

Mental health charities welcome shake up of youth mental health care

Tuesday 17 March, 2015

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Mental health charities have today welcomed the proposals outlined by the children's mental health taskforce to radically overhaul children and young people's mental health services.

Mark Winstanley, CEO of Rethink Mental Illness said: "We welcome this report's recognition of the need for radical improvements to mental health care for young people, and these proposals should be put into action as a matter of urgency.

"This has to be a top priority for whoever forms the next Government. The challenge and opportunity is clear – urgent reform and investment is needed in every part of the mental health system, otherwise people with mental illness will continue to get a raw deal."

Mind's Chief Executive Paul Farmer said: "Getting the right services and support first time can make a huge difference to the lives of young people with mental health problems. Conversely, we know that failure to proactively support young people means they can fall through the cracks with devastating consequences felt throughout their adult life.

"The creation of more dynamic services that make the most of technology, more investment in early intervention services and targeted mental health campaigns will all have a valuable impact. We also welcome the much needed improvements in supporting young people as they transition from children's services to adult services. This should be a seamless experience not a traumatic one.

"Approximately 50 per cent of lifetime cases of diagnosable mental illnesses begin by age 14 so these proposals have potential to go a long way in building a better future for many young people."

Sue Baker, Director of Time to Change, said: "We welcome the focus on tackling stigma and improving attitudes in the plans announced by government today. One in 10 young people – three children in every classroom - will experience a mental health problem and it's important that they are able to seek support without fear or prejudice.

"We've seen significant improvements in adult attitudes towards mental health and more open conversations, and we've seen positive results from our current work with young people. However, we need more of a focus in order to shift the thinking and behaviour of all children, young people and their parents on a national scale."

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