



The 1st HEIW / SCW virtual conference 'Informing the future of the **Mental** **Health Workforce** in Wales'

Case Study

Improving WAST Response to Mental Health calls

What did you do and why?

Circa 10% of calls to the Welsh Ambulance Service 999 number are related to mental health crisis. During the Covid 19 pandemic we recruited mental health professionals (mental health nurses, learning disability nurse and social worker) to work in our clinical contact centre, to help us improve our response.

What was the impact on service users?

Mental health professionals were able to use their skills to stop us sending an ambulance in about 50% of cases. They were able to discharge around a fifth of callers over the phone. They reduced ambulance conveyance at a time of crisis and improved the service to the public.

What was the impact on staff?

Other non-mental health professionals valued having mental health professionals working alongside them. They feel unconfident and under-skilled in helping people in crisis. The mental health professionals enjoyed the work. Both groups found the work demanding but rewarding

What lessons did you learn?

We learned that mental health professionals can safely and effectively manage mental health crisis calls to the ambulance service. They improve the overall efficiency of the ambulance service and provide rapid access to a mental health professional at a time of crisis. People valued this service.