

THE INDEPENDENT INQUIRY

into Mental Health
Services in Tayside

A Call for Evidence

on the experiences of patients, families, carers, service providers and staff of Mental Health Services in Tayside.

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1. Introduction

It is with thanks to the hard work of families, carers and the people with experiences of mental health services, that we are able to issue this open call for evidence.

It was bereaved families who worked to secure a parliamentary debate which established cross party recognition of a lack of confidence in the mental health services available in Tayside and the fundamental need for an Independent Inquiry.

There have been previous investigations and reviews into mental health services in Tayside with a focus on particular services. It is one of the responsibilities of this Inquiry to look into the outcome of these reports and examine the leadership and governance behind resulting improvement plans. However, it is also important that this Inquiry takes a broad view of how services and support work together, including looking at connections between and pathways into services (such as the Police and community-based services) along with the general health of our communities.

Personal testimony, stories and experiences are essential in getting the person centred, end-to-end perspective of mental health services that is vital to this Inquiry. These experiences will help to build a narrative that can guide the focus of the Inquiry; they will help contextualise reports and statistics and help develop recommendations for improvement.

This open call for evidence aims to hear from as many people as possible including individuals, families, staff, community groups and organisations. Information on how to contribute can be found within this document and on the Inquiry website: <https://independentinquiry.org/>

Thank you in advance for your contributions.

If you wish to get in touch to talk about this call for evidence, then please contact:

Email: independentinquiry@dundee.ac.uk

Phone: 01382 381835

2. Background to the Inquiry

A need has been identified for a review of mental health provision in Tayside due to ongoing concerns which have resulted in a lack of public trust in mental health services specifically and NHS Tayside generally.

After strong campaigning from bereaved family and friends, a parliamentary debate took place on 9 May 2018 to discuss the issue. At this debate there was cross party support for an independent Inquiry into mental health services in Tayside. It was agreed that such an Inquiry should follow five core principles:

1. be open and transparent
2. include and involve staff from NHS Tayside, its partners and third sector providers
3. include and involve patients and their families
4. be truly independent
5. include a public call for evidence to ensure everyone's voice is heard

The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE) were asked to convene and chair a Stakeholder Participation Group with the aim of ensuring public involvement in the establishment of the Inquiry. The two tasks for this group were to:

- Recommend a preferred candidate for the Chair of the Inquiry
- Comment on and shape the Terms of Reference for the Inquiry

This group is made up of people with experience of mental health services in Tayside, including people who have/are accessing services, carers and families. To date, this group has met three times and membership has expanded over the course of these meetings.

An Employee Participation Group has also been established to facilitate staff members contributing to the Inquiry.

The Terms of Reference for the Inquiry were finalised with input from both Participation Groups and can be found on the Inquiry website.

Thanks to the input from these groups and others, the Inquiry is now in a position to launch the open call for evidence.

3. How to submit your evidence

You will be able to submit your evidence in a number of ways:

1. Individual written evidence
2. Individual oral evidence
3. Group/organisational evidence

Individual Written Evidence

Written evidence can be sent to:

Email: independentinquiry@dundee.ac.uk

Postal: Independent Inquiry into Mental Health Services in Tayside, 15/16 Springfield, Dundee DD1 4JE

Call for evidence will be open from 5th September 2018 for six weeks, closing on Friday 19th October.

We are looking to hear from individuals, families, carers, NHS staff, community groups and organisations.

Please feel free to submit your experiences and/or the experiences of family members.

You are also encouraged to submit reports and documentation e.g. from Fatal Accident Inquiries, Local Adverse Event Reports, and your own cases pertaining to experiences with mental health services in Tayside.

We are interested in the full range of experiences from good to poor.

We have not prescribed a format or standard template for your written evidence and so you should submit it in a way that you are comfortable, and which best enables you to tell your story. However, below are some guiding questions you may wish to consider when writing your response:

- What are the challenges facing someone trying to access mental health support?
- Are there any good experiences that we can highlight, for example, community services, charities, GPs and the Police service?
- What does a person-centred mental health service look like?
- How can the entire community, including NHS services, take responsibility for vulnerable people?

If you require assistance in drafting or preparing your submission, then please contact Inquiry Team. You will be helped to identify local advocacy groups that can assist you.

We will be reviewing evidence as it comes in. If you have identified yourself in your written submission of evidence, we may contact you for further information/clarification.

Individual Oral Evidence

This will allow individuals, families carers and groups to submit oral evidence to the Inquiry.

This will also allow for those not comfortable with providing written evidence, for whatever reason, to have their voice heard.

Dates and appointment times to meet with the team to give oral evidence will be published on the Inquiry website from 1st October.

Group/organisational evidence

We will be working with groups and organisations who wish to run discussion events and submit a joint document to us as evidence.

We recognise that peer support plays a huge role in allowing people to tell their story and get their views across. To help support this environment we want to encourage organisations and community groups to host discussions around some of the key issues within mental health services in Tayside. The results of these discussions can then be fed into the Inquiry and help inform the direction of investigation.

To support this we will be providing Facilitation Packs for those wishing to host a conversation. Included in this will be guidance on hosting the event, background information and some key questions to consider.

To request a Facilitation Pack or to have a conversation about hosting a discussion the please contact tayside@alliance-scotland.org.uk

Data Protection

A Privacy Impact Assessment has been carried out to ensure that all information submitted as part of this call for evidence complies with General Data Protection Regulations. To view this, please contact the Inquiry.

Accessibility

If you require this document in a different language or format, then please contact the Inquiry.



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