

Minister welcomes report on substance misuse among older adults

The independent Advisory Panel on Substance Misuse (APoSM) was asked by the Welsh Government to provide advice on the additional actions needed to tackle the problem of substance misuse in an ageing population.

Older adults are forming an increasingly large proportion of the population; they are also, as a group, more likely than earlier generations to develop substance misuse problems. This is resulting in greater demands on health, social care and other services.

The [Report](#), published today, concludes that although there is significant work already underway, substance misuse services need to adapt to meet the needs of older adults, and more specialist older adults' services need to be developed.

Interim Chair of the Advisory Panel on Substance Misuse, Richard Ives, said:

“The proportion of older adults in the population is increasing rapidly, and so is the number of older adults with substance use problems. Services must respond to this social change and need to be flexible in providing effective treatment for older clients.”

In welcoming the Report, Minister for Social Services and Public Health, Rebecca Evans, said:

“Substance misuse among older adults is a growing problem. Levels of alcohol and drug misuse – including illicit drugs and prescription and over-the-counter medication – is a cause of concern.

“The Welsh Government, together with Public Health Wales, is taking forward a range of actions to support this group of people, including implementing a new treatment framework specifically targeted at older substance misusers.

“But we recognise that challenges remain and we agreed that APoSM should explore and advise the Welsh Government on this, to examine what more could be done to tackle this issue. I would like to thank the Panel for this comprehensive Report which will be a useful contribution to our evidence base on substance misuse among older adults, as we look to build on the good work already underway in Wales.”