PRESS RELEASE
Tuesday 1st July 2014

MPs URGED TO DOUBLE PSYCHOLOGICAL THERAPY IN THE NHS

At a meeting in Parliament on Tuesday 1st July, MPs will be urged to double the provision of psychological therapy in the National Health Service.

Professors Richard Layard and David Clark will present data that irrefutably prove the economic case for increased access to psychological therapy in the NHS, demonstrating that the savings to the taxpayer of providing treatment greatly outweigh the cost of the treatments themselves.

David Clark will show the high success rates of modern evidence-based psychological therapies such as CBT (cognitive behavioural therapy). Combined with Richard Layard’s economics, these findings demand a radically new priority for psychological therapy within the NHS:

- The average cost of treatment for depression or anxiety disorders is only £650, but 50% of those treated recover and many others improve substantially. If someone comes off Employment Support Allowance, the savings are £650 a month. These savings are enough to pay for the whole cost of a radical expansion of psychological therapy in the NHS.

- In addition, for any given physical illness, people who also have mental health problems cost on average an extra £2,000 a year in physical healthcare – which costs the NHS £10 billion a year in total. If more psychological therapy were available, the cost of the therapy would be completely covered by the savings on physical healthcare.

- Employers would gain too, since mental health problems account for almost 50% of the days that people take off sick.

- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines recommend that all people with depression or anxiety disorders should be offered psychological therapy. Yet at present only about 13% of them are seen by the NHS Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) programme. Professors Layard and Clark argue that in the next Parliament this should be raised drastically to 25%.

Layard and Clark’s argument is published in a new book, *Thrive: the power of evidence-based psychological therapies*, that will be published by Allen Lane/Penguin on 3rd July.

The meeting is co-sponsored by four All-Party Parliamentary Groups, and the other speakers at the meeting will be Norman Lamb MP, Tracey Crouch MP, Alastair Campbell and a former patient.

ENDS
For your information:

Tuesday 1st July’s meeting in Parliament is called “How can the Manifestos do justice to mental health?”. It is co-sponsored by four APPGs (on Health, Mental Health, Mindfulness and Wellbeing Economics). It is at 12.30-2pm in Committee Room 10 (1st floor corridor). Other speakers will include Norman Lamb MP, Tracey Crouch MP, Alastair Campbell and a former patient. To attend, email Harriet Ogborn (h.ogborn@lse.ac.uk).


The Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) Programme began in 2008 and has been described by the journal *Nature* as “world-beating”. In 2013, it saw 650,000 people, and it has also trained 5,550 new therapists in NICE-recommended treatments. The progress of all patients is monitored session-by-session – the first service in the world to do so. Nearly 50% of those treated recover during the period of treatment.

But the service sees only about 13% of people currently suffering from depression and anxiety disorders. Moreover it needs to be extended to the very many people who have both mental and physical problems (whose physical health is often made worse by mental difficulties) and to people with severe mental illness such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. This will require that the programme doubles in size between 2014 and 2020 and improves in quality (especially in the number of sessions which commissioners are willing to pay for).

At the same time the IAPT programme for Children and Young People, which began in 2010, needs extending to cover the whole country and needs its own target for access.

David Clark and Richard Layard are both advisers to the IAPT Programme.

**Richard Layard** is one of the world’s leading labour economists, and in 2008 received the International Prize for Labour Economics. A member of the House of Lords, he has done much to raise the public profile of mental health. His 2005 book *Happiness* has been translated into 20 languages.

**DAVID M. CLARK**, Professor of Psychology at Oxford, is one of the world's leading experts on CBT, responsible for much progress in treatment methods. With Richard Layard, he was the main driver behind the UK’s Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme.

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