

Easy Read



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Our plans for mental health and wellbeing in Wales

2025 to 2035



This document was written by the **Welsh Government**. It is an easy read version of ‘**Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy**’.

April 2025

How to use this document



This is an easy read document. You may still need support to read it. Ask someone you know to help you.



Words in **bold blue writing** may be hard to understand. You can check what the words in blue mean on **page 51**.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Where the document says **we**, this means **Welsh Government**. For more information contact:

Website: www.gov.wales/mental-health-and-wellbeing-strategy

Email: mentalhealthandvulnerablegroups@gov.wales



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Help and support for your own mental health

If you need support with your mental health, you can:



- phone the CALL Helpline: 0800 132 737



- or phone the Samaritans: 116 123.



For urgent support please call the NHS on 111 and press 2.

About this strategy



This is our plan for **mental health** and **wellbeing** in Wales.



Everyone has **mental health**. It is about how someone is feeling in their mind. It is about our **feelings**, thoughts and **wellbeing**.



Wellbeing is about feeling comfortable, healthy, or happy.



This plan says what we will do over the next 10 years to support **mental health** and **wellbeing**.

Our overall vision for Wales



We want people in Wales to live in communities that support:

- their **mental health**
- and **wellbeing**.



We want people to be treated fairly. We want **everyone** to have the support they need.



This strategy supports people of all ages. Whoever they are, whatever needs they have.

4 Vision statements

We have written 4 Vision Statements. They are our goals for the future:



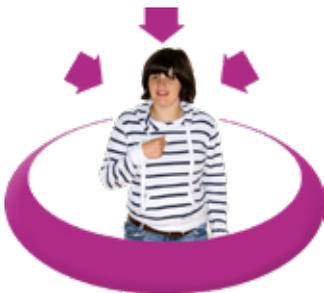
1. We make sure people can get the things they need to support good **mental health** and **wellbeing**.



2. Everyone has the knowledge, opportunities, and confidence to care for their **mental health** and **wellbeing**.



3. Everyone can get the right support no matter where they ask for help.



4. **Mental health** support is easy to access and focused on each person's needs. People get the right help without delay.

Terms used to talk about mental health and wellbeing



Mental health

Mental health is how someone is feeling in their mind. It is about **feelings**, thoughts, and **wellbeing**.



Good **mental health** helps people cope with the stresses of life. When people have good **mental health**, they can:

- live well
- learn well
- work well
- play and socialise
- and be part of their community.



Mental health conditions

These are conditions that affect our **feelings**, thoughts, and behaviour.



Conditions like **anxiety** and **depression** are **mental health conditions**. They affect someone's life a lot. There are many other conditions too.



We all feel sad sometimes. And we all go through difficult times. This is a normal part of life. But when things like this go on for a long time, or are severe, it could be a **mental health condition**.



Anxiety

Anxiety is when someone feels worried or stressed a lot of the time.



Depression

Depression is a low mood that lasts a long time.



Mental wellbeing

This is when you are happy and comfortable in yourself. You see yourself as being able to cope well.



Emotions

Emotions are how you feel about something. And how your body reacts. For example, if you are scared, you may feel your heart beat faster.



Feelings

Feelings are how we experience our **emotions** and the meaning we give to them. **Feelings** are different for everyone.

Our goals



This section is about:

- our work now,
- and what actions will take next, to achieve the 4 Vision Statements.

1. We make sure people can get the things they need to support good mental health and wellbeing



Good **mental health** depends on having the right things in life. We call them **building blocks** of health. These include things like:

- Safe homes
- Good jobs
- Enough money
- Safe childhoods
- Being involved in your community





There are also other things that can affect people's **mental health** and **wellbeing**. Such as **trauma**, **poverty**, homelessness, **abuse**.



Trauma is when something bad happens, and it makes someone feel sad or scared for a long time. **Trauma** can be a one-off event, a number of events. Or it could be an ongoing situation.



Poverty is when someone does not have enough money to pay for basic things like food or heating.



Abuse is when someone says or does something to hurt you or make you feel bad.

Our work now



Good, affordable housing is important for **mental health**. We have plans to help with this, including:

- the [Welsh Housing Quality Standard](#)
- and [Ending Homelessness Action Plan](#).



We are focusing on reducing **substance misuse**. And making sure people know the risks and where to get help.



Substance misuse means taking drugs or drinking too much alcohol.



The [Whole School Approach](#) helps schools support students' **wellbeing**.



The [Welsh Government's employability plan](#) focuses on:

- helping young people
- creating fair jobs
- and supporting people with health issues to work.



We are working to reduce loneliness and build stronger communities.



The [Early Childhood Play, Learning and Care approach](#) focuses on the child and their development.



Parents can get support through programmes like Families First and Flying Start.



We also focus on improving children's speech, language, and communication skills.

Actions



- Check how well we are doing.



- Use the Joint Ministerial Assurance Board to check if more action is needed.



- Make sure this strategy is thought about in all Government work. **Public bodies** will do health impact assessments that look at how their decision affects **mental health**.

Public bodies get money from the Government to provide services to the public, like hospitals, schools and social services. But they are separate from the Government itself.



- Raise awareness about the importance of **mental health** in government policies.

2. Everyone has the knowledge, opportunities, and confidence to care for their mental health and wellbeing

This is about how we make sure:



- Clear and helpful information is available.



- **Resources** and opportunities are easy to find and use.



Resources are useful things we have or can use. For example, buildings, parks, groups, information, money and professionals.



- Everyone can learn how to protect and improve their **mental wellbeing**.

Our work now

Understanding what helps our mental health and wellbeing



We need more evidence about what works well to protect and promote good **mental health** and **wellbeing** and stop problems.



Public Health Wales has developed a model to help us understand how people can look after their **wellbeing**. The model shows 3 important connections:



1. Connection to ourselves: Understanding our **feelings** and being in control.



2. Connection with others: Having good relationships, trust, and feeling like we belong.



3. Connection to the world: Feeling part of something bigger, like our community and nature.



Research shows that there are activities that can help protect and promote good **mental health** and **wellbeing**. Such as:

- Moving and staying active.



- Being creative.

- Enjoying nature and culture.



- Learning new things or doing hobbies.

- Helping others and volunteering.



- Taking time to relax.

- For children, having time to play.

- Eating healthy food.



- Getting good sleep.

Taking action to protect and promote good mental health and wellbeing



We all feel **emotions** like anger, joy, and sadness. It is not always easy to understand or manage them. But we can learn skills to help.



We want people to know what works for them and feel confident to try new things.



There are **resources** and tools to help people manage **feelings**. Community **resources** like parks, libraries, sports clubs, and advice services can help.



It is important everyone can use these **resources**.



People can be supported to use different **resources** through **social prescribing**.

Social prescribing helps connect people to groups and services in the community. It is a way to help them manage their health and **wellbeing**.



People should feel comfortable asking for help when they have problems.



Employers can also help staff protect their **mental health** and **wellbeing**.

Creating the right environment for good mental health and wellbeing



We want to make Wales a place where people are kind and talk openly about **mental health** and **wellbeing**. We want everyone to feel comfortable asking for help when they need it.



Communities should work together to make spaces that are welcoming and meet local needs.



Our surroundings affect our behaviour and **wellbeing**. For example, having areas where we can go for walks, helps us stay active.



Places that help us connect with nature can encourage us to care for our local area and the world. This benefits both people and the community.

Actions



- Make clear information about how to protect **mental wellbeing** and prevent **mental health** problems.



- Help everyone take action to improve their **mental health** and **wellbeing** throughout their lives. And ask for help when they need it.



- Create a place where people feel comfortable and can talk openly about **mental health** and **wellbeing**.

3. Everyone can get the right support no matter where they ask for help



This is about making sure services work well together. Services must work together so people get the support they need, whatever service they use.



People can get **mental health** support in different ways, from different services. Such as:

- Health and social care
- Housing and advice services
- **Substance misuse** services
- Sports, leisure, and culture settings
- The voluntary sector
- The criminal justice system
- Faith and education settings



For babies, children, and young people, it could be services like:

- Early years and childcare
- Youth work and play services



These services should work closely together to plan care around each person's needs.

Our work now

Offering trauma-informed support



Trauma informed means understanding how **trauma** can affect people. And knowing how to support those who have experienced it.



We want to become a **trauma-informed** nation. We will do this by:

- Including the [Trauma-Informed Wales Framework](#) in our policies and programmes.
- Continuing to support services that help people who have experienced **trauma**.

Easy access to help



People need simple ways to find advice for themselves or loved ones.



The NHS 111 press 2 service is improving access to information.



We will work to improve access to information and advice for service providers, volunteers and community workers.

Better health and social care



Health and social care must work closely together to:

- Provide fast help before issues get worse.
- Offer support close to home so people can live independently.
- Reduce hospital stays and help people return home safely.





An **Integrated Community Care System** is a way of joining up services. So they create better services based on local needs.

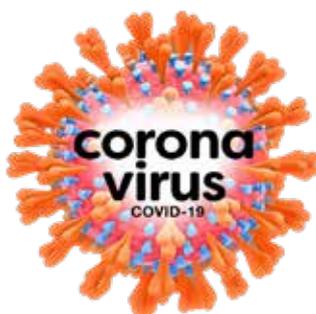
Supporting babies, children and young people



We want to make sure families get the right help when they need it.



Half of all **mental health conditions** start by age 14.



It is believed that 1 in 5 children aged 1 to 7 years old around the world have a **mental health condition**. COVID has made things worse.



The [NYTH/NEST Framework](#) aims to:

- Make expert advice easier to access.
- Help trusted adults support children's **mental health**.
- Make sure children and families get the right help at the right time.



Some babies are at risk of **trauma, abuse**, and neglect. This can affect them for life.



Parents and carers need easy access to expert support to help their babies.



We want to improve training for midwives, health visitors, and family support teams.

Support in education



Schools help with key issues like bullying, exam stress, and social media pressures.



The [Whole School Approach](#) supports **wellbeing**. It helps schools to work better with **mental health** services.



Counselling in schools and **CAMHS-in reach** services make sure children get **mental health** support in schools.



CAMHS stands for **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services**.



It is an NHS service that supports children and young people's **mental health** and **wellbeing**.



Colleges and universities play an important part in supporting young people's **mental health**.



Staff should have access to training to understand **trauma** and provide the right support for students.

Supporting adults and older adults



Having a safe, comfortable, and affordable home is important for **mental health**.



We want to improve:

- support for people living in poor conditions
- services that help people keep their homes
- services that support people at risk of homelessness.



It is important that everyone has the chance and support to take part in activities to support health and happiness.



Having a job, whether paid or voluntary, is important for **mental wellbeing**. We will continue learning from programmes that support people in work, including:

- Out of Work Peer Mentoring Service
- In Work Support Service
- Healthy Working Wales



Supporting people living in rural areas

Living in the countryside has benefits, like a community and nature. But it can also be harder to get services, support, or jobs.

Supporting people with long term health conditions



People with long term illnesses are more likely to have poor **mental health**.



Health problems can cause stress, **anxiety**, loneliness, or trouble sleeping.



We need to support both physical and **mental health** for people with long term health conditions.

Helping people who have both mental health needs and other health conditions



People with other conditions are more likely to have poor **mental health**. Such as:



- **Neurodivergent** people.

Neurodivergent means people whose brains work differently. For example, autism is a **neurodivergent** condition.



- People with learning disabilities.



- People with sensory impairments - when people have problems with seeing, hearing, or touch.



- People living with dementia.

Substance misuse



Many people with **substance misuse** issues also struggle with poor **mental health**.



We need to focus on early help to reduce harm before it gets worse.



We have a [treatment framework](#). A framework is a set of guidelines, procedures, or goals. Our treatment framework sets out how to support people with both **substance misuse** and **mental health** needs.



We will continue to work with partners to help those at risk.

Actions:



- Make it easy to get support and advice early.



- Make sure health and social care services work well together.



- Develop **trauma-informed** services with help from **Traumatic Stress Wales and ACE Hub Wales**.



- Improve training for people helping those with **mental health** needs.



- Use the [NYTH/NEST Framework](#) to support a no **wrong door approach**. This means people get the right support, at the right time in the right way for them. Without having to tell their story lots of times.



- Improve support for parents and babies in the first 1000 days.



- Work with partners to improve services for different needs, like education and **substance misuse**.

4. Mental health support is easy to access and focused on each person's needs. People get the right help without delay

This is about how we make sure:



- **Mental health** services are easy to access.



- Support focusses on each person's needs and wants.



- Services work together to provide the best care.



- People have better experiences when getting help.



It is important for health and social care services to work together. We support plans for a [National Care and Support Service for Wales](#). We will work with the National Office for Care and Support to:



- Provide strong leadership.



- Help deliver national care plans.



- Work with local councils and involve people who use care services.

Our work now

Rules and responsibilities



We will make sure there are rules and clear responsibilities for planning and delivering **mental health** services. This will apply to health boards, local councils, and other organisations providing services.

Strong workforce



We need a caring, well trained and diverse **mental health** workforce.



We will make this happen by following the [Mental Health Workforce Plan](#) from Health Education and Improvement Wales and Social Care Wales.

Digital information



We will work with Digital Health and Care Wales (DHCW) to create a plan for using digital tools in **mental health** care. For example, websites, social media and online platforms.



This plan will focus on 6 key areas:

1. Helping staff learn to use digital tools.
2. Working with businesses and universities to boost Wales' **economy**.
3. Using good data to improve services.
4. Creating a safe system for sharing data.
5. Making online services based on people's needs.
6. Helping everyone use online health services.



We will create tools to measure how people feel about their care.

Buildings



We will review the buildings needed for **mental health** services. From hospitals to community care.



We will make a plan for current and future needs. This plan will help:

- manage buildings better
- make sure they are worth the costs
- and improve care.

We will use available funding to:



- Improve the way we provide care.



- Make sure buildings work for everyone. Including children, adults, disabled people and people with other health needs.

Research



Health and Care Research Wales will support **mental health** research through centres like:

- The **National Centre for Mental Health**
- The **SAIL Databank**



Researchers in Wales are studying **mental health conditions** to improve care and treatment.



Wales is part of the UK's Mental Health Goals programme to find new treatments. We will keep funding research to help people in Wales get better care.

Communication



We will make sure people know how to access support and what to expect.



We will provide clear, and easy to understand information for everyone.



We will offer options for those who cannot or do not want to access services online.

Developing models of care



We want to focus on early help, so people get support before problems get worse.



We want to provide support that helps people **recover**, step by step.



Recovery is the process of getting better.



We want **mental health** services to be **trauma-informed** and support everyone's needs.



We want to use our **resources** wisely, value all workers and make the most of their skills.

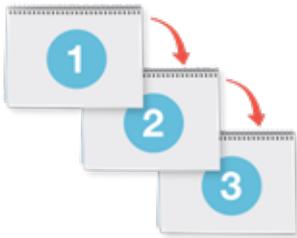
Mental health care with no waiting times



Everyone should be able to get **mental health** care on the same day. People can get help online, by phone, or in person based on what they need.



We want to find **mental health** issues early and offer quick support.



There will be clear ways for people to get support. Including those in **crisis** or with long term health conditions.



A **crisis** is when someone is going through a very difficult situation and needs help quickly.

Working with primary care



Primary care is health services in the community, like your doctor, dentist and optician.



Primary care helps deliver **mental health** support.



We will work with groups to make clear **mental health** pathways. A pathway is a detailed plan for how people access care.



We will work with groups to improve the physical health of people with severe **mental health conditions**.

Working with secondary care services



Secondary care services are specialist health services. Like clinics and hospital-based care. You are usually referred to secondary care services from primary care.



We will create better community **mental health** services that support people with different needs. Including their families and carers.



These services will focus on **recovery**. And provide clear pathways to specialist care when needed.

Moving between services



We will make sure young people moving from children's to adult services get the care and support they need.



We will also improve how people move from adult to older adult services.

People with long term support needs



Some people will need extra care to stay out of hospital. Like home care or supported housing.



We need to make sure people understand their rights to aftercare.



We need to focus on keeping them well at home, especially after leaving hospital.



We will follow the National Framework for care and support. This is part of the [Rebalancing Care and Support Programme](#).

Actions:



- We will set clear standards to make sure **everyone** in Wales has fair access to **mental health** services.



- We will focus on early help to stop **mental health** from getting worse.



- We will provide strong community support to help people **recover** and improve their **wellbeing**.



- We will make sure hospital stays are safe, and high quality for people in **crisis**.



- We will improve physical health care for people with severe mental illness to help them live longer and healthier lives.

What happens next



We know that change will take time. Our plans will be delivered over 10 years.



We will have delivery plans over the 10 years. They will give detailed actions and explain what we need to do and by when.



A special board, led by the **Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing**, will oversee the strategy. A partnership board will make sure everyone is included and will check how the work is going.



We will work in partnership to make sure actions are delivered.



We will check our work every 12 months and adjust plans based on results.



We will make best use of **resources** to deliver the strategy within available funding.

Hard words

Abuse

Abuse is when someone says or does something to hurt you or make you feel bad.

Anxiety

Anxiety is when someone feels worried or stressed a lot of the time.

Crisis

A crisis is when someone is going through a very difficult situation and needs help quickly.

Depression

Depression is a low mood that lasts a long time.

Emotions

Emotions are how you feel about something. And how your body reacts. For example, if you are scared, you may feel your heart beat faster.

Feelings

Feelings are how we experience our emotions and the meaning we give to them. Feelings are different for everyone.

Mental Health

Everyone has mental health. It is about how someone is feeling in their mind. It is about our feelings, thoughts and wellbeing. Wellbeing is about feeling comfortable, healthy, or happy.

Mental health conditions

These affect our feelings, thoughts, and behaviour.

Mental wellbeing

This is when you are happy and comfortable in yourself. You see yourself as being able to cope well.

Neurodivergent

Neurodivergent means people whose brains work differently. For example, autism is a neurodivergent condition.

Poverty

Poverty is when someone does not have enough money to pay for basic things like food or heating.

Public bodies

Public bodies get money from the Government to provide services to the public, like hospitals, schools and social services. But they are separate from the Government itself.

Recovery

Recovery is the process of getting better.

Resources

Resources are useful things we have or can use. For example, buildings, parks, groups, information, money and professionals.

Social prescribing

Social prescribing helps connect people to groups and services in the community. It is a way to help them manage their health and wellbeing.

Substance misuse

Substance misuse means taking drugs or drinking too much alcohol.

Trauma

Trauma is any experience that can cause distress or anxiety. Trauma can be a one-off event, a number of events. Or it could be an ongoing situation.

Wellbeing

Wellbeing is about feeling comfortable, healthy, or happy.