

T: 0300 244 4000
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Lewis Macdonald MSP
Convener
Health and Sport Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP
By email: HealthandSport@parliament.scot

26 November 2019

Dear Lewis,

PUBLICATION OF MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY 2017-27: SECOND ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

I am writing to make the committee aware of the publication of the Mental Health Strategy 2017-27: Second Annual Progress Report. The report, which has been published today, can be found at the following web link:

<https://www.gov.scot/ISBN/9781839603662/>

When we published our ten year Mental Health Strategy in 2017, we committed to produce an annual report to update Parliament, and the public, on our progress. The 2019 report covers not just the 40 specific commitments we made in the Strategy, but also highlights the myriad work that is taking place across the country to fulfil the Strategy's ambitions and central vision: of a Scotland where people can get the right help at the right time, expect recovery, and fully enjoy their rights, free from discrimination and stigma.

The report also provides an update on how we are taking forward the recommendations made by the Youth Commission on Mental Health Services, the recommendations contained within the Audit of Rejected Referrals to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), and our mental health commitments in the 2018 Programme for Government. All of this work builds on the Strategy's original set of commitments, working towards our aim to achieve parity between mental and physical health.

Over the last two and a half years, we have worked closely at a local and national level to ensure that those 40 actions are achieved. I am pleased that we have already completed 19 actions, with the remainder in progress.

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I am also pleased to advise that we will later today announce the agreement with Local Authorities on the distribution model for the £60 million package of funding to support the access to mental health counsellors in every secondary school in Scotland. The commitment is being delivered in partnership with Local Authorities who are responsible for the recruitment of counsellors and how the service will operate within schools. Our investment in counselling through schools will enable children and young people to be supported more efficiently and effectively with issues affecting their mental health and wellbeing.

I hope you have found this update useful, and I am happy to provide further updates on individual actions if the Committee would find this useful.

Clare Haughey

Clare Haughey

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St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
www.gov.scot



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