

LSE Depression Report urges choice of psychological therapy for all

The LSE's Depression Report – published on Monday 19 June 2006 – urges that **psychological therapy should be made available to all people suffering from depression, chronic anxiety and schizophrenia**. This is what the guidelines from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) prescribe, but they are not currently being implemented because the therapy services are not there.

According to the authors of the report – the Centre for Economic Performance's Mental Health Policy Group, led by Lord Professor **Richard Layard** – there should be a proper psychological therapy service in every part of the country by 2013. Such a service would pay for itself in the reduced expenditure on incapacity benefits from people being able to go back to work.

The report reveals the following striking facts:

- There are more mentally ill people on incapacity benefits than the total number of unemployed people on benefit.
- One in six of all people suffer from depression or chronic anxiety, which affects one in three of all families.
- Only a quarter of those who are ill are receiving any treatment – in most cases medication.
- Modern evidence-based psychological therapy is as effective as medication and is preferred by the majority of patients.
- In most areas, waiting lists are over nine months, if therapy is available at all.
- A course of therapy costs £750 and pays for itself in money saved on incapacity benefits and lost tax receipts.
- We can therefore provide a service in every area at no net cost. This would require 10,000 therapists and 250 local services, with 40 new services opened each year till 2013. With proper leadership from the centre and protected funding, this is totally feasible.

The report has the support of the Royal College of General Practitioners, as well as leading mental health charities – Mind, Rethink, Sane, the Mental Health Foundation and the Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health.

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The Chairman of the Royal College of General Practitioners, Professor **Mayur Lakhani**, said:

‘GPs tell me all the time just how hard it is to get talking therapies for their patients. I welcome this important proposal, which, if implemented, could transform the care of thousands of patients with anxiety and depression.’

ENDS

Notes for editors

The Report is published by the Mental Health Policy Group of the Centre for Economic Performance (CEP) at LSE. The group includes nine distinguished academics and practitioners, including Lord Layard (the Chair), Professor David Clark and Baroness Meacher, all of whom are available for interview.

The report is available in pdf format following publication on Monday 19 June 2006, at: <http://cep.lse.ac.uk/>

For further information

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Lord Layard’s telephone numbers are: work: 020-7955-7048; mobile: 07790-906206; home: 020-8341-7771.

To speak to representatives of the mental health charities, contact Andy Bell, Director of Communications at the Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health on 07810-503638.



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