

Rethink Mental Illness response to Autumn Statement

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The charity Rethink Mental Illness has welcomed the Government's promise of an extra £2bn funding for the NHS, and says mental health must be a top priority in how that money is spent.

Responding to the Chancellor's Autumn statement today, Mark Winstanley, CEO of Rethink Mental Illness said:

"This is a golden opportunity for the NHS to address the historic underinvestment in mental health care. Mental illness accounts for 23% of the national impact of ill-health, but currently receives only 13% of the NHS budget.

"We're delighted that today's statement confirms that the NHS Mandate will commit to equally valuing people's mental and physical health, but now we urgently need to see that reflected in how funding is spent across the NHS. Everyone should be able to get good quality care for both their mental and physical health, no matter where they live or what their circumstances are. But that will only be possible if the right services are in place and people can access them quickly.

"The Chancellor and Prime Minister say this new funding will go directly to 'frontline' NHS care. That should mean, for example, making sure that people with severe mental illness get swift access to potentially life-changing talking therapies. It should also mean ensuring people can access treatment at the earliest possible opportunity, to improve their chances of recovering.

"As George Osborne says that you can't have a strong NHS without a strong economy. Given that one in four of us are affected by mental illness, we can't have a strong economy without making everyone's mental health an absolute top priority."

ENDS

For more information or to set up an interview, please contact Brian Semple, News and Media Manager for Rethink Mental Illness, on 0207 840 3043 or brian.semple@rethink.org

Notes to editors

Rethink Mental Illness is a charity that believes a better life is possible for millions of people affected by mental illness.

For over 40 years we have brought people together to support each other. We run services and support groups that change people's lives and challenge attitudes about mental illness.

We directly support almost 60,000 people every year across England to get through crises, to live independently and to realise they are not alone.

We give information and advice to 500,000 more and we change policy for millions.

For more information go to www.rethink.org

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