



Fforwm Iechyd
Meddwl a Lles Cymru
Wales Mental Health
and Wellbeing Forum

**Improving Mental Health & Wellbeing, by respecting
and empowering people to influence decision making**

Information Pack for National Forum Member



Would you like to influence decision making about Mental Health Services in Wales?

You can do this by becoming a member of the Wales Mental Health and Well-being Forum. There are currently opportunities for people who have personal experience of Mental Health Services and their carers, friends and family.

This information pack is designed to give you some understanding of the work of the Wales Mental Health and Well-being Forum and how you can be involved.

Role of the Wales Mental Health and Well-being Forum

The Forum brings together the service user and carer member representatives from the Local Partnership Boards across Wales, the service user and carer members of the National Partnership Board and ten service users and carers appointed into national roles.

Since the Forum was established in 2013 the members have produced numerous papers on a range of topics. These have influenced change and resulted in a number of recommendations to the National Partnership Board. The Forum continues to respond to policy and ongoing strategy and delivery plan development providing a perspective of the personal experiences of the members i.e. those using mental health services and their carers, friends and family.

To be effective, it is important that the Forum membership represents the diversity of our country and includes a strong voice for people who experience a range of disadvantages. We are therefore looking for people with personal experience of mental health services who will enhance the makeup of the Forum in a number of ways. In particular we are looking to increase diversity by inviting individuals with lives experience and carers or those who provide support, from the following backgrounds:

- Members of Black, Asian and other minority ethnic groups
- People with experience of specialist services e.g. Forensic Psychiatry, Eating Disorder Services, Neuropsychiatry, Personality Disorder Services
- Members of the LGBTQA+ community
- People who have experience of homelessness
- Prisoners and those with experience of the Judiciary System
- People living with physical or sensory impairment or disability

- Members of the Gypsy/Traveller community
- People with experience of seeking asylum in Wales
- Older People
- Young people experiencing transition to adult mental health services
- Expectant parents or parents of a young child / children
- Veterans
- People from minority religious / faith groups
- Others who feel excluded e.g. financially or digitally



Mental Health Context

Together for Mental Health – A Strategy for Mental Health & Wellbeing in Wales was published in October 2012 by the Welsh Government. The Strategy aims to achieve a significant improvement in quality and accessibility of mental health services for all ages. The Strategy has been implemented via a series of delivery plans, and the third delivery plan for 2019 – 2022 has now been published and has added a number of priority areas. Partnership Boards, at a national and local level, oversee the delivery of the strategy, and the Wales Mental Health and Well-being Forum was established to ensure that people with personal experience of mental health services (also known as service users and carers) are at the heart of this process, influencing policy and service development.

Commitment required (See Key Responsibilities listed below)

The Forum meets at least 3 times per year in the different health board areas. Members are currently not paid although travel is paid, and accommodation is arranged and paid for where applicable (depending on travel time to the meeting). Currently the Forum is meeting online only, due to the COVID-19 restrictions. These meetings take place on Zoom, or on Microsoft Teams. Support can be provided to use these digital tools.

All members are actively encouraged to participate in the full range of activities undertaken by the Forum, which does from time to time involve time commitment over and above the full Forum meetings described above. Such participation is voluntary.

The work of the Forum is evolving and there is a clear emphasis on co-production, enabling the members to identify and manage their priorities and work programme. Support is provided by a small team from Practice Solutions Ltd.

Key Responsibilities

1. Attending the Forum meetings as well as voluntary participation in workshop sessions and sub-groups, as necessary.
2. Actively participating and engaging in the work of the Forum.
3. As far as possible representing the voice for people with personal experience of all adult mental health services, drawing on and giving the perspective of personal experiences. Representing views of other service users and carers – especially minority communities - as gathered through other means.
4. Help shape the development of policy, strategy and the delivery of services, communicating progress and outcomes to other national/specialist groups.
5. Actively seek views of local service user/carer groups as needed.
6. Keeping in touch with other members between meetings.
7. Treating members and the support team with respect.
8. Training will be available – including support meetings for National Members with Practice Solutions

Do you have the skills, knowledge & experience to contribute?

If you believe in the importance of service user and carer perspectives, are a carer or have experience of mental health problems in the last 5 years, and are interested in becoming a member here are some of the skills that would be useful

Desirable

- Experience / ability of promoting the perspective / voice of service Users / lived experience / carers
- Experience / ability of establishing strong links with service user / lived experience and carer groups
- Ability to work alone and as part of a team
- Understanding of mental health legislation, policy and practice eg. Together for Mental Health Strategy
- Good communication and influencing skills at all levels
- Ability to challenge, in a constructive manner
- Flexible and adaptable
- Ability to travel
- Experience of committee work or similar work
- Report writing skills
- IT Skills or willingness to learn
- Welsh Speaker (desirable but not essential)
- Speaking in public/making a public contribution to groups/meetings

How do I apply for this opportunity?

If you can answer yes to **any** of the desired skills and are still interested, then then there are a number of ways that you can get in touch:

Stage 1

- Complete the “expression of interest form” and send to mhforum@practicesolutions-ltd.co.uk by **Friday 23rd April 2021**
- You may wish to find out more information about the National Member Role as well as more information about the Wales Mental Health and Wellbeing Forum. Jojo Jones will be more than happy to have a chat with you. Please feel free to email Jojo on mhforum@practicesolutions-ltd.co.uk or contact her by telephoning **01443 808060**.

- You may also want to have a chat with a current Forum Representative. Again, Jojo will be more than happy to arrange this for you.

Stage 2

- Following the closing date, you will be invited to attend a virtual “coffee & chat” session on Tuesday 4th May [10.30 am – 12.30 pm].
- During this session, you will have the opportunity to meet other Forum Representatives who will share their experiences and provide an update on the work of the forum. You will also be able to observe / take part in a group discussion in relation to a relevant topic.


If you are still interested in joining the forum as a National Member after this session, then you will meet with two of the existing forum members to discuss your interest further. These discussion meetings will take place on Tuesday 11 and Wednesday 12 May between 10.30 am and 12.30 pm.

Diversity Monitoring Form

You **do not have to fill in the Diversity Monitoring form** however it would help us to monitor our diversity to ensure that membership opportunities are not unfairly discriminating against particular groups. This will not be circulated to other members. It is up to you to decide whether you would like to share this information with other members. You can find the link to the form on the website.

Reasonable adjustments

Please contact Jojo if you require any reasonable adjustments to this recruitment process due to any disabilities, or physical or mental health conditions. Contact details: mhforum@practicesolutions-ltd.co.uk

 **Practice Solutions** is proud to support the work of WMHWF

Web: www.practicesolutions-ltd.co.uk/en/page/mental-health-forum

Email: mhforum@practicesolutions-ltd.co.uk

Phone: 01443 808060

Mobile: 07563 928694