

telyn

Rhaglen Partneriaethau Iechyd
Meddwl Dysgwyr Cenedlaethol
National Learner Mental Health
Partnerships Programme

Delivery Strategy

2025–2028



Medr

Y Comisiwn Addysg Drydyddol ac Ymchwil
Commission for Tertiary Education and Research

**CARDIFF
UNIVERSITY**

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Executive Summary

There are on average, 330,000¹ learners across tertiary education each year in Wales. This equates to just over 10% of the 3.2 million population of Wales². telyn is a cross-sector, whole-system initiative³ to strengthen mental health and wellbeing outcomes for learners⁴ across post-16 (tertiary) education in Wales.

Rooted in the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and addressing common themes of multiple national strategies including early intervention, local access to support, and digitally informed, the programme provides interventions for better access, support and infrastructure now, and builds knowledge and awareness to continuously improve delivery for future generations.

Programme delivery is a shared priority for Welsh Government and the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research (Medr) and closely aligns with Wales' Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025–2035. The programme facilitates national approaches across the National Health Service (NHS) in Wales and Further and Higher Education (FE and HE) institutions. Through multiple, interconnected workstreams, telyn will deliver measurable impact for learners, strengthen practitioner capability, and drive lasting system improvement through integrated partnership working and data generation.

The programme and this strategy builds on the success of the Mental Health University Liaison Service (MHULS) in South East Wales, which was commended in the 2023 Senedd report⁵ on student mental health in HE. MHULS successfully brought partners from education and health together; an NHS staffed, campus-based clinic was established with cross-organisation information sharing agreement and a common approach and language to severity rating and data capture. The national programme expands the focus and deepens reach with the inclusion of FE institutions, reflecting leading Welsh, UK, and international thinking, advancing ambitious whole-system solutions to improve learner mental health.

With 10% of the population of Wales being learners in tertiary education system, and given the rising complexity and prevalence of mental health needs, the systemic challenges to access support, and the incomplete data picture, this three-year Programme Strategy sets out a roadmap for delivery against four core priorities for 2025–2028:



Priority 1

Improved access to support and services by strengthening regional partnerships and collaboration. Achieving efficiency and effectiveness gains from reducing 'transactions costs' across providers and maximising local creative solutions, referral pathways, collaborative working and partner decision making.



Priority 2

Evidence-informed support by standardisation and visualisation of learner mental health data through the 'SevRes' data capture and reporting process. This will facilitate visibility of individual and regional collective needs and presenting trends, assisting decision makers to respond with targeted mental health provision and intervention. The programme will establish sustainable mechanisms and opportunities to collect and present relevant rich demographic data.



Priority 3

Removing barriers with data sharing and improving communication between health and education for a more cohesive, person-centred service for learners. Facilitating effective data sharing through a national student mental health data sharing agreement.



Priority 4

Better outcomes for learners demonstrated by in-built robust methods for evaluation and measuring impact, generating an evidence base from learning from key programme initiatives and products to support collaboration, understanding across education and health and to inform future investment.

Success of the programme, supported by a detailed three-year delivery plan and a robust governance structure and Oversight Board, will be demonstrated by qualitative and quantitative outputs. Achieving the programme outcomes through multi-agency commitment and contribution, will position Wales as a leader in coordinated, data-informed and impactful student mental health policy and provision.

Introduction & Purpose of the Programme

Tertiary education in Wales engages around 330,000 learners annually—over one in ten of the national population (3.2 million).

Learners are first and foremost citizens of the communities in which they reside and as such, they are served by the provisions and facilities of local and statutory authorities. Public Health Wales report a continuing rise in mental health difficulties among young people in Wales with rates of diagnosable mental health conditions doubling between 2004 and 2023, with highest prevalence in the age group 17- to 24-year-olds⁶.

In addition, it is documented in evidence given to the Children, Young People and Education Committee inquiry into Mental Health support in Higher Education⁷, that learners of all ages can have different requirements and vulnerabilities, linked to their learning journey, to those in the general population. We also know that the prevalence and complexity of learner mental health difficulties are increasing. In response, the Welsh Government⁸ placed clear emphasis on strengthening learner mental health and wellbeing support across the whole tertiary education system and tasked Medr with the development of a common framework for mental health and wellbeing support with consistency in provider policy and practice.



In the context of financial constraints and growing demand, there is a clear need to strengthen connections between the health and education sectors, building on existing strategic commitments. telyn addresses this by bringing together stakeholders to develop collaborative, open-access⁹ models of care that emphasise community- and region-based provision. These approaches enable earlier intervention outside hospital settings through multidisciplinary working, clearer pathways across systems and more effective use of data.

This is not a new concept, and it was a clear ambition outlined in a Universities UK publication, *Minding our Future: Starting a conversation about the support of student mental health*¹⁰:



[student] health needs remain largely unrecognised. To avoid longer-term personal, social and economic consequences, these needs should be addressed Student mental health needs to become a shared priority, to ensure that the mental health needs of students are understood, and services are designed to integrate [education] support with NHS care more effectively.”

This national programme is ambitious to facilitate and nurture connections across the NHS and Tertiary Education to establish a whole-system approach to learner mental health support. It translates the principles outlined by the Higher Education Mental Health Implementation Task Force¹¹ into practical system-level delivery realities.

The programme will recognise and strengthen each partner organisation's role and contribution to delivering improved and impactful measures. It will harness the power of a unified approach and cohesive communities, while building a shared understanding of existing and emerging regulatory frameworks and responsibilities. Together, this will enable a truly whole-system approach to mental health that supports all tertiary learners in Wales.

Context (Drivers of demand, challenges and opportunities for Wales)

Learner mental health needs are increasing in prevalence, visibility and complexity, with providers reporting rising levels of anxiety, depression, self-harm and trauma, often alongside neurodiversity, substance use, financial/housing insecurity and social media impacts.

The legacy of Covid-19 continues to affect learner transitions and resilience, while the cost-of-living crisis and wider inequalities disproportionately affect marginalised groups (e.g., LGBTQ+, care-experienced, second-language English), increasing demand amid diminishing resources¹².

A system-wide response remains constrained by systemic misalignment between education and NHS mental health services, including gaps between child and adult services, disrupted continuity of care due to learner mobility and term structures, delays or rejections in referrals, and limited access to embedded support in FE. Insufficient data sharing and inconsistent data collection further hinder coordinated planning and care, contributing to fragmented learner experiences.

Wales' emerging response is to strengthen partnership models that bridge these gaps, building on evidence from the MHULS model and enabling more preventative planning through improved data (including the SevRes dataset¹³).

Unmet mental health needs have significant implications for retention, attainment and progression, reinforcing the case for integrated, sustainable mental health support as both a public health priority and a key enabler of an inclusive post-16 system. Delivery is shaped by structural challenges including fragmented service architecture, variation across Health Boards, workforce capacity and retention pressures, data governance and interoperability barriers, and short-term funding cycles—alongside opportunities to scale effective partnership models and improve system-wide coordination and accountability.

Background

Building on the successful establishment of the Mental Health University Liaison Service (MHULS) in South East Wales, telyn was established in 2024 with a feasibility study exploring the appetite and opportunity to align health and education partners across Wales.

A partnership between Cardiff's four campus universities and Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, the backdrop to the MHULS, demonstrated the impact and benefits of collaborative working for individual learners, and for the partnership. The approach and benefits received praise from the Welsh Senedd following a committee review of support in Higher Education¹⁴.

The first of its kind in Wales, the MHULS model involves an NHS clinical mental health team co-located with university student support services, delivering across the four University locations. Learners access the service via referral from university wellbeing teams, GPs or adult mental health services. It provides NHS assessment and support for moderate to severe, long-term or complex needs, bridging the gap between campus wellbeing provision and community mental health care.

MHULS has demonstrated the value of joint delivery, including faster access to assessment and treatment; embedded information sharing using WASPI¹⁵; improved coordination and service navigation; strengthened NHS-led risk management; foundations for use of common language, severity rating scales (SevRes), data collection and analysis; a reduction in demand on crisis teams, secondary care and accident and emergency services.

MHULS provides a tested foundation for system evolution and scalable delivery across Wales, directly informing telyn ambition for a whole-system model built on shared accountability, clarity on organisational duties and capabilities, and collaborative working to enable sustainable system change. Progress and Opportunities

Since its inception, telyn has made significant progress in shaping a more coherent, collaborative and data-informed response to student mental health needs in Wales. The programme has developed with strengthened cross-sector partnerships, resources and established the infrastructure required for future expansion and long-term sustainability.



Priority 1

Improved access to support and services by strengthening regional partnerships and collaboration

At the centre of this progress is the MHULS model. MHULS has demonstrated that embedding NHS mental health professionals within university settings is both feasible and effective. Evidence demonstrates improved speed of access to services for learners, reduced pressure on crisis and secondary care services through earlier intervention and strengthened partnership working across education and the health board. Importantly, MHULS has provided a “proving ground” for integrated referral pathways, shared clinical oversight and cross-sector arrangements, a model that could be adapted for other regions with student populations, aligning with existing structures, local requirements, and resources¹⁶.

There is a significant opportunity to strengthen suicide prevention at scale by aligning telyn’s infrastructure and practice models with the NHS suicide prevention agenda. This alignment would enable Wales to establish clearer, nationally consistent pathways for early identification, timely referral, appropriate escalation, safety planning and sustained support. A more integrated national approach to data-sharing, multi-agency collaboration, and clinical oversight would enhance the system’s capacity to identify and respond to student risk earlier, more proactively, and more compassionately—while reducing dependence on reactive, crisis-led models of intervention.

telyn’s emerging work to align with wider NHS Wales priorities strengthens the programme’s future relevance and sustainability. Early engagement with the NHS Performance and Improvement team is aligning future NHS clinical design with broader NHS development goals, including political direction through the Open Access Framework. Participation as a Cardiff and Vale University Health Board demonstrator pilot will support evaluation of MHULS working within the new Open Access methodology.

Priority 2

Evidence-informed support by improving student mental health data capture and reporting

A second major area of progress has been the creation of a shared data infrastructure through SevRes. This co-produced dataset and dashboard combines standardised severity and presentation (“reason”) codes to capture student mental health disclosures in a consistent, clinically aligned way. Key milestones have included agreement on shared terminology aligned with NHS frameworks, development of a real-time dashboard accessible to participating institutions and Medr, and the collection of baseline data across pilot sites. SevRes represents a transformative opportunity for Wales: as more institutions onboard, the dataset becomes increasingly powerful, supporting risk profiling, service design and strategic investment at scale. There is also potential to expand future phases of data collection to include student characteristics, enabling deeper insight into which groups are most at risk and how risk is shaped by both personal and circumstantial factors.

Priority 3

Enhanced communication across health and education through data sharing agreements

This data work is complemented by progress in developing stronger information-sharing arrangements. With quality assurance support from the NHS WASPI team, the programme is producing robust regional information sharing protocols enabling communication between education and the NHS. WASPI data sharing protocols, associated staff- and patient-facing materials, and online training have been shared with health boards and education partners, enabling a consistent approach that can be tailored to local delivery models. This creates a significant opportunity where regional protocols can be developed into an overarching national data sharing protocol. A national protocol would benefit all learners ensuring continuity and consistency of support regardless of location, but particularly relevant for those online (for example, with Open University and Adult Education Wales), as well as commuting learners who may live in one region while studying in another.



Priority 4

Better outcomes for learners demonstrated by in-built robust methods for evaluation and measuring impact

Alongside operational and technical progress, telyn has strengthened the partnerships required for national scale-up. The programme has successfully convened stakeholders across Wales' post-16 education and health systems, including universities and colleges in South East Wales, local health boards, and national bodies such as Medr, AMOSSHE, Universities Wales and ColegauCymru. This partnership-based governance and co-investment approach is foundational for measuring, evaluating and sustaining impact, enabling common frameworks for working, and supporting coordinated implementation across diverse settings.

Looking ahead, there is an opportunity for telyn to shape practice beyond Wales by contributing to a wider UK approach to student mental health data. The programme is working with other UK universities using standardised datasets to review learning, scope differences, and collection methods. The ambition is to form a basis for a unified UK student mental health data toolkit across education. Such leadership would strengthen evidence-driven decision-making and position Wales as an innovator in data-enabled mental health support policy.

As a Medr-funded programme aligned with the Well-being of Future Generations Act, telyn is well placed to become a cornerstone of learner mental health support in Wales. Strong progress to date provides both evidence and a practical foundation for national scale-up. The next phase should focus on deepening NHS-Education collaboration, formalising national data-sharing, strengthening shared analytics through SevRes, and aligning with prevention and NHS reform agendas—showcasing how data-driven, values-led cross-sector working can deliver meaningful system-wide impact.

Strategic Context

telyn aligns with key policy frameworks and system ambitions

Policy Driver

Congruence with telyn

How telyn Delivers

Well-being of Future Generations (WFG Wales) Act 2015

Sets out seven national well-being goals and five ways of working for public bodies in Wales.

telyn embodies the Act's focus on prevention and long-term system change through integration and collaboration across organisational boundaries. There is a common goal of embedding a preventative approach and reducing escalation. telyn aims to reduce inequality by improving mental health outcomes for learners – a key population for future economic and social participation.

- Applies all five ways of working in its design and governance with particular focus on facilitating statutory bodies working together through the provision of collaborative structures (regional forums) and tools (applied WASPI).
- Supports a Healthier Wales and the explicit WFG goal focused on mental well-being by reducing mental health inequalities in education.
- Evidence-based improvement and accountability through robust data recording and analysis, and external evaluation.
- Emphasises prevention through earlier access to support and better data on student needs.

Welsh Government Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2025 – 2035)

Vision Statement 4: Open access mental health support

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy highlights “crucial role that both further and higher education sectors can take in supporting young people”.

NHS Wales is adopting an open access model to underpin mental health care. Its core components include the ‘one-at-a-time’ approach which suggests that the focus should be on the person’s “biggest concern at that moment”.

- SevRes enables rapid screening of need and its focus on presenting issues aligns with the ‘one-at-a-time’ principle.
- MHULS and telyn supports rapid access to early mental health care at the point of need
- telyn is facilitating the Strategy’s objective: “work to remove any existing barriers between children’s and adult’s services for those young people who need adult secondary care mental health services”, through data sharing, developing regional pathways and pilot work.

Medr Strategic Plan (2025–2030)

Committed to a learner-centred, evidence-informed and risk-based approach.

telyn directly supports Medr’s strategic aims by tackling a key risk to learner progression and widening participation: unmet mental health needs.

- Provides Medr with access to dashboard data to identify trends and risks.
- Strengthens partnerships that make the post-16 system more coherent and supportive.
- Offers an evidence base for regulatory and funding decisions.

Senedd Children, Young People and Education (CYPE) Committee recommendations

Clearer coordination between education and NHS mental health services.

telyn directly addresses the CYPE Committee’s call for better joint working between NHS and education providers to support learners. [See CYPE Committee report ‘Mental Health Support in Higher Education’ recs 1 & 25]

- Embeds NHS staff within university settings (e.g. via MHULS).
- Establishes formal data sharing agreements between HEIs and health boards based on the WASPI framework.
- Develops national approaches for cross-sector collaboration and pathways.

Policy Driver

Universities UK Stepchange: Mentally Healthy Universities and Suicide-Safer Universities Framework

Sector-led framework
promoting whole-university
approaches to mental health.

Congruence with telyn

telyn complements and operationalises these frameworks by building system-level links that enable a truly whole-institution approach.

How telyn Delivers

- Provides FE and HE providers with tools to collect and act on mental health data.
- Enables use of SevRes and shared protocols to reduce variation and improve early intervention.
- Aligns with suicide prevention initiatives through shared data and care models.

Welsh Government suicide prevention and self-harm strategy delivery plan (2025-2028)

Practical actions for Welsh Government, NHS and partners to reduce suicide in Wales and ensure people who self-harm feel safe, supported, and able to access timely care.

telyn will achieve safer, earlier and more consistent support for learners. This is facilitated by strong data and evaluation mechanisms, improving pathways and collaboration based on appropriate information-sharing protocols, supporting parity of experience across learners in Wales with a focus on vulnerability at times of transition.

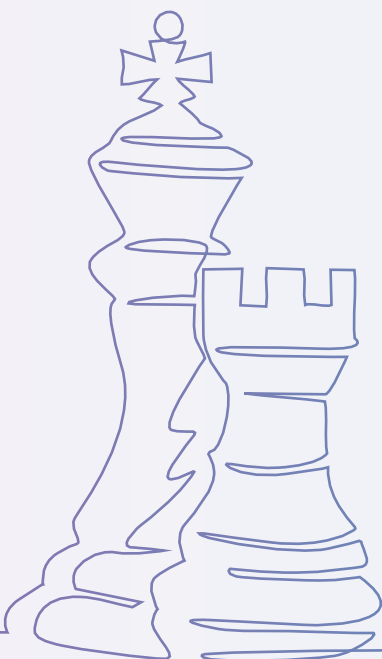
- Provides data recording and visibility through the common severity index (SevRes) enabling analysis and impact evaluation.
- Prevents people falling through gaps via partnership working and collaboration between NHS and education providers
- Ensures appropriate and effective information sharing using WASPI agreements.

Public Health Wales, Working together for a Healthier Wales (2023 – 2026)

Six strategic priorities supporting a vision for Wales where people live longer, healthier lives.

Recognising education as one of the determinants of health in Wales, telyn focus on tertiary learners will support a sustainable health and care system emphasising prevention and early intervention to improve population health. telyn will facilitate robust population insight and trend monitoring. There is commonality of approach with an expectation for partnership working and continuous quality improvement and evaluation.

- Improving mental health outcomes by improving access with campus-based and enhanced referral pathways for early support and joined up provision between health and education providers. Keeping learners engaged in education.
- Protecting learners' mental health contributing to retention, academic attainment and transition to work and training which are major determinants of life chances and health.
- Delivering continuous improvement, striving for excellence in public health services through data solutions (SevRes), evaluation and applied shared tools (WASPI).
- Reducing inequalities in access through establishing consistent and minimum access standards across further and higher education learners.
- Enabling whole-system change through data-informed targeted intervention and partnership working supported by sustainable regional governance set-ups.



Policy Driver

Fit for the Future: 10 Year Health Plan for England (2025 – 2035)

Transforming how health care is delivered through new access models.

Congruence with telyn

The strategic aims of the plan for England are embodied in the priorities of the programme capturing ambition to better access to services; digital transformation for data openness, shifting care to upstream for earlier intervention; and outcome reporting through impact evaluation.

How telyn Delivers

- Improving mental health outcomes by improving access with campus-based and enhanced referral pathways for early support and joined up provision between health and education providers. Keeping learners engaged in education.
- Protecting learners' mental health contributing to retention, academic attainment and transition to work and training which are major determinants of life chances and health.
- Delivering continuous improvement, striving for excellence in public health services through data solutions (SevRes), evaluation and applied shared tools (WASPI).
- Reducing inequalities in access through establishing consistent and minimum access standards across further and higher education learners.
- Enabling whole-system change through data-informed targeted intervention and partnership working supported by sustainable regional governance set-ups.

HEIW Strategic Mental Health Workforce Plan for Health and Social Care

A motivated and engaged mental health workforce shifting to a community-based preventative, digitally enabled model where multi-disciplinary and multi-agency are the norm.

telyn exemplifies how the partnership governance principle of the plan can work in practice.

Benefits to the next generation of workforce as they train. Better designed systems will lead to a better experience for staff aligning to the retention ambition of the plan.

- Creates embedded multidisciplinary teams across education and NHS.
- Shared referral pathways and cross-sector working frameworks.
- Providing intelligence on demand, severity, and presenting needs.
- Enables evidence-based workforce modelling and service design.
- Enables person-centred, coordinated interventions and removes barriers to cross-organisation working.

Improving Student Mental Health through Higher Education-NHS Partnerships – Task force publication January 2026

A strategic framework for bridging the support gap through formal, co-funded partnerships between Higher Education Providers and the NHS. Showcasing practical implementation steps and evidence-based models to deliver on-campus clinical care that improves student outcomes while reducing pressure on emergency services.

telyn are aligned with the guidance and principles outlined in the document.

- MHULS and the Cardiff Psychological Therapies University Clinic are listed as a good practice case study evidencing recommended guidance for HE and NHS partnerships for student mental health.

Governance

Effective governance underpins the success and sustainability of telyn.

The programme operates within a mature governance structure aligned to Medr's three-year funding commitment, providing clear accountability, robust oversight, and strong alignment with national priorities across FE, HE, the NHS, and partner organisations. Cardiff University acts as the Lead Education Institution and reports directly to Medr in accordance with the agreed schedule. Partner and learner voices, including learners and individuals with lived experience, are embedded within governance arrangements to inform programme design and delivery.



Programme Management Team

Day-to-day delivery is coordinated by a Programme Management Team, led by the National Programme Manager and supported by secondees from participating institutions and sector specialists.

The team is responsible for:

- Coordinating delivery of agreed workstreams and milestones
- Managing engagement organisation leads
- Oversight of the SevRes dashboard, data governance and information security
- Risk, issue and budget management, alongside stakeholder communications

Programme Oversight Board

Strategic direction, delivery assurance and budget monitoring are provided through a Programme Oversight Board, chaired by Cardiff University as Lead Partner.

Membership includes representation from partner organisations, Medr and the National Union of Students.

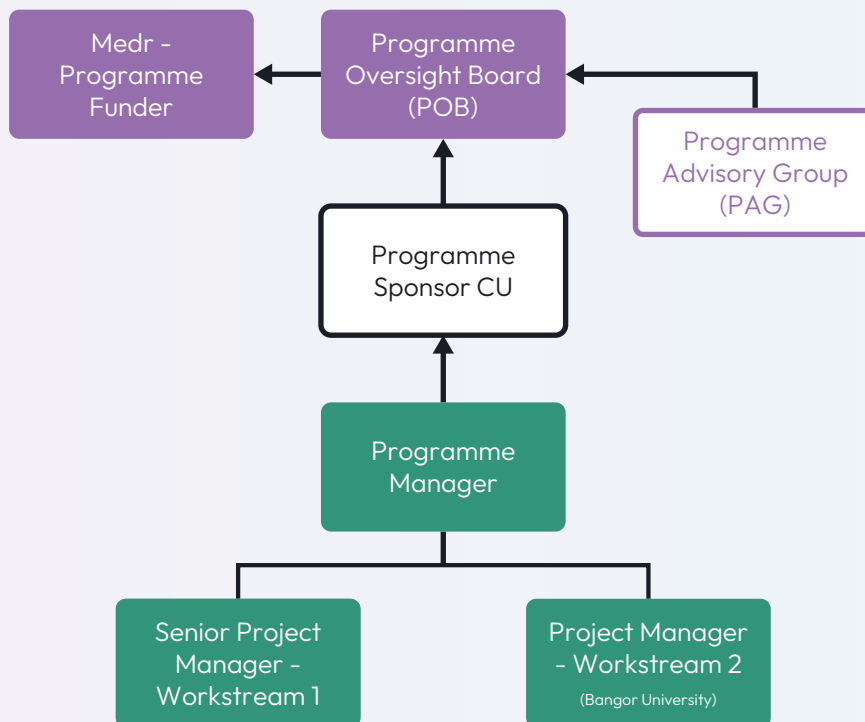
Medr oversight and strategic alignment

As both regulator and funder, Medr sets strategic expectations and maintains oversight, ensuring telyn remains student-centred, evidence-informed and aligned to post-16 policy in Wales.

The programme supports Medr's objectives through:

- Regular reporting on progress against agreed outcomes, including SevRes dashboard updates
- Contributions to Medr's evaluation and strategic planning processes
- Evidence of impact on access, retention and institutional resilience

Programme Governance Structure



POB Membership

- Chair - Programme Sponsor, Cardiff University
- Medr Representative
- HE & FE Representative
- Student Voice
- Programme Manager

PAG Membership

- Co-Chairs - HE & FE Representative
- Programme Sponsor, Cardiff University
- Medr Representative
- HE & FE Representatives
- Student Voice
- NHS Representatives
- Programme Manager/team

Governance and funding for the MHULS are separate from the National Programme. However, opportunities for shared learning and collaboration are coordinated, with the National Programme Manager continuing to oversee delivery, and Cardiff University remaining the lead institution for MHULS.

Programme Activities (2025–2028)

Over the next three years, telyn will transition from what began as a regional pilot to a nationally scaled and embedded framework for collaborative mental health support across Wales' post-16 education sector, in partnership with NHS providers.

This section outlines the activities associated with each of the programme's four priorities.

Priority 1: Improved access to support and services by strengthening regional partnerships and collaboration

By reducing the transaction costs¹⁷ of cross-sector working, the programme aims to make collaboration between partners the default in student mental health support. The programme will achieve this through:

- Establishing regional governance arrangements learning from the South East Wales partnership model to support education and NHS working together to maximise local creative solutions, referral pathways, collaborative working and partner decision making.
- Facilitating communities of practice to share learning and build consistency of provision across regions.

Priority 2: Evidence-informed support by improving student mental health data capture and reporting through further development of SevRes

Building on the SevRes dataset and its initial implementation, the programme will:

- Continue to test and implement the SevRes mental health data collection across FE, training staff with standardised definitions based on NHS terminology, for severity and presenting issues.
- Ensure that data is collected consistently and ethically, with appropriate governance frameworks, including information-sharing agreements and secure access controls.
- Continue development for the sustainability of the SevRes dashboard to allow continuity of access and support for collecting partners and Medr. Identifying options for a sustainable host for the data collection and dashboard, this includes:
 - Support for partners collecting SevRes, engagement, training, data sharing protocols, and facilitation of future developments if required.
 - Technical support, access, maintenance and future-proofing for the dashboard.
 - Development of any applications for future funding if updating or changes are needed to keep the products up to date with technological and sector advances.

- Work with Medr to understand requirements for additional demographics data to support discussions with HE and FE partners to explore what they can achieve in terms of joining SevRes data to the student characteristics data they hold, in order to better understand who is most at risk, and how risks change in relation to circumstances.

Priority 3: Enhanced communication across health and education through data sharing agreements

Allowing learners to benefit from effective personalised support and enabling practitioners to deliver person-centred, joined up interventions. Robust, effective data sharing is a foundation for a successful whole-system response to supporting student mental health. The programme will:

- Implement regional Data Sharing Agreement/s using the Wales Accord on the Sharing of Personal Information (WASPI) template that could operate Wales-wide, recognising existing regional differences within and across the health boards, education and other relevant partners.
- Developing common templates (Data protection impact assessments, standard operating procedures) governance, roles and responsibilities, information sharing mechanisms and agreed escalation processes.
- Develop training and awareness resources to support implementation of the tools and across partners working.

Priority 4: Better outcomes for learners demonstrated by in-built robust methods for evaluation and measuring impact

To sustain long-term impact, the programme will continue to generate robust evidence of what works, where and why. This will be achieved through:

- Supporting Medr to commission and deliver an independent evaluation.
- Providing capability to support the implementation of Medr's common tertiary mental health framework, using SevRes data.
- Using evaluation findings, both from the independent review, and ongoing assessment from delivery of the objectives, to inform future investment, influence service design, contribute to success metrics of partner organisations and inform long-term decision making and strategies broader policy agendas.
- Identifying metrics for success linked to the Well-being of Future Generations goals and Medr's risk-based regulatory framework. By embedding a shared learner mental health dataset, the programme will enable visualisation of trends and areas of shared regional and national challenges.

Stakeholder Engagement

The success of telyn depends on active, ongoing engagement with the diverse range of stakeholders who shape, deliver, and are affected by learner mental health services.

The programme's engagement model is built around co-design, transparency, and shared learning – ensuring that the voices of learners, practitioners, institutions and national bodies inform both day-to-day practice and long-term strategic direction.

The programme will work with providers to ensure that service users are engaged with service design. It will also work with staff in co-design, recognising that colleagues across health and education are impacted by service changes, e.g. the support that the programme has provided in developing common ways of working across teams from different disciplines.

Stakeholder Group	Engagement Approach	Purpose/Outcome
Learners & Learner Representatives	• Co-design of services and communication tools • Engage with learner representatives and feedback • Focus on inclusion, accessibility and lived experience	Learners are the core focus of the programme, and their lived experience is essential to understanding what good mental health support looks like. Ensures services are responsive, respectful and needs-led.
Higher & Further Education Institutions	• Engagement with mental health leads, student/learner services, data officers & planners • Implementation of SevRes data and cross-sector protocol • Shared learning and good practice across institutions	Institutions co-deliver the programme's objectives.
NHS Health Boards	• Local joint working arrangements (e.g. MHULS) • Shared referral pathways, governance and supervision • Links to NHS Wales workforce planning and service alignment	Co-creates a coherent, cross-sector mental health support system.
Strategic & National Partners	• Medr: oversight, reporting, funding • Universities Wales, ColegauCymru, AMOSSHE: sector voice and practice networks • Public Services Boards: alignment with regional well-being planning • Welsh Government: mental health & education policy links • NHS Wales Central bodies: Performance and Improvement, Digital Healthcare Wales and Health Education Improvement Wales and Public Health Wales for delivery of the National Mental Health Strategy and associated digital, data and workforce development strategies.	Ensures strategic alignment and policy coherence.

Risks and Mitigations

Delivering a national, cross-sector mental health programme is inherently complex, requiring coordination across multiple institutions, professional boundaries, funding streams, and local contexts.

telyn acknowledges these challenges and has established a proactive, collaborative approach to risk identification, monitoring, and mitigation.

A live risk register is maintained and reviewed regularly by the programme team, and shared with the Oversight Board and Medr as part of routine governance. This ensures that risks are not only identified, but systematically monitored and actively managed, with clear accountability, ownership, and action planning in place.

Measuring Success

telyn is committed to being an evidence-informed initiative that delivers measurable improvements for learners, institutions, and the wider system.

To that end, the programme will adopt a robust and transparent approach to evaluation and performance monitoring, tracking both short-term outputs and long-term outcomes.

The programme will use both quantitative and qualitative indicators to track and demonstrate progress. The programme's success will be assessed against three interrelated areas of impact aligned to the strategy priorities and outlined in a detailed benefits realisation plan:

Outcome Area	Description
Improved Access Strategy Priority 1	As a result of improved partnerships and clearer pathways, learners across Wales experience more timely and appropriate access to mental health support. The outcome being tested is the quality and confidence of practitioner decision for referral and signposting. Achievement will be demonstrated by a range of proxy measures such as 'knowledge of pathways and confidence for referral and signposting decisions'. Other evidence of documented pathways, active regional partnership forums and narrative of clearer decision-making will be relevant. A key measure will be learner feedback during exploration and design of learner-facing services, capturing experience, satisfaction, and perceived impact. This will be planned and delivered in conjunction with Medr's social research evaluation team.

Outcome Area	Description
Evidence-informed Support Strategy Priorities 2 and 3	As a result of clearer pathways, improved data visibility, better information sharing between education providers and health services, and strengthened partnerships, there is an improvement in the confidence and capability of HE and FE support services to assess mental health need and respond appropriately. Achievement will be demonstrated by a range of proxy measures such as 'confidence in internal escalation' and 'clarity of service boundaries'. Other evidence will be signed WASPI agreements and evidence of their utilisation. Another key measure will be utilisation of SevRes data, showing national and regional trends in volume, type, and severity of mental health presentations, informing targeting interventions.
Better Learner Outcomes Strategy Priority 4	As a result of institutional, regional and national dashboards and improved data collection practices, there is an improvement in the quality, consistency, and use of student mental health data to support planning, prioritisation, and system-level decision-making. Achievement will be demonstrated by a range of proxy measures such as 'confidence interpreting data' and 'utilisation of data'. In addition, an independent evaluation of the programme to be commissioned by Medr will seek to illustrate the whole-system benefits of the activities and report on metrics for success linked to the Well-being of Future Generations goals.

Conclusion

This strategy sets out a clear and coordinated roadmap for delivering a more effective, equitable and collaborative approach to learner mental health in Wales. Grounded in the learning from Southeast Wales and shaped by engagement across education and health sectors, telyn provides a compelling model for system-level change.

Over the next three years, the programme will focus on expanding its reach, strengthening its data infrastructure, removing barriers from data sharing, embedding collaboration and regional governance frameworks, and building a robust evidence base. These priorities respond to real-world challenges and opportunities identified through the first phase of delivery, while aligning directly with Wales' national strategies, regulatory goals and legislative duties under the Well-being of Future Generations Act.



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- 2 <https://www.gov.wales/statistics-wales-demography-newsletter-september-2025-html#181316>
- 3 Funded by Medr (the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research in Wales)
- 4 'Learners' is the collective term within the programme and strategy referring to those in tertiary education and research, including in HE, FE, adult community learning, apprenticeships and Local Authority sixth forms, for whom Medr has oversight, as detailed in the 2025-30 Strategic plan.
- 5 <https://senedd.wales/media/mdzljae3/cr-ld15768-e.pdf>
- 6 Joint statement on Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing, published by PHW in collaboration with experts in mental health and young people.
<https://phw.nhs.wales/news/rise-in-mental-health-difficulties-among-children-and-young-people-highlight-need-for-early-action/joint-statement-on-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-november-2025/>
- 7 <https://business.senedd.wales/documents/s130555/MHHE%2014%20Higher%20Education%20Funding%20Council%20for%20Wales%20HEFCW.pdf>
- 8 <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/pdf-versions/2024/2/3/1709131490/statement-strategic-priorities-tertiary-education-and-research-and-innovation.pdf>
- 9 Open Access mental health support approach adopted by NHS Wales performance and improvement and the Fit for the Future: 10 year health plan for England.
- 10 <https://tinyurl.com/yfvvkanb>
- 11 <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/higher-education-mental-health-implementation-taskforce>
- 12 There are multiple sources but for illustration - <https://tinyurl.com/56zjc63k> & <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC12193028/>
- 13 To inform the design and evaluation of the MHULS model, the Severity Index and Reason codes (SevRes) data capture and reporting process were developed in September 2021. All ten Welsh HE Institutes including the Open University are using SevRes. A SevRes assessment is documented by the HE/FE staff member after an initial appointment with a student. A prototype dashboard is in place to for all institutions to view their own data, alongside an aggregated national view.
- 14 <https://senedd.wales/senedd-now/news/cype-report-mental-health-support-in-higher-education/>
- 15 The Wales Accord on the Sharing of Personal Information (WASPI) <https://www.waspi.gov.wales/> - is a framework used by organisations directly concerned with the health, education, safety, crime prevention, and social wellbeing of people in Wales, providing the tools for sharing personal information effectively and lawfully
- 16 An example of existing resources is the 'Right Help at the Right Time - Carmarthenshire Family Information Service' - <https://fis.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/local-services/right-help-right-time/>
- 17 <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2024-04/oecd-multi-level-governance-review-moving-forward-together.pdf>

The top left corner of the page features three parallel, wavy lines in a light cream color. These lines flow from the left edge towards the right, curving upwards and then downwards, creating a sense of movement and depth against the blue gradient background.

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Rhaglen Partneriaethau Iechyd
Meddwl Dysgwyr Cenedlaethol
National Learner Mental Health
Partnerships Programme