

MPs report progress is unacceptably slow – New mental health taskforce launched.

Progress in ending “institutional bias” against mental health patients in the NHS is unacceptably slow and must be accelerated in the next parliament, a cross-party group of MPs and peers has said. Despite pledges to achieve parity of esteem with physical health, a report by the all-party parliamentary group (APPG) on mental health says that people with mental health problems receive substandard care that would not be tolerated elsewhere in the NHS.

Among its recommendations are a national target for reducing premature deaths among those with mental health problems given that, on average, people who have serious mental health illnesses die 15-20 years earlier than others.

Mental health charities expressed their support but said increased government funding was necessary. Conservative MP James Morris, who chairs the APPG, said: “While there have been some good commitments from government and the NHS to improving mental health services, our inquiry found that progress has been unacceptably slow. *There has been long-term failure over successive governments to give mental health equal priority with physical health; for too long poor quality mental health care has been tolerated in a way that would not be acceptable in physical health care.*”

The report also says that by the end of the next parliament, the Department of Health should commit to increasing research on mental health to ensure it is proportionate to the prevalence and impact of mental health problems.

It also supports a call by mental health charities for every local authority to elect a mental health champion.

Following the publication of this report, NHS England CEO Simon Stevens launched a mental health taskforce at the end of March to develop a new five year national



strategy for mental health, for people of all ages across England. Its principal task is to develop a new five year national strategy for mental health covering services for all ages which will be published in autumn 2015. This will be the first time there has been a NHS England-led strategic approach to designing mental health services for all ages spanning the health and care system.

In order to develop the strategy, the taskforce will explore the variation in access to and quality of mental health services across England; look at outcomes for people who are and aren't able to access services and also consider ways to tackle the prevention of mental health problems. The views of people with mental health problems and their families and carers will be vital to this, as are the views of staff.

The taskforce is chaired by Paul Farmer, Chief Executive of Mind. Members of the taskforce hold responsibility to ensure that there is cross-system commitment and alignment in developing a national strategy and that continued partnership, working effectively and meaningfully, delivers the strategy. People who are passionate about improving mental health services will be able to give their views on what works well, what doesn't and how we can tackle some of the challenges – including the stigma that too frequently prevents people going to get the help they need. Email: england.mhtaskforce@nhs.net

If you would like a copy of the newsletter in large print or you need any help accessing information from the internet - please let us know.

UPDATE! - Outcomes from the Public Consultation about the future location for mental health inpatient facilities in South West London

Following the end of the inpatient consultation featured in the December Carers in Mind newsletter we have received the following letter on the outcomes from the consultation:

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am now writing to you to provide you with an update following the end of consultation and the decision made by NHS England and the five Clinical Commissioning Groups governing bodies (CCGs) in Kingston, Merton, Richmond, Sutton and Wandsworth at public meetings throughout February and March 2015.

Taking into account the feedback from public consultation and the clinical case for change, I am delighted to announce that the plans for a £160 million modernisation of mental health services in south west London have been approved.

These modernisation plans will completely transform mental health services in South West London. They will create two state of the art centres of excellence for mental health services in Springfield University Hospital and Tolworth Hospital, ensuring that vulnerable people in the area have access to some of the best services in the country.

These two centres will be completely paid for with a £160 million investment from the sale of surplus land mainly on the current Springfield University Hospital site. This investment will add to the CCG commitment to invest a further £20 million into community mental health services in the area.

As a direct result of feedback from the consultation, some of the improvements to the proposals the governing bodies have agreed include:

- ★ Keeping adult deaf services on the Springfield site due to the deaf community that has built up in this area around services.

- ★ A CCG commitment to increasing overall mental health spending by £20 million to £157.2 million over the next five years.
- ★ Working with service users and families via two travel steering groups to improve travel plans and access issues.
- ★ Improving facilities for families and carers by providing visitor rooms on every ward and overnight accommodation at Tolworth for people visiting children.
- ★ Adding in flexibility around bed numbers with contingency for a seventh adult mental health ward.
- ★ Ensuring excellent education provision is in place prior to the opening of children's inpatients services in Tolworth.
- ★ Working on plans to use part of Barnes Hospital for outpatient clinical services.

David Bradley, Chief Executive of SWLSTG, said:

"This is a monumental decision and once in a lifetime opportunity to change mental health services for the people of south West London for generations to come. The CCG's commitment to invest further in community mental health services means we will help people get better, closer to home. This will make a very real and lasting difference to the lives of all the people who use our services, and a lasting legacy for the area.

On behalf of the Trust, I would like to thank everyone who took part in the consultation and made this possible."

For more information and the full report go to www.kingstonccg.nhs.uk

Kind regards,

Dr Phil Moore

*South West London Clinical Lead for Mental Health
Kingston Clinical Commissioning Group*



Around the world mental health research and treatment have simply not been a priority. Yet the burden is huge. Current investment does not reflect this incredible cost to society. MQ is here to change that. MQ: Transforming Mental Health is a new charity with big ambitions. We believe that research will ultimately improve quality of life for the billions of people and families affected by mental illness. We aim to raise money and fund exceptional research to close this gap. www.joinmq.org

The Care Act in Richmond



The Care Act 2014 strengthens the rights and recognition of carers in the social care system, and came into effect in April 2015.

London Borough of Richmond upon Thames is committed to supporting carers. With the introduction of the Care Act, the Council has introduced a new carers assessment which looks at the different ways that caring affects your life and for the first time provides a personalised approach to meeting your individual needs to improve and maintain your health and wellbeing.

What is a carer's assessment? A carer's assessment is a discussion between you and a social worker or community support worker which will look at the different ways that caring affects your life and work out how you can carry on doing the things that are important to you and your family. This is a free service provided by the Council and other designated services such as South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust (SWLSTG) which can help you to plan for the future as well as identify short breaks and leisure opportunities to improve your wellbeing. It can also put you in contact with specialist voluntary, health, financial and benefit advice services.

Independent Advocacy If you have substantial difficulty completing the assessment and there is no other appropriate person to help you we will arrange for an independent advocate to assist you.

Eligibility for Adult Social Care Support As a carer, you would be considered eligible for support if: Your needs are caused by providing **necessary** care for an adult. As a result:

- ★ Your health is at risk,
- ★ Or you are **unable to achieve specified outcomes** (such as looking after a child, keeping the home clean or maintaining relationships with family and friends)
- ★ As a consequence, there is or is likely to be **significant impact** on your wellbeing.

Support Plans If you are eligible for support, a support plan will be developed which outlines how your needs will be met. You will be given information and advice and access to services or we may arrange services directly to you or to the

person you care for. If your needs cannot be met in this way we may provide a Direct Payment. In most instances this will be a one off annual payment via a pre-payment card.

If you are not eligible for services, we can still provide information and advice and help you to make contact with other organisations which can support you in your caring role.

How to contact SWLSTG for a carers assessment

If the person you support is under one of the services provided by **SWLSTG** ask your relative or partner's care coordinator, or contact the single point of referral.

Telephone: **020 8513 3200**

How to contact Richmond Council for an assessment

The **Access Team** is the first point of contact for enquiries if the person you support is **not seen** by any services from South West London & St George's Mental Health NHS Trust (SWLSTG). Contact details:

Telephone: **020 8891 7971**

Textphone: **18001 020 8891 7971**

Email: **adultsocialservices@richmond.gov.uk**

Website: **www.richmond.gov.uk/access_team**

**Looking for
Solutions Together**
You are invited to our annual
mental health carers
conference & a big celebration
lunch for Carers Week 2015 –
SAVE THE DATE!!
Friday, June 12th
12 to 3.30pm
The New Pavillion, TW9 4LB



Welcome Agnes and Sid!

Ruth Stroud sadly left Carers in Mind in February - I am sure you will join me in thanking her for all her hard work and dedication over the last 5 years and in wishing her well for the future.

We would like to welcome two new members of staff to the carers team, Agnes Ratajewska who works Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday as our new carers support worker (to the left) and Sid Li (to the right) who has joined us as an administrator for two half days a week.



Carers in Mind Funding Update

A huge thank you to everyone who came along to and/or supported our 3rd fundraising Quiz Night on April 24th. So far all the feedback we've had has been very positive with everybody having had a good night - even if they didn't win - and we raised an amazing £830 during the night! Thank you.

We have received the good news that the Carers in Mind project is going to be funded until August 2016. However, whilst our funding has not been cut, it has also not increased during last few years. The same funding now needs to provide a service for more than 400 carers. Therefore, we will be trying to find ways of reducing some of our costs without impacting on the service we provide.

Following discussions with the carers from our Breaks and Activities Group (BAG) we will be introducing voluntary donations for some of our social activities. **It is very important to note that there is no expectation for carers to pay to access our activities**, but if you would like to help us to cover some of our costs for the social activities this would be much appreciated. The carers members of BAG felt we should have a suggested donation for those who did want to contribute, so we will be introducing this during the year.

We can also save some costs on postage and printing for our Newsletter and Dates for your Diary if there are carers who would be happy to receive these by email. We will continue to post them to you if this is important for you - but if you are happy with an electronic version please let us know.

RB Mind also has a new fundraiser in post called Emma Reeves who has some great ideas and projects for raising money for the organisation. If anyone would be interested in supporting Emma's work please let me know and I will put you in touch with her or you can contact her directly:

Emma.Reeves@rbmind.org

FOUR DAYS; THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND WHO EXPERIENCE MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES; A SNAPSHOT NEVER SEEN BEFORE

The everyday life of people with mental health difficulties has tended to remain hidden. There's been combination of prejudice, shame, stigma and sometimes, most damagingly, a lack of interest on the part of professionals and policy makers. We have a large literature around clinical interactions with people who have or do experience mental health difficulties but very little around what it actually means to live with a mental health difficulty.

'*A Day in the Life*' is doing is something very simple: they're asking people with mental health difficulties in England to share four days in the life via a website. So that'll be lots of people with mental health difficulties across England all blogging about the same day: once in November, once in February, once in May, once in August.

Everyone will be asked to share up to 700 words about the same four days in the year, one each season; building a library of personal stories that answer the question: what things make life with a mental health difficulty worth living and what things make it more difficult? Together the four days in the lives of people with mental health difficulties will give a snapshot of what it's like to be a person with mental health difficulties in England in the 21st Century.

For families and friends it can be difficult to know what your relative, partner or friend may be thinking and feeling - this website gives some really good insights that you may find really enlightening.

<http://dayinthelifemh.org.uk/>