

National Assembly for Wales

Children, Young People and Education Committee

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Inquiry into Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

Evidence from : Estyn

The availability of early intervention services for children and adolescents with mental health problems

Access to community specialist CAMHS at tier 2 and above for children and adolescents with mental health problems, including access of psychological therapies

The extent to which CAMHS are embedded within broader health and social care services

Whether CAMHS is given sufficient priority within broader mental health and social care services, including the allocation of resources to CAMHS

Whether there is sufficient regional variation in access to CAMHS across Wales

The effectiveness of the arrangements for children and young people with mental health problems who need emergency services

The extent to which the current provision of CAMHS is promoting safeguarding, children's right and the engagement of children and young people

Any other key issues identified by stakeholders

Estyn evidence

Estyn's 2010 common inspection framework gives a prominent place to the inspection of learner wellbeing, including aspects of healthy living. Healthy living includes:

- healthy eating and drinking;
- physical exercise;
- good mental and emotional well-being;
- responsible sexual behaviour;
- responsible attitudes and behaviours in relation to substance use and misuse;
- safety;
- hygiene; and
- environment-related issues.

We report on these issues in school inspection reports under Key Question 1 (Outcomes) aspect 1.2 Wellbeing and under Key Question 2 (Provision) aspect 2.3 Care Support and Guidance.

Estyn have not undertaken a focused review of the availability of mental health services in schools since the joint work undertaken with CSSIW, HIW and WAO in November 2009. We are therefore unable to provide detailed responses to this inquiry. However, we are currently undertaking a survey of learner support services as part of our remit advice to Welsh Government. The survey report will be published in summer 2014. In the survey, we look at the provision of specialist personal support to overcome barriers to learning. Particular issues, relevant to this inquiry, are pupils' access to a wide range of information and how well schools liaise with specialist agencies, such as the police, health, psychological, counselling and social services. Early findings suggest that many schools take great care of pupils who face barriers to learning due to home circumstances, physical and mental health problems and of those at risk of bullying or harm. Many schools have good arrangements to provide personal support to pupils. They work well with outside agencies to provide interventions and support programmes. Schools value the support of outside agencies and it is unlikely that personal support services would be as effective without the expertise and interventions these agencies make possible. Schools express concern about the difficulty of accessing specialist support and the contraction of such support in the current economic climate.