



Manifesto for the Mind

Ending the discrimination against
mental health

Foreword



Liberal Democrats believe that no matter who you are, where you come from and what your circumstances, you should not be denied the opportunity to fulfil your potential.

Yet, in Britain today, millions of people are denied the opportunity to get on and live happy, fulfilling lives because they live with mental health issues.

One in four of us will experience mental health problems at some point in our lives.

In every classroom in Britain there are three children who will have a mental health problem.

And yet, for decades, mental health services have been neglected by successive governments, the poor relation of physical health problems.

And that neglect has come hand in hand with a devastating stigma that has left people isolated and alone.

That's why in Government, the Liberal Democrats have slowly started to undo that damage.

We have enshrined equality for mental health treatment in law.

We have introduced the first ever waiting times standards.



We have invested hundreds of millions of pounds in talking therapies and services for young people with eating disorders.

And we set up the first ever cross-government Mental Health Taskforce to make sure every department is working to tackle mental health issues in their sphere of influence.

In the coalition government's final Budget we secured more than a billion pounds to revolutionise services for children and young people, alongside the first ever waiting times standards and a plan to roll out talking therapies across England.

But we cannot and must not rest there. Equality for people with mental health issues is a liberal mission.

As this document sets out, in Government again, we will continue to put mental health front and centre of the political debate.

That's why I am so immensely proud that we are the first party to put equality for people with mental health problems on the front page of our full General Election manifesto.

Liberal Democrats understand the value of our world class public services. We won't risk them with deep and unnecessary cuts as the Conservatives will. And we won't jeopardise them by risking our economic recovery with a return to reckless borrowing as Labour will.

Only the Liberal Democrats can keep Britain on track and provide both a stronger economy and a fairer society with strong public services.

Only the Liberal Democrats can and will make sure mental health is treated with the same urgency as physical health, with money to back that up. We will challenge the stigma every day, ending the discrimination against mental health.

Yours,


Nick Clegg

Introduction

One in four of us will experience mental health problems like depression or anxiety. For decades mental health has been the last in the queue when it comes to funding and attention. Mental health problems cost the country as much as £100bn each year yet as few as a quarter of people with depression get access to treatment.

Mental health represents nearly a quarter of ill health in our country (23%) but only £1 in every £9 the NHS spends is on specialist mental health services. Better care for mental health is a key factor in building a stronger economy and a fairer society. The moral and the economic case for change is overwhelming.

Labour introduced waiting time targets in the NHS. But they left out mental health. They introduced choice of hospital. But they left out mental health. They designed a system to pay hospitals by the activity they do. But they left out mental health – which has left it at the back of the queue for funding ever since. Mental health has been discriminated against for too long.

In 2010, we called a halt to this and wrote equality for mental health into law. We are now making real progress: introducing the first ever waiting time standards in mental health from next year. But there is a long way to go. That's why the Liberal Democrats have put mental health on the front page of our manifesto for this election and will make it a top priority in the next parliament. We are pledging an extra £8bn for the NHS by 2020, with half a billion a year dedicated to improving mental health care. We made a start towards this in the Budget by securing a £250m a year investment in mental health. This investment will quickly release real savings which can then be ploughed back into patient care and help to ensure that the NHS remains sustainable for the future. There is a wealth of evidence that if you invest in mental health you save money and improve people's lives.

Record of delivery

The Liberal Democrats in government have set out a roadmap to end the discrimination against mental health. We have written equality for mental health into law and into the Government's mandate to the NHS. From this April we are introducing the first ever access and waiting time standards. We are transforming how mental health is funded, tackling the quality of services and gathering much better data on current performance. We have worked hard to get better mental health care:

- £400m to increase access to talking therapies with over 2.4



million people entering treatment, and over 1.4 million completing it so far.

- Funded the Time to Change anti stigma campaign which has led to positive changes in people's attitudes to mental illness.
- £150m over five years to improve services for young people with eating disorders.
- £120m this year and next to introduce the first ever access and waiting time standards.
- A taskforce to set a blueprint for the transformation of children's mental health with £54m invested so far in improving access to talking therapies.
- Much faster assessment and support in the criminal justice system through the £25m liaison and diversion programme.
- Published 'Closing the Gap' a mental health action plan, which included a legal right to choose your care.
- Every area of the country will increase mental health spending next year in line with the extra funding we secured for the NHS in the Autumn Statement.
- New standards across the country to improve crisis care in A&E departments, and in the community, with police and other partner organisations, including driving down the use of police cells for those in mental health crisis.
- The Care Quality Commission has introduced a new, robust and independent inspection regime for mental health, drawing on hard data, on-the-ground expert inspection and patient and staff views of services to determine whether they are safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led;

Promise of more

The Liberal Democrats are committed to a funding boost of £500m per year in the next parliament for better mental health care. We made a start towards this in the Budget by securing a £250m a year investment in mental health. This new funding will enable us to deliver the following commitments:

Increasing access

- Continue to roll out access and waiting time standards for children, young people and adults, in line with the strategy launched last October^[1]. This will include a waiting time standard from referral of no more than 6 weeks for therapy for depression or anxiety and a two week wait standard for all young people experiencing a first episode of psychosis.
- Increase access to clinically and cost effective talking therapies so that hundreds of thousands more people can get access to this support. Our long term goal is to see everyone who can benefit being treated, but we will set an interim target of raising access to 25% of those who could benefit as soon as possible.
- Ensure that no one in crisis will be turned away, with new waiting time standards and better crisis care in hospital A&E departments, in the community and with crisis phone lines. This will enable us to end the use of police cells for people suffering from a mental health crisis.

Care for pregnant women and new mums

- Invest £250m over five years in transforming care for pregnant women, new mothers and those who have experienced miscarriage or still birth, and help them get the early care they need.

Children's mental health

- As announced in the Budget, we will invest £1.25bn over five years to revolutionise children's mental health services, to ensure every child has the opportunity to get on in life. We will implement the proposals outlined in the recent report of the Children's Mental Health Taskforce. This means building better links with schools, ensuring all children develop mental resilience, and getting support and care quickly to those who are struggling. Our investment will help ensure children can access high quality care closer to home.
- Put mental health on the curriculum and build better links with schools. Our investment will help ensure children are able to access high quality care nearer to home, enabling them to keep in contact with family and friends.

More research

- Establish a world-leading mental health research fund, investing £50m in cutting edge research to further our understanding of mental illness and the most effective treatments.

Tackling stigma

- Continue to support the Time to Change programme to tackle stigma against mental health.

Better care

- Introduce care navigators so that people get help finding their way around the system.
- Set stretching targets to improve the physical health of people with mental health problems and join up care so there is more mental health support in your GP surgery and more physical health advice and support within mental health services.
- Ensure all front line public service professionals, including in schools and universities, get better training in mental health – helping them to develop their own mental resilience as well as learning to identify people with mental health problems.
- Radically transform mental health services, extending the use of personal budgets, integrating care more fully with the rest of the NHS, introducing rigorous inspection and high quality standards, comprehensive collection of data to monitor outcomes and waiting times and changing the way services are funded so that they do not lose out in funding decisions in future.

Prevention

- Publish a national wellbeing strategy which puts better health and wellbeing for all at the heart of government policy. This includes promoting better public health policy to benefit mental as well as physical health, such as access to the natural environment.
- As part of this strategy, we will develop a clear approach on preventing mental ill health, with a public health campaign promoting the steps people can take to improve their own mental health - the wellbeing equivalent of the “Five a Day” campaign for healthy eating.
- Support the development of good practice among employers in promoting wellbeing and ensure people with mental health problems get the help they need to stay in their jobs or to find work.