

NEWS RELEASE

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OCKENDEN TEAM AND WATCHDOG JOIN FORCES TO REVIEW OLDER PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH CARE

An independent team, looking at the care of older people with mental health problems in North Wales, will be travelling across the whole region this Spring, giving people the opportunity to share their views and experiences as part of an on-going review.

Donna Ockenden, her team and the North Wales Community Health Council (NWCHC) – the independent health watchdog, will be hosting a series of events across the six counties of North Wales, inviting NHS staff, patients, their carers and their families to talk about the care and services provided to older people with mental health problems.

Ms Ockenden says, 'I am delighted that the North Wales Community Health Council will be joining my team in hosting these events. The NWCHC's local knowledge and impartiality will allow people to talk freely to me and my team and in confidence'.

Ms Ockenden went on to say, 'This work is part of our on-going review of the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board's governance arrangements relating to older people's mental health services in North Wales. My review also surrounds the nature of the care and treatment of patients at the Ysbyty Glan Clwyd mental health ward – Tawel Fan – which was closed in 2013. The review will consider the Health Board's past and current systems, structures and processes for inpatient mental health services for older people. Reaching out to patients and health care staff in this way is crucial to my review establishing the truth. Throughout the work we are ensuring an independent and objective approach. Listening to staff, patients, carers and patient families will help my team ensure that patients' voices are a central part of my final report.'

The Chair of the North Wales health watchdog, Mrs Jackie Allen says, 'We are looking forward to meeting as many people from across North Wales as part of Ms Ockenden's work. Although we are still working through the finer details as to where we will be going – we thought it would be useful to give people as much notice as possible that we will be coming to various locations across the region. Our teams will be available on a series of dates – morning, noon and evening – so that people can come and talk to us – in confidence if they want – about their experiences, whether they be good or bad.'

Mr Geoff Ryall-Harvey, NWCHC Chief Officer commented 'I strongly believe that the local knowledge of the NWCHC membership and the skills of my staff will prove to be of significant value to Ms Ockenden's independent review. It is vital that people from all across the region are given the opportunity to have their voices heard for such an important piece of work.'

Events will be taking place on the following dates:

April 2017 – 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th (times and venues to be advised)

May 2017 – 8th, 9th and 10th (times and venues to be advised)

June 2017 – 5th, 6th and 7th (times and venues to be advised)

It is anticipated that further dates will be announced in due course.

For further information or an interview, please contact Carol Williams on tel: 01248 679 284 or e-mail: carol.williams@waleschc.org.uk