Today officially marks 100 days before the Welsh elections. In the coming months the RCPsych in Wales will be lobbying all political parties on our Manifesto calls for better leadership, workforce and planning; better support to provide timely services; and a renewed focus on meeting the specific needs of those with challenging behaviour.

We have joined forces with 25 health and social care organisations in a ‘Marketplace Manifesto’. We will attend five political party conferences, starting with the Welsh Lib Dems on 5 February and ending with the Welsh Conservatives on 13 March. The Marketplace is a lunchtime fringe event where organisations armed with banners and manifestos we can speak directly with candidates, MPs, AMs, and other dignitaries to influence the line the next Government will take on health and social care. It’s also the perfect opportunity to show solidarity with organisations like Mind Cymru, the Samaritans, Age Concern, and Alzheimer’s Society as well as other Royal Colleges.  

We have also co-signed a Joint Manifesto arranged by the Welsh NHS Confederation. 10 Actions Required. Action 8 covers mental health: “Improving the level of mental health support and enabling parity of esteem between mental and physical health”.

The Political Parties will be unveiling their manifestos after the conference season is over. We expect that mental health will feature on all of the health portfolios, as it did at the general election. However, there is no room for complacency, especially given that this year’s election is filled with uncertainty. Experts are predicting quite confidently that this year there will be no clear winner; not even Welsh Labour, who has managed to hold on to power since the Assembly’s inception in 1999. If you follow politics closely, you will see that the tide appears to be turning against Labour and for the first time there is a real chance that we may see another political party, or coalition of parities, leading the Assembly, without Labour.

Why is this year so different?

- UKIP has struck a chord with a large number of working class voters who traditionally would vote for Labour. For the first time since devolution, UKIP may gain at least one seat in the Assembly.
- In the run up to the general election, the Conservatives launched an attack on Welsh Labour in order to gain seats in Parliament, and this appears to have worked very well. This tactic is now being repeated by the Welsh Conservatives in the run up to this year’s elections.
- The split in the Labour party under Jeremy Corbyn’s leadership could have implications in Wales.
- Welsh Liberal Democrats face significant losses as a result of the party’s poor performance at the national election.

The election will be held on Thursday, 5 May.
TOPICS OF INTEREST

Minimum Unit Pricing for Alcohol

Welsh Government has put forward a Bill to introduce a Minimum Unit Price (MUP) for alcohol at 50p. The Bill makes it an offence for an alcohol retailer to supply, or authorise the supply of, a serving of alcohol for a selling price below the set MUP for alcohol in Wales. MUP will apply to businesses in Wales when selling to a person in Wales, including those which operate online or telephone sales of alcohol. Where alcohol is ordered online or over the telephone from a retailer in Wales and delivered to a person outside Wales, MUP will not apply. Provisions within the draft Bill also include: powers of inspection for local authority Authorised Officers (AOs) to enforce the MUP for alcohol, with powers to issue fixed penalty notices and where necessary, to prosecute offenders; powers of entry for AOs with offences relating to intentionally obstructing an AO in the exercise of his/her functions under the Bill; and powers for Welsh Ministers to make regulations to set the minimum unit price for alcohol.

The consultation ended on 11 December. Click on the below link for our response.

http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/workinpsychiatry/divisions/rcpschinwales/currentconsultations.aspx#MUP

Public Health (Wales) Bill

The Assembly’s Health and Social Care Committee published its report into stage one of the Public Health (Wales) Bill. The Bill introduced a number of provisions for cigarette sales, public toilets, tattooing and piercing, and vaping in enclosed public spaces. The Committee broadly accepts the general principles of the Bill but they could not reach consensus regarding vaping in enclosed public spaces. The Committee did recommend that the Bill should include a statutory duty on public bodies to complete Health Impact Assessments when making any policy and legislative decisions.

The Bill is now at Stage 2 at the Assembly.


The Mental Health (Wales) Measure

The National Partnership Board at Welsh Government heard the views from service users and carers about the implementation of the Mental Health Measure at the last meeting in November. Their views are beginning to reflect our own.

Their comments were:

- Concerns about GPs lack of knowledge of mental health and the legislation itself
- The definition of primary and secondary mental health services are muddled; in some cases the criteria for primary and secondary care are being manipulated.
- Doctor case load is too high
- Part 3 (self-referral back into secondary care) needs a focus on outcome rather than numbers.
- People will do no more or no less than the Measure states.
• Huge impact on benefits when moved from secondary to primary care.
• Older people feel that the Measure leaves them less empowered; the IMHA has more power over their care than those who know them.
• They want all health boards to sign a dignity pledge.

We plan to meet with the authors and discuss ways of moving things forward.

**The Crisis Care Concordat for Wales**

RCPsych in Wales is one of 22 organisations that signed up to a Welsh Crisis Care Concordat. A draft Concordat was circulated to Members for comment over the summer. Dr Sabari and Dr Maria Atkin provided feedback directly to Welsh Government. Dr Sabari and I sit on the Task and Finish Board, which supports its implementation in the first year. This board is led by Sara Mosely, the new Chief Executive of Mind Cymru.


**Mental Health Act, Code of Practice**

Welsh Government published the draft Code of Practice for sections 2 and 3 of the Mental Health Act for public consultation. Four members of our Executive Board provided feedback to the Welsh Government during the drafting of the Code. You can find a copy of our response to the Consultation here.

**Mental Capacity Forum**

The Forum is chaired by Baroness Finley of Llandaff. It is a joint Department of Health & Ministry of Justice initiative to improve access to the benefits of the Mental Capacity Act, following the House of Lords Select Committee report stating that many vulnerable people who may lack capacity are not receiving their rights under the law. The new National Mental Capacity Forum will seek to meet this challenge. The Forum will consist of a small, core group of stakeholders representing different areas in the sector, and a larger group of associate members.

We plan to provide feedback to the Forum on how the MCA is being implemented and how it could work better. This forum was created after the findings of the House of Lords’ inquiry into the MCA found that people were not being properly protected under the Act. Central College is involved in the Forum. If you have any comments you would like to share with us, please email me by **29 February**.

**RCPsych Public Mental Health Executive**

Professor Keith Lloyd is attending the Central College’s Public Mental Health Executive as Welsh representative. Dr Peter Byrne, Associate Registrar for Public Mental Health, spoke at our conference in December on the key challenges for public mental health. In Wales, the particular points of interest are: increasing the smoking ban to mental health units and prisons, vaping in enclosed public spaces, high deprivation and mental health, and Welsh Government’s policy on Prudent Healthcare.
Together for Children and Young People (T4C&YP) - Review into CAMHS in Wales

Together for Children and Young People Programme is a Welsh Government initiative to improve CAMHS services in Wales. Professor Dame Sue Bailey has given Welsh Government on-going advice. We are arranging a meeting between RCPsych in Wales and the Association of Directors of Social Services to see how we as organisations can together work with Welsh Government to deliver these changes.


On 18 January, the College launched a Commission on CAMHS, chaired by Baroness Claire Tyler. The first meeting of the Commission is taking place on 8 February and representatives from the jurisdictions will provide an update on advances in their areas.

Mental health budget ring-fence

The mental health budget in Wales will continue to be protected by a ring-fence following a Welsh Government-commissioned review. The Review of the Financial Ring-fencing Arrangements for Mental Health Services in Wales, by PricewaterhouseCoopers concluded that the purpose of the ring-fence – to protect expenditure on mental health services – has largely been achieved. The report contains a number of recommendations aimed to better link expenditure with outcomes. The Welsh Government are now considering these recommendations and will publish a further statement later in the year following discussion with stakeholders.

http://gov.wales/newsroom/healthandsocialcare/2015/mhbudget/?lang=en

New plan to develop frontline NHS Wales workforce

A new plan to strengthen the primary care workforce to deliver new models of care and look after more people close to their homes has been published by Health and Social Services Minister Mark Drakeford today. The primary care workforce plan will be backed by an extra £4.5m of funding as the Welsh Government continues to invest in primary care to recruit, educate and train the wide range of healthcare professionals who are key to providing health services in local communities.


Healthcare Professional Education and Investment Review

In April, a panel led by Mel Evans OBE published the findings of its review into making improvements on education and training the healthcare professionals in Wales. The panel made three key recommendations:

- The need for a refreshed strategic vision for NHS Wales for 2015-30, based on prudent healthcare, which should inform the strategy for the workforce;
- The development of NHS Wales’ learning culture;
The creation of a single body for workforce planning, development and commissioning of education and training

The findings were criticised by a number of health professional organisation. Click here for our response.

Future Pay Strategy NHS Wales - NHS Workforce Review

The Review is led by a small panel of experts, academics and other professionals who are familiar with the areas of investigation and who are independent of Welsh Government. The review is chaired by David Jenkins of Aneurin Bevan Local Health Board. The Review has gathered evidence and will make recommendations for the consideration of Welsh Ministers on matters arising from the Nuffield Trust’s 2014 report ‘A decade of Austerity in Wales’.

The review is considering the following:

- The identification of new models of service delivery, which are at the forefront of the integration of health and social care together with an analysis of the barriers experienced by such models and associated ways of working;
- The workforce of the future; the staff and skill mix the NHS needs to ensure people receive high-quality care as close to their homes as possible;
- Areas of efficiency, taking into account the principles of prudent healthcare to help address the long-term financial challenge between 2016-17 and 2025-26, as identified in the Nuffield Trust report A Decade of Austerity in Wales?; and
- The long-term strategic direction for pay and reward for people currently covered by the UK Agenda for Change (and executive and senior posts) contract terms and conditions. This will include the affordability of future pay and rewards within the context of the Nuffield Trust report A Decade of Austerity in Wales?; and the approach to considering, determining and setting future pay and rewards

The panel will report to Welsh Ministers next month. We will keep our members informed.

10 year plan for the NHS Wales Workforce

The review of the NHS workforce being led by David Jenkins will provide an understanding of strategic challenges faced by the current workforce.

It will also help inform the development of a 10-year plan for the workforce to which the government committed earlier this year under the motion agreed by the National Assembly. The motion called for the government to “prepare a new 10 year national workforce plan for the NHS which ensures action is taken to train and recruit sufficient doctors, nurses and other health care professionals to ensure that health and social care across Wales is ready for the future”.

The plan will be available for the incoming government to consider after the elections to the National Assembly for Wales in May.

1 The National Partnership Board oversees the implementation of the Welsh Mental Health strategy, Together for Mental Health. Clare Lamb, our Policy Lead, sits on the board.