



Consultation on the mental health workforce plan for health and social care

Theme 1 – Workforce Supply and Shape

Do you support the suggested actions under Theme 1?

1. Increase the annual commissioning of education and training numbers related to the specialist mental health workforce for the next three years

Yes

2. Undertake scenario planning to inform the shape of the specialist mental health workforce including nursing, pharmacy, psychiatry, social work, psychological therapies and AHPs for the next 10 years

Yes

3. Ensure that data quality improvement projects under the workforce strategy address the needs of the mental health workforce

Yes

4. Review workforce planning tools and resources being developed under the workforce strategy implementation to ensure they are fit for mental health purposes

Yes

5. Develop and implement plans to ensure that there is an appropriate supply of trained professionals to undertake new and existing legal roles

Yes

6. Commission a programme of work to identify and define impactful volunteering roles which will help to inform workforce planning, education and training

Yes

7. Develop and implement a specialist mental health Allied Health Professional (AHP) model as a pathfinder for rollout across Wales.

Yes

Please explain your response

The Council of Deans of Health supports strategic workforce planning for the mental health workforce. It is important that universities are involved in workforce planning, and that this planning is evidence informed, outcome focused, and innovative. The Council supports medium to long term planning, to increase the sustainability of the workforce. Changes in numbers and courses take a long time to plan, so it is important to make early decisions around programmes and staff resource. It is important that workforce planning includes the academic workforce, which is critically important to the health and social care workforce.

Theme 2 - An Engaged, Motivated and Healthy Workforce

Do you support the suggested actions under Theme 2?

8. Commission a mental health workforce survey across health and social care, to assess staff engagement, experience and wellbeing

Yes

9. Establish a national Professional Support Unit for the mental health workforce

Yes

10. Identify, train and support a network of mentors which will be hosted on 'Gwella' to provide consistent and agreed standards for mental health staff mentoring

Yes

11. Use best practice and evidence to establish standards for supervision across the wider mental health team

Yes

12. Building on the Social Care Wales Team Manager Approach, implement an accredited team manager development programme across mental health services

Yes

Please explain your response

To ensure an engaged, motivated and healthy workforce, it is important to provide student mental wellbeing support on placement. Temporary relocation for placement has been identified as a risk factor for mental ill health in students, and it is important that students are supported when away from their university. There should also be an increased focus on support throughout preceptorship; it is especially important for newly qualified staff to feel supported in the work environment. It is important to ensure both students and academic staff are part of wellbeing initiatives and interventions.

Theme 3 - Attraction and Recruitment

Do you support the suggested actions under Theme 3?

13. Develop a targeted attraction campaign programme for the mental health workforce, supported by Train Work Live and We Care Wales

Yes

14. Use the Careersville platform to promote mental health careers across health and social care through a marketing campaign aimed at schools and colleges

Yes

15. Implement recommendations relating to careers pathways for the mental health workforce, including opportunities relating to research, academic, leadership and improvement as described in the Centre for Mental Health's Future of the mental health workforce report

Yes

16. Develop guides, tools and resources which help managers to facilitate improved work-life balance and increase staff retention across health and social care

Yes

Please explain your response

The Council is supportive of recruitment programmes. It is important to promote different roles within the workforce and across professions, including academic and research positions alongside joint roles. The Council is especially supportive of point 15. Universities would be keen to collaborate with HEIW in this area.

Theme 4 - Seamless Workforce Models

Do you support the suggested actions under Theme 4?

17. Develop and roll out mental health literacy training for the health and care workforce, to provide more seamless support for physical and mental health

Yes

18. Building on the work developed by Health Education England (HEE) design an All-Wales resource for implementation of new, expanded and extended roles into mental health multi-disciplinary teams

Yes

19. Initiate a project working with arts organisations to capture the experience of people with lived experience to inform the development of seamless care

Yes

20. Increase the capacity of community and primary care teams to support mental health services

Yes

Please explain your response

It is important to link practice and university roles; a seamless workforce model would ensure it is easy to transition and work in both areas. This is important across health and social care.

Theme 5 - Building a Digitally Ready Workforce

Do you support the suggested actions under Theme 5?

21. Assess current digital capability in the mental health workforce, against the national digital capability framework to inform training needs

Yes

22. Create a network of digital champion roles to influence and lead digital workforce transformation (to be discussed with Digital Health Care Wales and other partners)

Yes

Please explain your response

The Council supports these areas. It is important to be innovative within the workforce and capitalise on recent developments in digital innovation.

Theme 6 - Excellent Education and Learning

Do you support the suggested actions under Theme 6?

23. Work with partners to develop proposals to redesign education and training programmes for psychiatry

N/A

24. Review quality frameworks for commissioned education and training programmes relating to mental health

Yes

25. Consider how pre-qualifying training for social workers can be adapted to encourage greater specialism and take up in mental health, alongside how the new post qualifying framework can be developed to include opportunities for newly qualified and experienced social Workers in mental health specialisms

N/A

26. Commission professional bodies to assess interprofessional education and training opportunities for the specialist mental health workforce

Yes

27. Commission evidence-based, multiprofessional education and training frameworks in priority and specialist areas

Yes

28. Establish a national investment fund for post-qualifying education for the mental health workforce

Yes

29. Provide targeted national continuing professional development programmes to support priority areas across the mental health workforce

Yes

30. Building on Social Care Wales Qualification Framework, develop a mental health support worker education framework

N/A

Please explain your response

Engaging with universities on these issues is essential. Universities can bring a range of skills including data, evidence, and research to inform decisions. Developments in this area must link to workforce needs. It is also important to capitalise on innovation that universities have access to. This should be done in partnership with universities and should be evidence informed.

The Council is supportive of interprofessional agendas and multidisciplinary teams. Universities must be involved in this. It is also important to work with both pre- and post-registration programmes around higher-level programmes such as master's courses. CPD is also important to promote a highly skilled workforce.

Theme 7 - Leadership and Succession

Do you support the suggested actions under Theme 7?

31. Develop and implement an inclusive and targeted talent management pipeline for mental health leadership roles at organisational level, recognising the unique context and challenges of mental health services

Yes

32. Ringfence places for mental health clinicians as part of the wider national multiprofessional clinical leadership programme

Yes

33. Establish a mental health leaders' network on Gwella, to improve access to the compassionate and collective tools and resources for all staff.

Yes

Please explain your response

The Council welcomes investment and support to leadership development. HEIW must ensure this happens across professions and ensure strategic and senior involvement in organisations across both

health and social care. It is important to cover different types of roles too; alongside practice and acute care, social care and research roles should be considered. It is also important to ensure support for minoritized groups to promote leadership for underrepresented groups.

General questions

Do you think there are any gaps in the suggested actions?

No

If 'yes', please highlight what else should be included, and why this matters to you

N/A

What advice do you have on how we should implement these actions?

It is important to include universities in these decisions, and work with all partners and stakeholders early on to implement this. HEIW must be inclusive in how decisions are made. A diverse range of views must be considered, including minoritized communities but also students, academics, and the full range of healthcare professions.

Do you have any examples of different ways of working, best practice or case studies that would help inform these actions and the costings? (Please provide a brief overview which may include hyperlinks, and your contact details. Alternatively you may wish to email us the information via the HEIW mental health email: HEIW.MentalHealth@wales.nhs.uk (<mailto:HEIW.MentalHealth@wales.nhs.uk>))

CoDH Wales would be happy to work with and provide case studies related to higher education.

Do you feel the proposals set out within this consultation provide equity and accessibility to all?

Yes

Do you have any further comments?

The Council of Deans of Health welcomes the comprehensive and appropriately ambitious scope of this consultation, which recognises the vital importance of mental health both at population and workforce levels.

Accordingly, we would also welcome the development of a strategic plan that coherently and sequentially sets out the short-, medium-, and long-term priorities that are required to realise the ambition that is implicit within the consultation. Welsh universities offering healthcare courses welcome the opportunity to be involved on an ongoing basis in multiple elements of this work.

For more information contact:

Amelia Canning, Policy Officer, amelia.canning@cod-health.ac.uk