

How SHRN can support a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health



Y RHWYDWAITH YMCHWIL
IECHYD MEWN YSGOLION

SCHOOL HEALTH
RESEARCH NETWORK



My name is Simon Murphy, I'm the lead for the School Health Research Network in Wales. I'd like to welcome you to this webinar which is looking at how the School Health Research Network can support the whole school approach to promoting positive mental health.

Webinar Aims

- To highlight the policy and research context in Wales and the role of the School Health Research Network
- To outline the background to the mental health and wellbeing measures included in the Student Health and Wellbeing Survey and to help interpret data introduced this year.
- To consider the practical implications of pupil mental health for schools
- Learn how schools can best support pupil mental health



Given the current situation, it's probably even more important for us to think about the mental health and wellbeing of our young people. So today we are hoping to provide some sort of feedback and guidance to schools about the policy and research background to what we're doing around mental health in Wales, and then a little bit about the Student Health and Wellbeing Survey measures that we collected last time, because there are some new ones in there around mental health; you'll be shortly receiving that data, so we're also hoping to provide you with some useful, practical implications for understanding, interpreting and using that data today.

Welsh policy and research context

- **Supportive context** in schools. E.g. WNHSS and ESTYN inspections and reports - *Healthy and Happy: School impact on pupils' health and wellbeing June 2019*
- Forthcoming **Whole School Approach to Mental Health Policy (2021)**. SHRN part of Joint Ministerial task and Finish Group and data as part of needs assessment, health action planning and monitoring and evaluation
- MRC award established consent procedures for **linking SHRN** to routine health and education data sources anonymously via the SAIL databank. Introduced internationally used **adolescent mental health measures** to survey. Well Being Measure in 2017 and Strengths and Difficulties Measure in 2019
- Newly funded **Wolfson Centre for Adolescent Mental Health** in Wales – SHRN leading programme of work on mental health in schools and agreement to evaluate the MH policy in partnership with Welsh Government



So, just starting off with a little bit of the background to what we're currently doing.

It's worth re-iterating that within Wales there is a very supportive context for health and wellbeing in schools, and you can see that in the Welsh Network of Healthy Schools Scheme, but also more recently in Estyn inspections and reports, such as 'Healthy and Happy'.

I should point out that there is going to be a new Whole School Approach to Mental Health launched in the next year or so. SHRN is currently part of a ministerial Task and Finish Group which is helping to develop that policy and will also be providing the data for the planning, assessment, monitoring and evaluation of that policy in schools. SHRN is in a good place to do that because we have had investment over the last couple of years, significantly from the Medical Research Council, to help us explore whether we can link our SHRN data collected from pupils, to more routine data sources such as education and mental health service use. We are also, through that investment, including some additional measures and particularly the short version of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), that we will be talking to you about today.

The final bit of the jigsaw is the success we've had in obtaining new funding for a Wolfson Centre of Adolescent Mental Health, that is going to be launched at the end of this year. SHRN is going to be leading a programme of work on mental health in schools and has agreed to help evaluate the mental health policy with Welsh Government. We will be working alongside Professors Fran Rice and Stephan Collishaw, who you will hear from in a little while.



The last bit from me is to reiterate how we use the data.

We are going to talk today about your school-level health and wellbeing reports, obviously a really important part of what we do. But it is also worth pointing out that because we have all of the secondary schools in Wales as part of the network, and we routinely get about 70% of pupils filling in the questionnaire, we are able to provide really good national reports for Welsh Government, which is critical for their planning and monitoring of policy. But we can also use that data every four years to compare it with European data as part of the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Survey (HBSC), which allows us to see where Wales sits in the European picture. We also provide Local Authority health and wellbeing reports (www.shrn.org.uk/regional-impact/).

The image displays four research briefing sheets from SHRN. The top sheet, 'Adolescent self-harm prevention and intervention in secondary schools' (April 2018), discusses the prevalence of self-harm and the effectiveness of interventions. The middle-left sheet, 'Wellbeing in young people in foster care in Wales' (March 2017), explores the health and wellbeing of young people in foster care. The middle-right sheet, 'Summer holiday experiences and mental wellbeing on return to school' (November 2017), examines the impact of summer holidays on mental health. The bottom sheet, 'The quality of social relationships for students in foster care', is partially visible.

The final bit, which is a really important element, and sometimes overlooked, is that because we take the pupil data and we also get school environment data from senior management teams, we are able to link those and understand what school practice is associated with beneficial health outcomes for pupils. We disseminate that to schools as research briefings (www.shrn.org.uk/research-briefing-sheets/) and webinars (www.shrn.org.uk/webinars/), so it's a really critical part of the jigsaw within SHRN.

I am going to leave you now and hand over to my colleagues, Fran and Stephan, and they will say a bit about the data that you'll shortly be receiving.