Session 2: Improving Access to Psychological Therapy (IAPT)

IAPT:

- On World Mental Health Day in October 2007 the UK Government announced a large-scale initiative for Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) for depression and anxiety disorders within the English National Health Service.
- IAPT has seen a huge increase in the availability of psychotherapy. Treatment is based upon protocols developed from Cognitive Behaviour Therapy which are highly specialised to each specific condition.
- As IAPT has expanded so has its coverage of more complex mental health presentations as well as its reach across the age range, with services for children and adolescents becoming available.

How it works:

- Typically, individuals receive 6 - 8 sessions of CBT.
- There is a strong focus upon building rapport, assessment, formulating the dynamics of the problem and working out why it persists and addressing underlying thought and behaviour patterns.
- In 2014 – 15, around 1.3 million referrals were made to IAPT services, with just under half reporting 'reliable recovery'.
- Whilst IAPT is not without criticism, (over-reliance upon a single treatment modality - CBT) it is clear that IAPT has significantly increased the availability of effective talking therapies to those who need them.

And in Wales…

- Wales has seen no replication of IAPT. Whilst there has been some development of local CBT based services, originally it had not been on the scale or level of systematic organisation seen in England. This meant that provision was patchy and waiting times longer, especially at a primary care level.
- There was however, a delivery plan (2016-19), for realising the objectives of the 2012 'Together for Mental Health ' strategy for mental health and well-being in Wales. This built upon the 2010 Mental Health Measure and its various statutory requirements for service standards, and work undertaken since the launch of the strategy in 2012.

What is happening in Wales?

- The Together for Mental Health delivery plan for 2016-19 reiterates a 28 day target for interventions in primary care and requires health boards to report on the 26 week referral to treatment target in specialist secondary mental health services for all patients.
- However, the We Need to Talk (Wales) coalition believes that people in need of primary and secondary mental health services should be able to access psychological therapies within 28 days of a referral request as early intervention improves outcomes.

The We Need to Talk (Wales) Coalition:

- Consists of:
- British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy
- British Psychoanalytic Council
- British Psychological Society
- CAIS
- National Counselling Society
- OCD Action
- UK Council for Psychotherapy

- Wales Alliance for Mental Health:
- Bipolar UK
- Diverse Cymru
- Gofal
- Hafal
- Mental Health Foundation
- Mental Health Matters Wales
- Mind Cymru
- Samaritans Cymru

Mental Health Wales:

- Mental Health Wales

Psychological Well-being Practitioners (PWP):

- Psychological wellbeing practitioners are trained to assess and support people with common mental health problems, mainly anxiety disorders and depression and assist in the self-management of their recovery.
- Psychological Wellbeing practitioners work to aid clinical improvement and social inclusion, including return to work, meaningful activity or other occupational activities.
- This is achieved through the provision of information and support for evidence-based low intensity psychological treatments, but also includes physical exercise and supporting medication adherence.

PWP and Wales:

- Psychological Well-being Practitioner
- Whilst these roles are designed to support the IAPT scheme in England, similar posts were being created under the Welsh Governments 2016-9 plan.
- These posts aim to be open to individuals who have completed an undergraduate degree followed by a post graduate qualification either in low-level therapeutic treatments or counselling.

Results of the IAPT and PWP to date:

- In the first 3 years more than one million people were treated.
- Recovery rates were at least 45%.
- Over 45,000 people moved from benefits into paid employment.
- Similar schemes to IAPT are now being rolled out in other countries such as India and Uganda.
- However there is still a treatment gap of 75% worldwide.
- **WHERE DO WE STAND NOW?**