

Response to Review

1. Introduction

Background: the Review of the Partnership for Wellbeing and Mental Health in Schools and the Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition

Over the last two years, the Partnership for Wellbeing and Mental Health in Schools (the Partnership) and the Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition (the Coalition) have frequently collaborated to influence Government policy; seek solutions to implementation and policy problems; share best practice; and coordinate joint meetings with government officials and others across the sector. During this time, questions were raised as to whether the Partnership and Coalition have sufficiently distinct roles to operate separately or whether a merger may more effectively achieve the vision and aims of each group.

In June 2019, the National Children's Bureau, who host the Partnership, commissioned Lorraine Khan Solutions Ltd to complete an independent Review of the two membership groups in response to these discussions. The Review was published in August 2019 and reported a range of views from stakeholders, members and government representatives linked to both groups. The Review identified a number of challenges. In particular, it reported that some members of both organisations felt they did not sufficiently understand "who is doing what" or what "the purpose" of each group was in relation to the other.

Despite this, the Review found there were "key difference "in the aims and objectives of both organisations." The Partnership focused on addressing mental health and wellbeing in schools, in particular promoting and implementing a Whole School Approach, and provided a strategic support role with regards to the policy environment. In addition to campaigning and policy activity to improve children and young people's mental health outcomes for all young people, including those in school settings, the Coalition has a broader campaigning role and goals, including embedding a focus on mental health in national and local policies, addressing health inequalities, and promoting early intervention and cross-sector collaboration. The Report concluded that "there was a clear consensus that the Coalition should focus on 'bigger picture' transformative activity... and blue sky thinking" in the future, with the Partnership maintaining a clear focus on promoting a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing and troubleshooting policy and practice implementation issues.

Decision to remain separate organisations

The Partnership and Coalition have reviewed the findings and agree that both have distinct and much needed voices and roles, valuable in different ways, to the children and young people's mental health and wellbeing sector.

Maintaining the separate aims and identities of each group is something that is valued by many stakeholders. Representatives from the Department for Education emphasised the importance of a "go-to for school mental health", and the way it acted as a bridge between government and organisations to troubleshoot policy and implementation

issues and gather opinions. Partnership members expressed concerns that a merger could mean a loss of "...cohesion and drive" and a focus on education. Likewise, some Coalition stakeholders feared that the school agenda may dominate other cross-sector concerns in the event of a merger, or expressed concerns that the Coalition might lose its campaigning voice and role of "holding the government to account".

Ultimately, we have therefore concluded that at present the vision and aims of each organisation are better served by maintaining distinctive voices and identities, whilst continuing to embrace collaboration when aims overlap. Members greatly valued collaboration between the two groups, but emphasised that this would be more effective, cohesive and avoid unnecessary duplication if there was greater clarity on roles, responsibilities and processes for joint working.

This response therefore seeks to clearly set out the distinct vision, aims and practice of both groups moving forward; and to respond to members' concerns setting out a strategic framework for joint working between the two groups in the future which will allow collaboration on common aims to be as effective and impactful as possible.

2. Partnership for Wellbeing and Mental Health in Schools

Vision: That wellbeing and good mental health is a strategic priority embedded into the culture and ethos of every school.

Objectives: The Partnership focuses on children and young people's mental health and wellbeing in educational settings, and aims to achieve a whole school approach to improving mental health and wellbeing. Its key objectives are:

- to increase awareness of the importance of promoting and protecting CYP's emotional wellbeing and how this connects to learning
- to inspire schools and services to incorporate measures that will improve CYP's wellbeing and MH
- to equip teachers, adults working with children and CYP with the skills and knowledge to prioritise and address wellbeing and MH needs

Membership: The majority of its 48 members are educational bodies, schools and voluntary providers.

Role: The Partnership has a strategic support role, drawing together learning, disseminating best practice and identifying solutions.

The Partnership has been described as a bridge between policy and practice and between government and organisations, offering organisations a way to inform and influence policy, and providing a safe space for policy makers to meet with key stakeholders in order to troubleshoot implementation problems.

Over the past years the Partnership has put in place a number of key building blocks which support its ambition that every school should adopt a Whole School Approach. It has:

- Published guidance developed by Professor Katherine Weare, which sets out 'What works in promoting social and emotional well-being and responding to mental health problems in schools.'

- Building on this research we have developed a self-assessment and improvement tool for school leaders along with supporting resources.
- Worked with Optimus Education to develop an award for schools based on the tool.
- Set up an online forum for schools seeking to implement a Whole School Approach so that they can find further support, both from the Partnership, but also each other on any implementation challenges.

Challenges identified in the Review:

- Lack of transparency of processes e.g. criteria for steering group membership
- Lack of resources, particularly communications and administration
- Some confusion over identity and USP
- Some members felt there were limited *practical* outputs
- Lack of representation from schools
- Need to systematically embed CYP voices

Commitments in response to the Review:

- Develop a communication strategy and clear brand, including improved website and a set of simple messages to build a compelling case for the whole school approach
- Improved communication with members by providing updates
- Develop clear and publically available information on processes (including clear processes for joint consultations); governance structures (including steering group membership; terms of reference; and strategy)
- Embed participation of CYP, parents and teachers
- Recruit new Chair from the education sector
- Develop a plan for how communications and administrative needs will be met in the future, and where funding will come from
- Clarify future funding approach
- Expand membership and formalise membership process

3. Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition

Vision: For all infants, children and young people to grow up in a society that prioritises, invests, listens and attends to their mental health and wellbeing.

Objectives: The Coalition is for all those working to improve infant, children and young people's mental health. Through our collective voice, we influence and shape policy, systems and practice by listening to, and learning from our Members, supporters, children, young people and families.

Our key priorities:

1. The promotion of good mental health, the **prevention** of mental health difficulties and the reduction of inequalities in all national and local policies and strategies impacting on infants, children, young people and families
2. Greater **investment** in accessible, high quality, person-centred, **early intervention** approaches to infants', children's and young people's mental health

3. Everyone having the **knowledge, skills and confidence** to recognise and address the mental health needs of infants, children and young people.

Membership: The Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition are a coalition of organisations from across England who are passionate about the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people. The Coalition currently has 204 members primarily representing the voluntary and community sector, academic institutions and professional membership bodies.

Role: The Coalition's aim is to bring together leading charities to campaign jointly on the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people and ensure that our voice is heard. Our members all have an interest in the CYPMHC's remit and support our values.

It informs and engages a strong network of key stakeholders from inside and outside its membership. Members include third sector organisations, service providers, funders, schools, and organisations campaigning on a range of children's issues not limited to mental health. The Coalition delivers independent advice and critical challenge to Government, Arms-length bodies and local agencies. The Coalition has been proactively working to inform the development and implementation of several policy initiatives around children and young people's mental health. This includes:

- Future in Mind (2015)
- Five-year forward view (2016)
- Transforming children and young people's mental health: a green paper (2018)
- NHS long term plan (2019)

The Coalition has undertaken and produced a number of research and policy papers to support its work and address gaps in the evidence base. This includes:

- Centre for Mental Health & CYPMHC (2019) *Making the Grade: How education shapes young people's mental health*
- CYPMHC (2019) *Overshadowed: The mental health needs of children and young people with learning disabilities*
- CYPMHC, RCPSYCH and Young Minds (2016) Values-Based Child and Adolescent Mental Health System Commission: What Really Matters in Children and Young People's Mental Health
- CYPMHC and PHE (2015) Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing: A whole school and college approach

Schools are a priority area for the Coalition. The Coalition's recent portfolio of work makes evidence-based recommendations for Government, schools and colleges, calling on them to make a series of changes to support a whole school approach and improve young people's mental health in the context of the wider system.

Challenges identified in the Review:

The review identified the following areas for improvement for the Coalition going forward included the below challenges:

- The pressures of limited time and increased workload made the attendance of 'reflection' forums 'nice to rather than need to' for some organisations.
- Stakeholders felt that the Coalition could do more to act as a facilitator and coordinator of a sector-wide strategy and activity. This would help members understand who was doing what and would provide a 'bank' of knowledge that

organisations could use when seeking partners for funding for bids. (N.B this could be a significant task to service, maintain and upkeep).

- Occasionally, key policy influencing opportunities had been missed.
- Consultation and membership events should be scheduled in the diary in advance at the beginning of the year.
- Stakeholder perceptions of the Coalition are that it could be more inclusive of school leaders

Commitments in response to the Review:

- Develop and share Terms of Reference. We will publish this on our website.
- Our new website will launch in January and we will ensure there is clarity around our strategy, aims and work priorities. We will outline how we work with Partnership as part of this communication.
- The Coalition will undertake a cloud mapping member's work to see where work overlaps and interacts with each other.
- Ensure there is Partnership representation at all CYPMHC Steering Group meetings and members meetings.
- Ensure CYPMHC strategic lead attends Partnership Steering Group meetings and provide comprehensive updates.
- Explore how to improve representation of school-based professionals in its work.
- Recruit a new Chair from the CYP Mental Health Sector.
- Update and share fundraising plans relevant to MH in education with the Partnership.

4. Strategic approach to collaboration and joint-working

Though it is important to provide clarity on the different roles of each group, we continue to value collaboration between the Partnership and Coalition where it is needed. Moving forward, we agree that future joint working must be underpinned by a clear strategic approach to collaboration, outlined in a co-produced Memorandum of Understanding.

Recommendations from the Review	Response
Each membership group having a strategic liaison representative who sits on the other membership group's steering group	Confirmed that programme leads have assumed this role
Agreement on circumstances in which the two groups might come together to maximise the impact of their voices, their breadth of expertise and their influence	<p>Agreed areas for joint working include, but are not limited to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health Green Paper implementation • Ofsted framework • NHSE Long-term plan • Practice development issues • Evidence gathering and sharing • Whole School Approach framework refresh • Needs assessments within schools • Quality Assurance
Advanced planning and horizon scanning on future work	<p>Membership groups have liaison on Steering groups</p> <p>Termly planning meetings between programme leads</p> <p>Steering group meetings from Coalition and Partnership set in advance for the year</p>
Having in place a joint working agreement to guide interdependent areas and joint roles and responsibilities when membership groups come together	MOU developed and signed off
Having clear and transparent terms of reference in the public domain which clearly set out the different roles and responsibilities of each membership organisation	<p>Partnership Membership list and Steering group list published online</p> <p>TOR and recruitment processes published online</p>
Both membership groups are aware of the need to introduce a multi layered child and young person co-production process to help shape strategic direction, priorities and solutions	Paper outlining proposed approach to go to Partnership Steering group meeting in February 2019
Clarity on process of feeding into joint responses which shape strategic planning	In progress

Developing a clearer identity for the Partnership and greater independence from NCB.	Partnership Steering group unanimously agreed to continue to align Partnership Brand with NCB brand. New logo has been developed
Increased communication and administrative support	Partnership fundraising plan to go to Steering group meeting in February 2019
Bring together a strategy development working group from the Partnership membership around understanding quality assurance and implementation support role for the Partnership	In progress