

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**DATE:** 31 March 2017

**STATEMENT OF:** The Scottish Mental Health Partnership ("the Partnership")

**IN RESPONSE TO:** The Mental Health Strategy: 2017-2027 ("the Strategy") released by the Scottish Government on 30 March 2017.

Chair of the Scottish Mental Health Partnership, Dr Alastair Cook, has said "We are pleased to see a commitment to parity of physical and mental health in the new Strategy. However, the next stages and actions will be crucial to delivering the transformation needed to create good mental health for all. The Partnership, as a coalition of national organisations, can play a key role in supporting development and delivery of the Strategy and would welcome the opportunity to do so."

The Scottish Mental Health Partnership welcomes the publication of the new Strategy and the inclusion of a vision for Scotland where people can get the right help at the right time. The Partnership are pleased to see the Strategy includes actions around early intervention and prevention, as well as an approach that considers the multiple factors which affect peoples' mental health; housing, poverty and education all play a key role in wellbeing. We are also encouraged by the pledged investment in the mental health workforce, including the additional 800 workers. However, we are uncertain as to whether this is the significant investment required to achieve the ambitions of the Strategy until we see further detail.

The Partnership would like to see strong leadership and oversight of the Strategy and would welcome the opportunity to contribute to the development and delivery of next steps and future plans. We also feel it is important for the voices and experiences of those who use the system to be included as part of the development and delivery of the Strategy, such as in a process of co-design and co-ownership.

The Partnership would like to see an increased share of health and social care spending targeted towards mental health throughout the life of the Strategy. Whilst there may be a commitment towards parity between mental and physical health, adequate resources need to be directed towards mental health to ensure this happens. To truly achieve parity, we need sustainable, recurring and substantial investment in mental health. We believe good mental health must be seen as important for everyone and recognise this extends beyond the remit for health and social care.

*The Scottish Mental Health Partnership provides a collective, strategic voice for organisations with an interest in mental health in Scotland. The Partnership is a coalition of third sector mental health organisations, service providers and professional bodies working together to promote mental health awareness and improve outcomes for people experiencing mental health problems.*

**Ends**

## **NOTE TO EDITORS**

### **Scottish Mental Health Partnership Members**

1. Action on Depression
2. Bipolar Scotland
3. Breathing Space
4. Mental Health Foundation
5. Penumbra
6. Royal College of GPs
7. Royal College of Psychiatrists in Scotland
8. Samaritans
9. Scottish Association for Mental Health
10. Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance
11. Scottish Recovery Network
12. See Me
13. Support in Mind Scotland
14. Voices of Experience