

All Party Parliamentary Group :Conception to Age Two.

Wednesday 17 January 2018, Committee Room 6, Palace of Westminster, London.

Ministers in attendance: Tim Loughton MP (APPG Chair), Andrea Leadsom MP

Chairing the meeting: Tim Loughton MP and George Hosking OBE (Wave Trust)

Attendees: See Appendix 1

Apologies received

Helen Callaghan, Sheena Carr, Jo Casebourne, Joseph Croft, Jackie Doyle-Price, Alain Gregoire, Laura Henry, Rosemary MacKenzie, Catherine Pymar, Camilla Rosan, Ruth Rothman, Claire Russell, Emily Tredget.

Focus of the meeting – The Children and Young People’s Mental Health Green Paper ‘*Transforming children and young people’s mental health: Green Paper*’ issued by the Department of Education and the Department of Health in December 2017 and open for consultation until noon March 2nd 2018.

Other items – Feedback from the membership on the invitation to drive workstreams of work within the APPG this parliamentary year.

1. Green Paper

Tim Loughton opened the meeting. He was sharing the chairing with George Hosking due to the House voting a number of times throughout the APPG session.

Jackie Doyle-Price, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department of Health, sent her apologies and that of her office. Andrea Leadsom MP, Leader of the House of Commons, had stepped in to provide her personal and unofficial overview of the Green paper given her long standing interest and passion around perinatal and infant mental health.

Alain Gregoire also sent apologies due to injury. He was to present the perinatal mental health view of the Green Paper.

George Hosking also provided his view on the paper and questions would be opened to the group as well as points for discussion.

Andrea Leadsom explained that the green paper was out for the standard 12 week consultation and important that individuals and organisations respond and contribute to ensure that parents, infants, and early mental health features in the next stage of the process.

Andrea and George provided an overview of the papers’ content including the commitments already made to support children and young people’s mental health as part of the *Future in Mind* and *Five Year Forward View for Mental Health* reports:

1. Parity between physical and mental health
2. £1.4bn for Children and Young People's (C&YP) mental health over 5 years
3. By 2020/21, committed to:
 1. 1,700 new therapists and supervisors;
 2. additional training for 3,400 staff;
 3. 70,000 more C&YP obtaining mental health support.
4. Eating disorders: additional £30m funding; 70 new/enhanced Community Eating Disorder Teams
5. Waiting times for eating disorders, psychosis
6. Funding to test different crisis approaches to C&YP mental health in 8 areas
7. Local Transformation Plans for CYI mental health published

Building on this there will be support in local areas for a collaborative approach to supporting C&YP mental health which has three key elements:

1. Every school and college to identify a Designated Senior Lead for Mental Health
2. Funding for new Mental Health Support Teams, supervised by NHS C&YP mental health staff – managed jointly by schools, colleges & NHS
3. Trial 4 week waiting times

Action already underway:

- Record levels of investment
- New mental health waiting time standards
- Improving inpatient care and out of area placements
- Improving specialist services
- A better journey through mental health services, working in partnership
- Support for children in need
- Support for children with special educational needs and disabilities
- Better support for LGBT young people
- Better support for young offenders
- Improving data and tackling variation
- Supporting C&YP in schools and colleges

With wider support for:

- Mental health awareness training
- Teacher training changes
- Every child – learn about mental wellbeing
- Local communities
- Support for young adults.

The Paper is very focussed on school age children, especially those over the age of 14. The 0-2 year age group was not mentioned directly. Investment in perinatal mental health was referred to, especially for specialist support. Better support for families with children and young people at risk of developing mental health conditions, especially those who may have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) was proposed through the commitment to commission further research into engaging vulnerable families and into interventions to improve the quality of attachment relationships.

George Hosking highlighted the evidence that already exists (and collated by the Wave Trust) to demonstrate the link between ACEs and mental health. He pointed out that mental illness is a consequence and to get to the root cause we must invest in early experiences. There are clear, evidenced intergenerational impact of ACEs. This are especially pertinent in looked after children/children in care. Although these are highlighted in the Green Paper, they are not reflected in the proposals.

Both speakers reported that the Green Paper includes good proposals, but they are all late intervention. The lack of intervention and focus in early life (the first 1001 days) is frustrating when so much evidence exists and the other UK nations have already recognised this and are implementing work to focus on prevention in the early years.

Points from the floor:

- The proposals as a whole could be more ambitious for ALL children.
- There is too much focus on school aged children. A general concern that the Paper seems to consider the mental health of children from 14 years of age.
- Schools are already overwhelmed and are an easy place to put issues where we don't know what to do with them. Who will train the teachers, with what and how?
- There is a lack of emphasis on families and the early origins of mental health problems.
- There is a lack of reference made to the home environment and parents in the development of strong mental health. Nothing in the Paper referring to working alongside parents in supporting children's mental health – at any age.
- There was a general concern within the audience about the impact of local support for families i.e. health visiting and Children's Centres, that are being drastically reduced in the current economic climate, which will impact heavily on those in need of early support and

intervention. There needs to be more joined up thinking locally and nationally. The role of the voluntary sector should also not be forgotten in how it supports many thousands of families across the UK.

- The influence of the antenatal as well as postnatal maternal stress needs to be highlighted with regard to baby development. Poor postnatal care impacts on maternal mental health. This is a key time to have impact on parent/infant relationship.
- A lack of overall support for families (financial, housing, welfare cuts etc) means less time and capacity for caring. Many young children are in intensive childcare. Do we know the impact of this? We need to see a joined up approach with wider social and economical considerations that impact so heavily on families, especially the most disadvantaged.
- Lots of evidence already exists in demonstrating the need to focus on the first 1001 days to support longer term positive mental health. We cannot sit back and wait for more research before acting.
- However more research is needed on the interventions that could improve outcomes for children with high number of ACEs for example. We also need to understand the mechanisms that underpin interventions and their outcomes.
- It is important that Government act based on what evidence is telling us. Funding (or lack of it) shouldn't be dictating support for families – it should be the evidence that leads this.
- Interesting to note that the following words did not appear at all in the Paper: infant, toddler, father. Baby appeared only three times. Schools featured 239 times, parent 50 times.

Attendees were encouraged to swamp the consultation with responses to champion for the first 1001 days within the next stages of the Mental Health Bill. The closing date of the consultation period is noon on 2 March 2018.

Action to create a draft list of key asks for respondents to choose from and include in their individual and organisational responses ([PIP UK to lead list creation](#)).

Respondents to cc in Tim Loughton MP to facilitate him sharing with Ministers from other parties to generate support.

The MMHA are preparing a response and will be sharing among members for feedback and for them to use.

1. Proposal to the APPG from Strong Start for All Children

Ben Wesson and Jenny St. John were welcomed from Strong Start for All Children. They had submitted a proposal to Tim Loughton following his request for member suggestions to lead the APPG's work streams.

Strong Start for All Children are a non-partisan group working to introduce a national life chances strategy, focused on the first 1001 critical days of a child's life.

They are working with all political parties and early years organisations to set up a Commission to gain support for the development of a national coordinating strategy to give every child a strong start in life.

They propose this is the next stage following the first 1001 days manifesto, which now needs widespread implementation. They want to see a joined up and whole system approach to early childhood development.

They indicated that early intervention is crucial and that there are significant economic and social benefits to intervening early. They stressed that evidence exists to demonstrate that action is now needed.

Strong Start for All Children will be setting up a Commission made up of professionals to pull together this outline strategy. They stated how they saw this working over the next 9-12 months and the key themes to be considered are: parent and infant relationships including mental health; early communication; economic wellbeing and physical wellbeing.

They were seeking endorsement of the Commission by the APPG, which would be 'owned' by Strong Start for All Children. They also requested a representative to sit on the Commission and assistance to create the narrative and build support within communities/political parties for taking forward the strategy once it has been created.

Attendees asked for the slides to be shared so that they can spend time considering the proposal.

The home environment was suggested as a further topic. Strong Start for All Children will include this as an area for exploration by Commission.

There was a query as to whether the proposal duplicated the work of The Great Britons Report created previously by the APPG. Any forward plan needs to consider what was proposed in the Great Britons Report and how it moves this on.

Strong Start also agreed to ask the Commission to look at how the strategy could build upon the Healthy Child Programme.

Action for Strong Start for All Children to revisit their submission and recommendations for the APPG in light of the comments raised.

2. AOB

Attendees were signposted to:

- the PHE Prevention Concordat referred to in the Green Paper and to consider if it is an opening for raising prevention as a priority.
- www.closer.ac.uk from UCL, the home of longitudinal research studies, which have a variety of cohort studies that may include evidence of relevance.
- The Life Project book by Helen Pearson

The Green Paper consultation closes on March 2nd. Government will then look at the responses and will respond. This could take a while and be presented in a variety of ways. The production of a Bill is unlikely before the end of the year.

Suggestion that the APPG meets again once the consultation has closed and the Minister can feedback on the responses received.

Attendees

Surname	First Name
Amadi	Obi
Bryant	Lucy-Anne
Buttery	Matt
Calder	Pamela
Cassidy	Madeleine
Clarke	Peter
Clear	Alanna
Darton	Sarah
Davies	Rob
Dobbin	Hannah
Dobson	Amy
Duff	Elizabeth
Edwardson	Hayley
Florschutz	Alex
Fobel	Vicky
Foreman	David
Fulton	Elaine
Gilchrist	Tommy
Gilley	Wendy
Gordon	Joanna
Greene	Alexandra
Hanton	Penny
Hill	Nicky
Hogg	Sally
Hosking	George
Jesurasa	Amrita
Jones	Hazel
Keyte	Lydia
kingham	sarah
Lang	Beckie
Lawes	Sam
Leach	Penelope
Leadsom	Andrea
Lintern	Charley
Loughton	Tim
Mahon	Deborah
Mansfield	Penny
McMaster	Alan
Middleton	Karen
Munday	Dave
Norris	Lara
Osafo	Yvonne
Pawlby	Susan
Peacock	Marie

Ransom	Heather
Reissland	Nadja
Rheeston	Mary
Salter	Jen
Shih	Miaolung
Silberfeld	Carolyn
Smith	Sally
Speier	Diane
St John	Jenny
Stewart	Claire
Style	Angela
Tasa	Ikie
Thorne	Anna
Wesson	Ben
Williams	Jane

