</p>	<p>Missed opportunity to support more carers</p>	<p>All Wales forum for parents & Carers</p> <p>All Wales People First</p>	

2. High Quality Specialist Care

The focus is to invest in the quality of care provided in both community and hospital settings. To ensure people have access to appropriate, high quality and safe care that is sustainable and reduces harm.

Aim	What	How	Lead responsibility	Provisional Measures	Risk	Key Partners	Timescale
To build capacity to deliver high quality, safe and sustainable care to meet the needs of citizens close to their home	Contribute to the WHSSC review of secure learning disability hospital care	Attend national steering group to review medium and high secure hospital care Provide regional data Explore best practice and formulate recommendations	WHSSC	Rate of people in secure hospital care Length of Stay Transition barriers % of people who experience a delay of ... days or more in transition to and from secure hospital care		WHSSC	
	To ensure that Wales has the resources to meet the needs of people who require specialist learning inpatient care	Understand regional demand and capacity requirements for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low secure • Assessment & Treatment units • Continuing Health Care • Non-NHS provision Consider collaborative approaches to meeting future needs Explore regional pathways for planned and unplanned admission to ATU and share best practice		% of people who cannot access learning disability inpatient care within 24 hours % of people who cannot access inpatient care within the region of their home health board and within Wales Average length of stay % of people who experience a delay in transition from specialist hospital care into community or other hospital Reason for admission rate of people in inpatient care subject to at least one restrictive practice in the last 7 days		Health boards Local Authorities Advocacy 3rd sector Professional forums Independent sector subject matter experts	

	Consider developing care provider consortiums to contribute to service planning	Analyse population needs assessment across regions to predict future care demand and partnership opportunities Consider prioritising people who are suitable for discharge from specialist LD inpatient hospital To work with care providers to plan for future demand				Health Boards Local Authority Independent providers	
	To ensure access to mental health inpatient care through reasonable adjustments (DDA)	Implement levels two and three of the Learning Disability Education Framework for Healthcare Staff in Wales		Health Equality Framework Outcomes Lived experience	Missed opportunity for people with mental illness to access mainstream psychiatric services	Health boards	
	Consider All Wales memorandum of understanding for the safe transfer of care	Consider draft LD RCPsych (WALES) proposal				Health Boards	
	To ensure equal access to therapies for people with a learning disability who are in specialist hospital and community care	An audit of therapy provision across specialist learning disability services Consider future actions		Waiting times for: SALT Physiotherapy Psychology Occupational Therapy		Health boards Local Authorities Advocacy 3rd sector Professional forums Independent sector subject matter experts	
To deliver high quality safe and sustainable care to people with behaviour that challenges	Develop a set of All Wales value based statements around the care and support of people with learning disability whose behaviour challenges	Engage with the All Wales Community of Practice for Behaviour that Challenges and carer/user forums Publish value based statement		Incidence of people with behaviour that challenges % of people with a behaviour support plan that was informed by Functional Analysis		Health boards Local Authorities Advocacy 3rd sector Professional forums Independent sector subject matter experts	

	Develop a Positive Behaviour Support Workforce and Training framework across health, social care and education	Consider proposal from All Wales Challenging Behaviour Community of Practice Commission development of a framework		% of care providers with staff trained in the delivery of skilled behaviour support % of practitioners who have undertaken training % of people who experience a deterioration in their behaviour that challenges Health Equality Framework Outcomes	Inconsistency in the delivery of skilled behaviour support	HEIW CSIW	
	Develop a framework for the use of non-pharmaceutical interventions for people whose behaviour challenges, e.g. Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)	Development of a PBS Framework for CYP Development of a PBS Framework for adults Consider a national campaign to promote non-pharmaceutical interventions for people whose behaviour challenges		% of people who experience a deterioration in their behaviour that challenges Health Equality Framework Outcomes antipsychotic prescribing data	Inconsistency in the delivery of skilled behaviour support Failure to deliver reductions in restrictive practice	Health boards Local Authorities Advocacy 3rd sector Professional forums Independent sector subject matter experts	
	Embed a quality assurance framework for the delivery of non-pharmaceutical interventions for people with behaviour that challenges into organisational commissioning frameworks	Determine if the use of the PBS Academy quality assurance tool improves the delivery of skilled behaviour support Embed framework within new and existing commissioning frameworks for health & social \care Explore embedding in inspection and regulation process		% of care providers that meet quality assurance measures % of people who experience a deterioration in their behaviour that challenges Health Equality Framework Outcomes	Inconsistency in the delivery of skilled behaviour support Poor outcomes for people with behaviour that challenges	WHSSC Health boards Local Authorities Advocacy 3rd sector Professional forums Independent sector subject matter experts	
	Produce a flexible method of capturing the experiences of carers/care providers of delivering high quality Positive Behaviour Support	Design and test an online survey toolkit Publish tool kit	Improvement Cymru	Identify local and regional barriers to delivering good quality Positive Behaviour support (PBS)	Potentially poor quality behaviour support Increased use of higher acuity models of care including hospital		

	Develop a Once for Wales set of standards for transition of children and young people whose behaviour challenges to adult services which minimises the disruption to existing high quality behaviour support	Deliver NICE guidance		% of young adults and cares who experienced a positive transition to adults services Understanding barriers Health Equality Framework Outcomes	Poor lived experience of transition to adults services	Health boards Local Authorities Advocacy 3rd sector Professional forums Independent sector subject matter experts	
Ensuring that the use of Restrictive Practices are lawful, proportionate and time limited	Support cohort thinking around the national response to implementation of the Reducing Restrictive Practice Framework	Explore actions that could be delivered at an All Wales level i.e. standardised recording training resources quality assurance tools		Health Equality Framework Outcomes Capture lived experience		People with lived experience Staff groups Professional forums	
	Explore the development of an All Wales Reducing Restrictive Practice Expert Reference Group to support dissemination of best practice and training	Review terms of Reference of PRRICE group Allocate work to PRRICE					
	Contribute to organisational learning from patient safety incidents	Analyse safety data at a national level to understand impact of restrictive practice Review workforce training on restrictive practice (NHS All Wales Violence and Aggression Passport)		Rate of restrictive practices that resulted in an injury	Opportunity to standardise training	NHS Delivery Unit Health boards Local Authorities Advocacy 3rd sector Professional forums Independent sector subject matter experts	
To utilise meaningful outcome measures to understand	Develop an agile digital platform for the Health Equality Framework (HEF) and support its use in measuring outcomes in the community across Wales	Prioritise NHS staff to explore (Discovery Phase) user requirements for future design produce a proof of concept that meets organisational demand		Health Equality Framework Outcomes	Missed opportunity to identify health determinants and reduce inequalities	Health boards	

peoples lived experience and the effectiveness of care	Explore the use of outcome measures to capture the effectiveness of specialist inpatient care	Review use of All wales outcome measures Consider benchmarking dashboard (HoNOS LD)		HoNOS LD			
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3. Timely Transition

To ensure people receiving specialist hospital care have access to appropriate community and specialist inpatient care that best meets their needs. To reduce patient harm by ensuring that people with a learning disability experience a timely transition to and from specialist hospital.

Recommendation	What	How	Lead responsibility	Provisional Measures	Risk	Key Partners	Timescale
Timely transition to hospital close to home (admission)	To undertake early thinking of further national actions that can support regional priorities	Understand regional challenges and improvement plans Explore current best practice for out of hours admission and commissioning of non-NHS care		Distance from home User & family experience Delays in admission	Potential increase in poor user and carer experience		
	Explore ways to share timely LD inpatient bed state between health boards	Scope out existing real-time bed management tool		Time taken from decision to admit to admission			
Timely transition to appropriate hospital care (transfer)	Develop national standards and monitoring for timely transition from specialist hospital to another specialist hospital	Share regional best practice Consider further work to standardise process across Wales		Time taken from decision to transfer to completion of safe transfer % of DTOC			
Timely transition to the community (discharge)	Explore mechanisms to improve patient flow through specialist hospitals that reduce patient harm from delays in discharge	Evaluate D2RA approach in people with a learning disability Share regional best practice		% of patients with a length of stay over 90 days % of patients with a stay over 90 days who do not have a discharge plan			

				% of patients who require transition to community that remain in hospital Reasons for delayed transition			
	Prioritise transition for people identified as suitable for discharge into the community	Undertake audit of all patients in specialist hospital care Update on progress for people identified in NNCU review		Rate of people in specialist LD inpatient hospital % of DTOC			
	Explore with commissioners a range of support models that deliver high quality care for people whose behaviour challenges that prevents re-admission and expedites discharge	Share current regional best practice Consider national best practice Undertake gap analysis		% of people readmitted into LD inpatient hospital within Days/months Reason for readmission			
	To provide suitable accommodation in the community for people whose behaviour challenges	To develop a housing strategy for people with behaviour that challenges To know what the future housing demand will be and have regional action plans in place to meet the need Support operationalisation of the Commissioning Accommodation and Support for a Good Life for people with a learning disability guidance		% of people readmitted into LD inpatient hospital within Days/months Reason for readmission			