



Recovery and rehabilitation within the Welsh justice system:

Action Plan

June 2023



The purpose of this Action Plan is to set out practical ideas for improving the support of criminal justice and related health and care services in Wales for people with mental health or addiction problems.

The Plan has been co-produced by individuals with lived experience, their family members and carers, front-line professionals, commissioners, and key decision-makers who met at our Welsh Justice seminar in February 2023, together with guidance and feedback we received from some of the 16,000 people we supported between 2021 - 2022, and who remain at the heart of all we do.

A further product of this consultation will be the publication of a comprehensive Criminal Justice Survival Guide, designed to help people understand and navigate the system and access appropriate support. The Guide will cover the criminal justice system pathway from the perspective of people with mental health or addiction problems; it will also provide a valuable overview for professionals, enabling them to understand service users' wider experience before, during, and after their involvement in the criminal justice system. The Guide will be published in late 2023 and there are details below on how to register to receive a copy immediately on publication.

- For information on how to order a copy of the Survival Guide as soon as it is published, please see Appendix A.
- For more information about our Welsh Justice Seminar, please see Appendix B.
- For feedback gathered from seminar round-table discussions, please see Appendix C.

Key Actions

1. Engage

Involving people with lived experience at every stage of the criminal justice system (and before and after it comes into play) is crucial to achieving an improvement in outcomes. People with lived experience - and their families and carers - can be engaged both in their own care and also in supporting others.

- Individual service users should be offered choices wherever possible regarding their treatment and care
- They should be involved in the development of their own care plans
- They should also have the opportunity to provide training to staff from a lived-experience perspective
- They should have the opportunity to provide mentoring to other service users who have been similarly affected
- They should be encouraged and supported to become employees or volunteers within the system
- Collectively, they should be involved in making policies and designing and commissioning services
- They should have access to good quality information and necessary advocacy and advice so that they can engage with the system in a fully informed way

In each of the areas below, we lead with an action on engaging those with lived experience

2. Include

Despite previous efforts to address inequalities within the criminal justice system, these inequalities remain entrenched and long-standing, and action is required to address the underlying issues that perpetuate these inequalities.

- Establish and maintain a dialogue with communities that are most affected: this means community leaders as well as individuals within the system
- As a priority, work with community leaders in the black community to address the profound inequalities affecting black people which persist in both the criminal justice and mental health systems
- Devise systems and services which fully accord with distinctive cultures and languages
- Provide training and practical materials to ensure staff in the system are sensitive to cultural differences and are knowledgeable about the Equality Act (2010) and protected characteristics
- Ensure staff have had appropriate training on bullying, discrimination, and micro aggressions

3. Prevent

Preventing crime in the context of mental health and addiction requires attention, not only towards people already affected but towards society at large. Therefore, education and early intervention may be useful in the prevention of criminal behaviour.

- Engage people with lived experience in order to understand their journeys prior to involvement in the system and to learn from their experience
- Ensure trauma awareness and skills among education professionals and other relevant staff through training and information
- Improve emotional and wellbeing support in schools
- Equip schools and other services to manage behavioural problems more effectively
- Improve practice in schools and other front-line services to identify issues earlier
- Reverse the long-term disinvestment in youth work and youth activities, particularly in lower-income areas
- Improve education and engagement with teenagers on substance use, mental health, and sexual health

4. Divert

It is widely agreed that the criminal justice system, however sensitively managed, is not the best place for people to address mental health and addiction problems. Early contact with criminal justice agencies provides a vital opportunity to provide treatment and care wholly or partly in place of entering or continuing in the criminal justice process.

- Engage with individuals at the earliest possible stage, encouraging them to cooperate actively with diversion options
- Create diversion pathways at every stage: by non-justice agencies encountering behaviour problems; following informal contact by the police; in place of arrest or charge; and in court and at sentencing
- To be effective, diversion must be to support services or treatment which is delivered promptly

5. Support

Not everybody who has a mental health or addiction problem can be diverted from the criminal justice system. A key challenge is to continue to provide the right support within the challenging context of the system from arrest through to discharge.

- Engage people with lived-experience in advising services and in mentoring and similar schemes within the system, including prisons
- Create a system through investment in secure in-patient care where nobody with severe mental illness or high-risk addiction issues is in prison
- Mainstream mental health and addiction services should provide care, support and treatment throughout the process, including to those in prison
- Professionals within the system should be provided with training and support on mental health and addiction
- Ensure that professionals within the system are trauma-informed through training and information
- Care and Treatment Plans for people with more serious mental health problems (which should include those with more serious addiction problems) should be maintained and acted on in partnership with users throughout the process
- Provide access to high quality information and necessary advocacy and advice so that people within the system feel fully supported and represented

6. Reintegrate

Reducing repeat offending is second only to prevention as a solution to crime and this applies equally to those with mental health and addiction problems: it is recovery from these problems which will be most effective in reducing repeat offending, alongside the practical support which all offenders need on discharge.

- Engage with people with lived experience who have experienced the process of discharge and reintegration
- The Probation Health Care service should have equal access to training and professional support on mental health, addiction, and trauma
- The Probation Service should operate in close liaison with mental health and addiction services to ensure seamless transition from the criminal justice system into continuing care and support and prevent relapse
- Perform individual needs assessment upon release to identify support needs and to ensure the appropriate continuity of care
- Holistic Care and Treatment Plans should form the core plan for discharge and continuing treatment and care for those with more serious problems
- As a priority, provide access to housing support upon release
- Provide access to high quality and appropriate money and financial advice upon release

Appendices

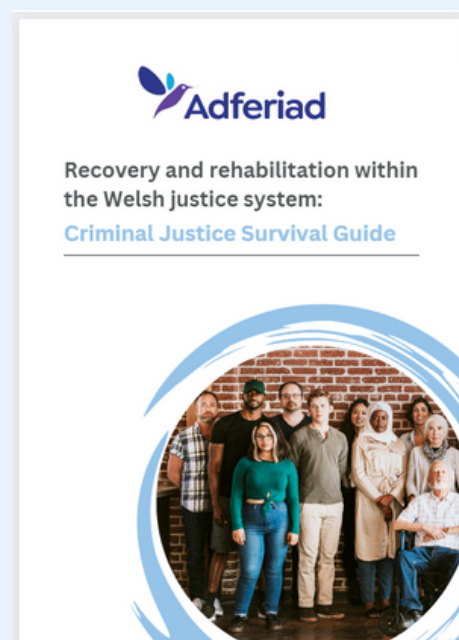
Appendix A. Criminal Justice Survival Guide

Our survival guide is being developed using a co-production approach and will be informed by a variety of stakeholders, including professionals, commissioners, decision-makers, influencers, individuals with lived experience, their family members, and carers.

Our Survival Guide is designed specifically for;

- People with lived experience of mental health problems, addiction, or the criminal justice system
- Professionals working within the criminal justice system
- Professionals working with people at risk of being involved in the criminal justice system
- Professionals working within mental health or addiction-related third-sector organisations or charities
- Any person interested in learning about how to navigate the criminal justice system from a mental health and addiction-informed perspective

To sign up to receive a copy of our Survival Guide when published, please click [here](#) or scan the QR code below



Appendices

Appendix B. Our Welsh Justice System Seminar

Back in February 2023, Adferiad Recovery held a seminar on the criminal justice system in Wales. The purpose of the seminar was to promote collaborative work between professionals and those with lived experience and to facilitate the sharing of experiences in order to help gather insights into recovery and rehabilitation within the criminal justice system in Wales. In addition, the event provided a forum for people to share ideas for improving the system, a matter which will be of interest to policymakers, commissioners, front-line staff, and people with lived experience of the criminal justice system.

The seminar included talks from a range of speakers, including Jane Hutt (member of the Senedd and Minister for Social Justice), Clive Wolfendale (Chair of Adferiad Recovery), and individuals with lived experience of the criminal justice system, amongst others.

During the seminar, attendees were invited to participate in two round-table discussions on the following topics;

1. Key issues within the criminal justice system that require attention
2. Potential solutions to bring about improvements and change within the criminal justice system

In total, 68 people attended our seminar and contributed to the round table discussions and as a result, the recommendations outlined in this report were co-produced by various stakeholders.

Seminar attendees included those working in various third sector organisations (including Adferiad Recovery, The Wallich, and The Hepatitis C Trust), health and social care organisations (NHS Wales and Social Care Wales), and in the police service (South Wales Police). In addition, a number of attendees had lived experience of the criminal justice system.



Our Speakers



Clive Wolfendale

Adferiad Recovery Chair of
the Board



Jane Hutt, MS

Minister for Social Justice



Yaina Samuels

Adferiad Recovery
Project Development
Officer



Professor Euan Hails, MBE

Adferiad Recovery Director of
Clinical and Therapeutic
Governance



Dean Pulling

Criminal Barrister and
Adferiad Recovery Trustee



Peter Martin

Adferiad Recovery
Policy and Public Affairs



Dai McBride

Lived-experience
Guest Speaker



Ben Stoker

Lived-experience
Guest Speaker



Clive Wolfendale addressing attendees



Lived-experience guest speakers Ben Stoker (left) and Dai McBride (middle) sharing their experiences



Speaker Yaina Samuels delivering her presentation



Seminar attendees during round-table discussions



From left: Peter Martin, Jane Hutt MS, Sharon Jones, and Alun Thomas

Appendices

Appendix C. Round-Table Discussion Feedback

In our first round-table discussion we asked "what are the key issues within the criminal justice system that need to be addressed, based on what you have heard and your own personal or professional experience and knowledge?". The discussion revealed 7 key issues:

Key Issues	Supporting Feedback
1. Improving areas that are lacking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mental health support• Skilled staff/workers• Treatment spaces/resources• Promptness• Continuity of care• Detox facilities• Individual treatment plans
2. Communication and coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Services not communicating• Sharing of information• Health board collaboration• Promoting inter-agency working is vital• Lack of coordination within central government
3. Mental and behavioural health	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mental health• Substance misuse• Trauma• ACE's
4. Racism and stigma	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff attitudes• Values & Beliefs• Emotional Intelligence
5. The prison environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Isolation and disconnection• No incentive to get out• Risks to individuals (drug misuse, debt, threats, physical harm) and their families (paying off debts, threats)
6. Vulnerable populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Women in prison• Young people in court
7. Reintegration into society	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transitioning from prison into the community

In the second round-table discussion we asked "what are some of the potential solutions to bring about improvements and change?". The discussion resulted in the proposal of six solutions:

Key Solutions	Supporting Feedback
1. Supporting Reintegration into the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support offered face-to-face and not just over the telephone • 'Through the gate' services • Better needs assessment on release • Prioritise supported housing • Setting up communities roles for clients in prison system to support structure on release • Providing security upon release e.g. housing • Continuity of care from prison to community
2. Utilising Lived Experience & Peer Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilising experience and knowledge from those with lived experience • Making it easier for people with lived experience to be employed in jobs that value lived experience • Peer support • Lived experience within social care/social services/probation services • Peer-led focus with training and 'bridging the gap' to show how far people can come • Maximise Welsh lived experience roles in substance misuse services
3. Improving Education & Implementing Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and training of public services • Understanding barriers • Co-production/co-construction • Help all prison staff understand addiction and their role in achieving recovery - better training and communication • Make use of prison debrief. Share intel and 'what worked well'
4. Targeting Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating opportunities for young people to stop reoffending behaviour in adulthood • More resources from school age to identify issues earlier on • Schools to be better equipped to manage young people to reduce offending/reoffending behaviour

Key Solutions	Supporting Feedback
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In school improve emotional support/wellbeing; Put more funding into education and youth work; Better engagement techniques/intervention • Education in teenage years over substances, health, and emotions
5. Applying a Trauma-Informed Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent skills to reduce trauma in next generation • Understanding trauma • More trauma informed approach to services • Train prison staff in trauma informed approaches
6. Increasing Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term funding in other services • Put more funding into education and youth work • Funding early interventions • Mental health funding



Support from Adferiad

Adferiad is a member-led charity that provides help and support for people with mental health, addiction, and co-occurring and complex needs, to maximise their personal potential, and achieve a better quality of life.

The Appropriate Adult Service provides support to vulnerable people (including people with mental illness, learning difficulties, learning disabilities, and Autism Spectrum Disorder) during their time in custody. We advise and assist the detainee when they are in custody and ensure that the police act fairly and respect the rights of the detainee.

Dyfodol De Cymru provides support to people with drug and alcohol issues in the criminal justice system in the South Wales area, targeting those in the criminal justice system. Dyfodol ensures there is support for those in prison as well as those who are in their communities but who are also receiving support from criminal justice services, such as Probation.


Tŷ Adferiad is a 6-bed accommodation supporting women returning to Gwynedd from prison. This service provides non-judgmental person-centred and trauma-informed support for individuals with complex and co-occurring needs. The aim of the project is to help support and equip individuals with the tools they need to be able to live successfully in their own accommodation.

Parkland Place offers unrivalled therapy for people with addiction, drug addiction, gambling addiction and other harmful behavioural conditions. Our therapeutic programme is individually tailored to the needs of our guests, and is delivered by friendly, expert staff. This truly bespoke approach allows us to address the psychological and social needs underpinning your addiction and support you to make key life changes.

To find out more...

 www.adferiad.org

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