Mental health support for young people in Scotland

Call for Evidence

Introduction

The Public Petitions Committee has launched an inquiry into how young people access mental health services and treatments in Scotland. The focus of the inquiry is to understand and suggest improvements on how young people feeling low and/or anxious can access help, particularly for the first time.

Background

This inquiry relates to public petition PE1627 which is calling for the Scottish Government to provide for consultation with and consent from a parent or guardian before prescribing medication to treat mental ill health if the patient is under 18 years old.

The Committee has already gathered a wide range of evidence on the action called for in the petition. A common theme from this evidence is that significant improvements are needed to help young people who require some support, but who do not necessarily have a mental health disorder, access the right services.

What we’d like to know and who we’d like to hear from

The Committee is keen to explore and understand how signposting young people to the right support currently operates, with a focus on the experiences of young people under the age of 18 years old, seeking help for the first time.

A diagram has been developed (see the end of this document) which maps the different ways a young person might access the support they need.

The Committee seeks your views on this diagram in terms of:

- What support would you be most likely to use first?
- What needs to change or improve?
- Is there anything that has been missed?
The Committee invites all interested individuals and organisations to submit written views on its inquiry.

The Committee is particularly interested to hear from young people either with or without experience of mental ill health on the following areas —

- If you’re feeling low and/or anxious, who would you ask for help and why?
- Do you know the different ways you can get help for your low mood and/or anxiety?
- Have you ever been referred to CAMHS, but rejected from accessing these services? If so, were you directed to other kinds of support?
- In Scotland, anyone over the age of 16 can consent to medical treatment or intervention without needing their parent or guardian’s consent. Do you agree with this or do you think it should be increased to 18 years old?
- Do you have experience of moving from receiving children’s mental health services to adult mental health services? If so, what was that like?

The Committee is also interested to hear views from interested individuals or organisations such as —

- Parents and carers of young people.
- Non-specialist mental health workers who provide services to young people (such as GPs, nurses, teaching staff and classroom assistants, college and university lecturers and social workers).
- Counsellors supporting young people in schools, colleges and universities.
- Other people or organisations responsible for the wellbeing of young people (such as youth workers or people running community groups attended by young people).
- Professional organisations representing the interests of young people or people with mental ill health.

You can focus your response on the areas outlined above or any other areas which you believe are relevant to the inquiry.

**How to submit your views**

The deadline for submitting your views is **Friday 14 December at 5pm**.

**Digital consultation**

We are gathering views using the digital consultation tool, [Dialogue](#). You can contribute to this inquiry by submitting both a written submission and providing your views through Dialogue. Please read our [privacy notice](#) about how to provide evidence using Dialogue for more information.
Written views

We are also issuing a call for written views. Before making a submission this way, please read our privacy notice about submitting your views to a Committee. This tells you about how we process your personal data.

If you are under 13 we will need to ask your parent or guardian to confirm to us that they are happy for you to send us your views. Please read our privacy notice on how a young person can submit their views to a committee for more information.

Please use the template provided on our website to format your submission. This includes the Data Protection Form. Fill this out and return it with your submission.

We welcome written views in English, Gaelic, Scots or any other language. Due to the time required to process and analyse evidence, late submissions will only be accepted with the agreement of the Committee.

Written responses should be sent electronically to the following address. Ideally, they should be no more than four sides of A4.

Please send your submission to: mentalhealthPPCinquiry@parliament.scot

If you cannot submit electronically you may send in a hard copy written submission. If you are sending in a hard copy submission please print off and include a copy of the Data Protection Form. Please send them to:

Public Petitions Committee clerks,

Room T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Contact

Should you require alternative formats of this information or further assistance in making a written submission, please do not hesitate to contact the clerking team.

For Committee information, contact: Sarah Robertson, tel 0131 348 5186, email: petitions@parliament.scot

For further information, the media contact is: Caroline Young, tel 0131 348 5605, email: caroline.young@parliament.scot

For general enquiries, contact: 0845 278 1999 (local call rate), email: sp.info@scottish.parliament.uk
Diagram: Different ways a young person might access the support for their mental health