

Government Action

Recently, there has been a big push from not only the general public but also from individuals who are in powerful positions for example the Government, to pay attention to the rising number of young people at school and adults in the workplace that are developing mental health issues.

Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Matt Hancock, has revealed that we should be expecting the first ever Green Paper, solely on the prevention of mental health issues, this year. A Green Paper is a report of government proposals that is published in order to provoke discussions. This is good news for everyone, but especially students in school like us because it means we have more of a chance to be listened to and given the opportunity to be given important things like funding to build on our mental health support in schools and our community.

Chief Executive of the support network, Mind, Paul Farmer, said, "We are promised £2 billion pounds extra for mental health but a huge investment over many years will be required to reverse the damage caused by cuts to the NHS". This shows that it will be a long-term project, but some improvements are on their way.

How will these changes help?

As mentioned, two billion pounds is being given nationally to help those experiencing mental health difficulties. This is going to affect so many people. It might be you, your neighbour or family member. However, Chancellor Phillip Hammond highlighted in his preview on how the money will be spent, that there will be an additional investment of £250 million in new service 'Crisis', which includes 24/7 service via NHS 111 children and young people crisis team all over the country. This affects all of us. Every single person that is reading this is a young person and can get help when the extra funding is given, so we must make sure this funding is continuously given.

There will also be comprehensive mental health support in every A&E by 2023/4. Moreover, plans have also been made to spend the money on community services, for example: crisis cafes that serve homemade food at a cheap, good value price -it is particularly aimed at people who are struggling to afford food- and the cafés also provide training for homeless people seeking employment.

Finally, the chancellor has also pledged that he will be prioritising children's mental health services and will be looking for the opportunity to introduce specialists in children's mental health to schools. Whilst this unexpected announcement is an encouraging step to stopping the stigma around mental health, as well as bringing more specialists into the workplace and schools to voice our opinion on how mental health is being dealt with, it will still take time and lots of money to meet the inordinate demand for help within the mental health community, while also trying to decrease the strain on the NHS.