

# The Welsh Government's 'Together for Mental Health' delivery plan 2019 to 2022

## Response from the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, August 2019

This is a response to the Welsh Government consultation of the 'Together for Mental Health 2019 – 2022' delivery plan at: <https://gov.wales/together-mental-health-delivery-plan-2019-2022>



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## Consultation Response Form

Your name: Ryan Stokes

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**Question 1:** The delivery plan continues to place a strong emphasis on improving mental health and well-being across all ages, would you agree with this approach?

Yes		
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**Question 2:** Could you please provide any further commentary on where you feel the approach works well or where alternative emphasis is required?

HEFCW's consultation response takes account of our Welsh Government Sponsored body role as an employer and as the regulator and funder of regulated higher education institutions in Wales.

We welcome the new delivery plan. The draft plan has an educational focus on the school system, but currently does not include post-16 education provision which encompasses higher education, nor does it consider issues of transition following post- compulsory school levels. We agree that working with school children and early years learning supports a preventative agenda. We suggest a broader focus is required to ensure the inclusion of mental health and well-being support in post-16 learning which would encompass significantly more learners and contribute to a whole system approach to well-being and health.

We recognise that as pre-16 support for well-being and health is improved, more learners will progress to and through higher education. Our institutions are part of a wider education system that will support students to achieve their full potential in and beyond higher education. In 2019, HEFCW published for consultation a draft [Well-being and Health in HE Policy Statement, as well as a new collection of case studies](#) of well-being and health practice in higher education. We consider that a whole system approach, which includes schools, colleges, the third sector and the health and social care sector could contribute effectively to the successful delivery of the Welsh Government's plan.

**Question 9:** In your view, does the proposed Delivery Plan link well with other relevant policy and service areas?

	Partly	
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**Question 10:** Please can you provide further commentary on where you consider the Delivery Plan to link well with other policy and service areas, and tell us how you think the Plan could link better with other areas?

**Legislation**

The plan could specifically reference and relate actions to the Equality Act 2010 and Violence against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015.

**Policy**

The plan could reference the Welsh Government's Nation of Sanctuary – Refugee and Asylum Seeker Plan (January 2019) as it includes specific health and well-being actions.

**Question 13:** Please also explain how you believe the proposed delivery plan could be changed so as to:

- have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language,
- have no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

In 2019, HEFCW consulted on its draft Well-being and Health Policy Statement. One of the key findings was the inconsistency of support and resources through the medium of Welsh for higher education institutions' staff and students. Respondents encouraged further provision of services and support relating to health and well-being through the medium of Welsh to be delivered to the same timescale and standard as English medium services. The delivery plan may want to set out its commitments to the Welsh language in the same way. An action within *Together for Mental Health* is for the Welsh Government to work with health boards to develop their capacity and capability to improve Welsh language provision in mental health services. We suggest that the development of the delivery plan should consider expanding this action to include the sharing of learning and resources across other sectors, as appropriate.

**Question 14:** Do you think the actions contained within the delivery plan will provide a positive impact for people with the following protected characteristics:-

- Disability
- Race

- Gender and gender reassignment
- Age
- Religion and belief and non-belief
- Sexual orientation
- Human Rights
- Children and young people

	Partly	
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**Question 15:** Please can you provide further information as to how the actions will provide a positive impact for people with protected characteristics or where you consider improvements could be made?

<p>Within the priority area defined as vulnerable groups, individuals with protected characteristics should be included. It would be helpful to include an annex or link to the equality impact assessment that provides the data that supports the prioritising of vulnerable groups.</p>
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**Question 16:** We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them:

Please enter here:

n/a
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Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here:

