

PE1438/G

NHS Fife Response to Public Petitions Committee Petition PE1438

CONSIDERATION OF PETITION PE1438

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to provide improved mental health services for those people in hospital and that have been discharged after having a mental health problem, and to actively stop the stigma of mental ill-health to ensure that people with mental health problems do not feel ashamed.

Our response

NHS Fife welcomes the opportunity to comment on this public petition.

The petition reflects some fundamental issues in relation to mental health care which are recognised both in the national strategy and in local efforts to improve care and services. We acknowledge fully the aims and sentiments of the petition, which we aim to capture in the Fife joint strategy for mental health which is currently being developed.

Fife mental health improvement programme

A comprehensive programme of mental health improvement work is identified in "*Getting Better in Fife*", the recently published NHS Fife healthcare improvement plan 2012-2017. The mental health section describes a range of key workstreams and activity being undertaken to improve mental health services, with particular focus on delivering safe and accessible mental health services. The overarching aim is to improve the mental health of the people of Fife and deliver prompt, safe and effective treatment for those with mental illness. We are focussing on a range of work designed to support the key themes and areas of change identified in the recently published *Mental Health Strategy for Scotland* and on specific areas of work identified locally as essential for the effective, efficient and sustainable delivery of current and future services.

In more detail, the improvement programme aims to:

Continue the improvements made in ensuring faster access to specialist services for children and young people with mental health problems.

Improve the care and treatment options for those with common mental health problems.

Work in conjunction with Social Work and other partners to develop the range of community care settings and options available for those with a severe and enduring mental illness, and so reduce the reliance on hospital care.

Support initiatives to improve the physical health of those with a mental illness and ensure consistent and effective standards of physical healthcare and treatment in psychiatric settings.

Ensure that inpatient care and treatment is person-centred, safe and effective, and delivered in therapeutic environments appropriate to the patients' needs.

Reduce the length of stay in admission wards and maintain the significant reduction in readmissions through the development and redesign of community services when opportunities arise and through effective crisis response.

Continue the development and delivery of services which ensure early diagnosis, treatment and support for those with dementia.

Maintain prompt access to services for those with alcohol and drug problems and, in collaboration with partner agencies, ensure the provision of effective interventions and support.

Provide appropriate inpatient and community services for those with forensic mental health needs.

Improve the provision of psychiatric liaison services to the general hospitals and review other areas of unmet and emerging need.

Examples of specific workstreams

Early intervention for children and young people with mental health problems and developmental disorders is essential to build resilience and prevent problems in later life. We will continue the significant improvements made in pursuit of the **CAMHS Waiting Time HEAT Target** through service redesign with specific focus on areas with high demand.

Improving the access to a range of 'talking therapies' for people with common mental health problems is a key element of developing better care and treatment options. We are working towards achieving the **Psychological Therapies HEAT Target** by focusing on the referral, assessment and treatment arrangements across mental health and psychology services, and the identification of service gaps and the additional training necessary to improve capacity and capability. This will lead to the more efficient use of existing resources and the development of the required skills to provide matched therapies for people requiring a psychological intervention, so reducing waiting times and preventing unnecessary treatments or deteriorating health.

The **Rehabilitation Redesign Programme** is a collaborative project with Social Work designed to develop and provide community care options for people with severe and enduring mental illness currently resident in Stratheden hospital. The programme will ensure patients have the opportunity to maximise their own potential and, with the proper type and level of support, be able to live in a community setting appropriate to their own needs.

The physical health of people with mental health problems is a priority for the Scottish Government. Through the development of core care pathways,

clinical practice protocols and the skills development of staff we will improve the quality and consistency of physical healthcare and the management of common medical conditions in psychiatric settings. In both hospital and community settings we will support people to make better lifestyle choices and so improve their quality of life and general health.

The **Scottish Patient Safety Programme-Mental Health** alongside *Releasing Time to Care* and the AHP *Realising Potential* strategy are key programmes aimed at improving person-centred, safe and effective care and treatment for people with mental health problems, and supporting a recovery based approach. The initial focus on adult acute inpatient care will improve the patient experience by increasing staff engagement with patients and reducing the occurrence of incidents, accidents and adverse events, so reducing the possibility of harm being experienced by individuals in receipt of care from mental health services.

The provision of therapeutic facilities and environments which offer privacy and maintain dignity is an essential aspect of good patient care. We continue to seek improvements in the quality of the mental health estate with the initial focus on developing a proposal for the re-provision of our Intensive Psychiatric Care Unit.

Prompt access to specialist services for those with alcohol and drug problems is vital in reducing harm to individuals and their families. We will maintain the delivery of services in line with the **Drug and Alcohol Waiting Time** and the **Alcohol Brief Interventions HEAT Targets** in collaboration with partner agencies to improve the treatment options for people, reduce harm and ensure equity of access across Fife.

We are developing a **Forensic Low Secure** inpatient unit on the Stratheden hospital site. This development will ensure NHS Fife better meets its responsibilities for the care and supervision of patients with forensic mental health needs. It will enable Fife patients to be cared for in a local facility, improving the patient experience and service efficiency.

Other initiatives

NHS Fife mental health services are engaged in a number of innovative projects with third sector partners aimed at improving resilience, confidence, employability and reducing stigma. As an example, the “*Employ Your Mind*” project is a five year, lottery funded project in partnership with Fife Employability Access Trust (FEAT) which offers empowerment training, practical skills, peer support, formal learning opportunities, volunteering and work experience.
