

PE1596/AA

Future Pathways submission of 7 October 2019

At the meeting of the Petitions Committee on 5 September the Committee took evidence from Janine Rennie and David Scott of Wellbeing Scotland. This letter provides response on the points raised during the oral evidence session with Wellbeing Scotland as part of the PE1596 Petition and follows our previous submission on 16 August 2019.

A number of statements were made regarding Future Pathways as a “*new and hitherto untried organisation*” and “*apparent lack of understanding of complex trauma*” and alleging that Future Pathways has “*asked to breach client confidentiality*” and further alleging that Wellbeing Scotland were ethical in their activities and that numerous other unnamed voluntary and charitable organisations were not. The Future Pathways Alliance Leadership Team refutes these allegations and observes that such statements are not conducive to developing a strong working relationship. We address key issues below.

Data Sharing

There have been ongoing issues regarding the sharing of necessary contractual information. Future Pathways is the commissioning body for support for survivors of in care abuse and neglect and is entrusted with public funds for this purpose. Therefore, Future Pathways must ensure funds are used to the full benefit of survivors, to prevent duplication of services and ensure properly focused use of the resource, in a safe and effective manner. Clearly in order to do so, Future Pathways must obtain data from partners it provides funds to and it is normal practice for this to be agreed on a contractual basis. All Future Pathways data sharing agreements are consistent with General Data Protection Regulation requirements and aligned with best practice from partners such as the National Health Service (NHS). As stated before, all other contracted partners have been happy to sign up to these agreements. These are all established organisations who will be acutely aware of their data protection and confidentiality duties and accountable to a range of regulators to ensure they are complying with these. This currently totals 45 partner organisations.

We have tried hard to clarify why Wellbeing Scotland’s perception of appropriate and ethical data sharing appears to be different to the rest of the sector. We hope the contract which is currently being negotiated will finally resolve this issue.

Future Pathways experience and credibility

In terms of the questioning of Future Pathways experience and knowledge of the issues regarding to support to survivors, we would note the following. Future Pathways is a partnership of four organisations with longstanding experience and expertise in the areas of trauma, mental health and wellbeing. Health in Mind has been working in the area of mental health since 1982 and following publication of our first research ‘Beyond Trauma’ which was undertaken by Dr Sarah Nelson, in the area of childhood abuse and trauma since 2001. Penumbra has been working in the area of mental health and wellbeing for over 30 years and is a registered support provider. The Mental Health Foundation bring significant expertise in the area of public mental health and community based participatory research. Their knowledge,

informed by rigorous research and practical based study, has been influencing policy, generating research and challenging mental health inequalities for 70 years.

The Glasgow Psychological Trauma Service (the Anchor) is a team within NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. NHS GG&C has been at the forefront of clinical service delivery, research, teaching, training, consultation and strategy work regarding Complex PTSD for decades. Their standing and leadership amongst the worldwide and UK trauma community is both respected and immutable.

There is no expectation that clients of Future Pathways must have an assessment at Glasgow Psychological Trauma Service prior to being able to access mental health or counselling supports. The service has already clarified this point and feel that raising it again is creating myths around what the service offers; it is factually untrue. With regard to the comments regarding the evidence base for Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), as a tertiary level mental health service the Glasgow Psychological Trauma Service is well placed to understand and interpret the evidence-base regarding Complex PTSD. As clinical psychologists, with training in psychological theories, clinical practice and research methods their staff members credibility in this area is beyond dispute. The Glasgow Psychological Trauma Service feels that the comments raised at the face-to-face meeting and in the petition regarding the evidence base for Complex PTSD show a misunderstanding of the evidence base.

Funding to Wellbeing Scotland to date

People supported by Wellbeing Scotland were included at each stage of the consultation about the support Fund with additional consultation after the design of the support Fund was produced. In May 2017, the Deputy First Minister affirmed that Future Pathways would be funded to deliver in care survivor work, hosting a model that offered both assurance and a way to scrutinise spend.

A commitment was made that the support which 134 people were receiving from Wellbeing Scotland as at 30 October 2016 would continue without disruption as they communicated that they did not wish their support arrangements to change.

This commitment has been met and extended to encompass all indirect referrals received by Wellbeing Scotland in keeping with our intention of ensuring availability of support. This commitment has seen Future Pathways commit funding to Wellbeing Scotland totalling £870,000 since November 2016.

Moving forward

Future Pathways has a strong wish to find a way to work together with Wellbeing Scotland on a clear contractual basis so that people can find and continue to access the supports they need. Agreeing such a contract would be a helpful further resource to allow survivors to access as wide a range of options as possible. Future Pathways wishes to move beyond the issues which are a barrier to this. The challenges we have faced in agreeing a contractual relationship are a

time consuming drain on the resources and capacity of both organisations which is not in the interests of survivors.

Future Pathways has also as part of our due diligence asked for clarifications with regard to Wellbeing Scotland officers associations with the Fresh Start Foundation. This organisation expresses views with regard to survivor issues which Future Pathways alliance partners feel are not consistent with the values and approach of the alliance. We look forward to receiving such clarifications.

A draft contract has been shared that responds to concerns raised and seeks to identify a way toward a stable, contractual relationship. We anticipate a response from Wellbeing Scotland in coming weeks.

Our hope remains that a new way forward can be identified that respects the expertise and know-how of both Future Pathways and Wellbeing Scotland, thereby ensuring that people may access the fullest range of supports.