

P 06

Ymchwiliad i'r Adolygiad Blaenoriaethau ar gyfer y Pwyllgor Iechyd, Gofal
Cymdeithasol a Chwaraeon

Inquiry into the Priorities for the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

Ymateb gan: Birth Story Listeners

Response from: Birth Story Listeners

[Via email]

Priorities for Health, Social Care & Sport Committee Consultation

To Whom it may concern,

I have just been sent a link to this Consultation, but I am unsure exactly how to present my views, so I shall write them here & ask that they are included in the consultation please.

I founded & lead a small Community Organisation with limited private funding in North Wales called Birth Story Listeners.

Our priority is to offer Peer Support & encouragement to women in North Wales (specifically Conwy County, North Gwynedd & parts of Anglesey) who experienced a distressing or traumatic birth & have gone on to develop symptoms of PTSD, Anxiety or PND, or for whom these symptoms have developed as a postnatal illness.

We offer a facebook support group, one-to-one meetings with myself where members can share their birth experiences, & a small Peer Support Group meeting in local café's where our Mums can connect with one another to reduce isolation & to gain encouragement & support.

I also campaign to reduce the likelihood of birth trauma developing by giving talks to student midwives at Bangor University, by writing a campaign poem about perinatal PTSD following user research at the Birth Trauma Association which has been read out at various maternity Services conferences, & writing a booklet called 'mental health matters' to fill the void of information available to pregnant women in regards to looking after their mental health.

In the coming couple of years I would like to see much more of an emphasis placed on perinatal mental health by the Health Board with a campaign for it to be 'of equal status as physical health during that perinatal period.' This also means that any consultations in relation to proposed changes to maternity services in this region should place the impact of those changes to women's mental health as a top priority rather than an afterthought.

I would like to see more investment & partner working across the region in terms of promoting mental wellbeing in the perinatal period.

I would also like to see Health Professionals educated to a much higher standard about the importance of protecting mental health & wellbeing, & recognising the symptoms of illness should they occur.

Please could you pass this on to the relevant parties.

Diolch yn fawr,

Claire Kay.