

**DATGANIAD I'R WASG
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***'Inconsistencies found in how care and support is being
provided by Community Mental Health Teams across Wales' say
Inspectorates***

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) and Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) today publish their Joint Thematic Review of Community Mental Health Teams and have made 23 recommendations for improvement.

This review is primarily a response to a report published by HIW in March 2016: *Independent External Reviews of Homicides – An Evaluation of Reviews Undertaken by HIW since 2007*. Given the integrated nature of community mental health services, it was agreed that the review would be carried out jointly with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW).

Published on Thursday 7 February 2019, this review brings together the key themes to have emerged from our joint-inspections of Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTs) across Wales, as well as engagement with people who use services, carers, and the third sector.

The key themes to emerge from this review are:

- Access to Services
- Care Planning
- Delivery of Safe and Effective Care
- Governance

In relation these themes we found disparity and variability in the standards, consistency and availability of treatment, care and support provided by Community Mental Health Teams across Wales.

Key findings include:

- There is a lack of clarity regarding how people access CMHTs, with links between General Practice (GPs) and CMHTs needing to be strengthened. In some areas there is a lack of knowledge of the range of services available for people to be referred to.
- We are concerned about the ability of people experiencing mental health crisis to access urgent support. Some service users have difficulty accessing services out of hours or have to attend A&E departments. A significant number of people did not know who to contact out of hours.
- Service users or families are not being fully involved in developing care and treatment plans.
- Whilst CMHTs are meeting targets for the completion of assessments and/or care plans, we have found that this does not always mean that the quality of documentation is good
- There are significant challenges for people who need to access psychology or therapeutic services with long waiting times in Wales; up to 24 months in some areas.
- In some areas there are problems in accessing some third sector or other support services, which means that the invaluable support those services can offer is not being used fully or effectively.
- There is much work being undertaken on the transformation of services across Wales, which is positive. However, focus needs to be maintained on ensuring service users continue to receive appropriate care whilst wider changes are being made.
- Information technology and universal access to patient/service user records is a considerable problem across CMHTs with health and social care service systems not working together properly.
- The working environments of CMHTs need improvement with some clinical areas is not fit for purpose.

HIW Chief Executive Dr Kate Chamberlain said: “This joint review has highlighted inconsistency in how care and support is being provided by Community Mental Health Teams across Wales.

“Whilst we have noted the commitment of those working within these services to provide the best care they can, the challenge remains to ensure that people living with mental illness receive equitable care wherever they live.

“We hope that this review will promote improvement, and that the findings and recommendations are carefully considered by Welsh Government, Health Boards and Local Authorities.”

CIW Chief Inspector Gillian Baranski said: “Ensuring people with mental health needs, and their carers, receive seamless care and support from Community Mental Health Teams is essential. This review has highlighted areas where joint working between health boards and local authorities is working well and has also identified areas where joint working needs to improve to ensure people achieve positive outcomes”

ENDS

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Notes to Editors

- Healthcare Inspectorate Wales is the independent inspectorate and regulator of healthcare in Wales. More details can be found on our website: www.hiw.org.uk
- Care Inspectorate Wales is the independent inspectorate and regulator of social care services in Wales. More details can be found on our website www.careinspectorate.wales
- This special review will be published on our website at 00.01 Thursday 7 February 2019.