A) Choosing Wisely Wales

The Choosing Wisely Wales campaign which encourages clinicians and patients to engage in conversations about making wise treatment decisions will be lead by the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges Wales. The Wales Academy, which represents Medical Royal Colleges and Faculties in Wales, will work in partnership with Public Health Wales and patient organisations to deliver this initiative aimed at providing patient-centred care, reducing harm and waste and improving healthcare outcomes for patients in Wales. Choosing Wisely is an important part of prudent healthcare.

Choosing Wisely Wales, which will align closely with Choosing Wisely UK, forms part of a larger international campaign. Choosing Wisely was originally developed in the United States in 2012 and has so far been adapted and implemented by 12 other countries.

This clinician-led campaign will enable clinicians and patients to choose care that avoids unnecessary tests, treatments and procedures. As part of the multidisciplinary programme, participating professional (health) organisations (such as medical royal colleges) will identify five common tests or procedures in their speciality (or discipline) where there is strong evidence to suggest that they do not benefit most patients, or may even cause harm. There will be close patient involvement at all stages and it is anticipated that independent patient or consumer groups will produce information for patients on the selected interventions. Thus clinicians and patients both use information supplied by trusted peers to make a shared decision relevant to the individual.

Public Health Wales is already applying this methodology with patients and clinicians in Aneurin Bevan University Health Board. The first set of nationally selected interventions of low or no benefit will be released early 2016 after consideration by the UK Academy of Medical Royal Colleges. There will be a programme to support implementation and to evaluate the campaign.

B) New Chairman

Dr Paul Myres, Chair of the Royal College of General Practitioners Wales has been appointed as the new Chairman of the Wales Academy to replace Mr Simon Emery who demitted office in December.

Mr Simon Emery, Chair of the Wales Academy said:

"I am delighted to support Paul as the newly appointed Chairman of the Academy in Wales. He has been deeply involved as vice chairman over the last two years and is very committed to building a strong all College partnership in Wales. These are interesting times for the Committee as we embark on the Choosing Wisely commission and embrace the opportunity to provide strong medical leadership in next year’s government elections."

C) Election Manifesto 2016

The Academy of Medical Royal Colleges Wales (AMRCW), has compiled a list of key policy actions and priorities it requires of Welsh Government by 2020.

This document provides a consensus view of the cross-specialty issues and overarching policies which AMRCW believes need to be delivered in primary and secondary care in order to maintain and improve health and health services for the patients in Wales.

The following actions are:
- Deliver integrated care
- Ensure the system of primary care is properly resourced
- Develop an improved medical workforce and training strategy
- Provide 7 day consultant present care for acute and emergency care
- Invest in prevention programmes to tackle obesity
- Reduce health inequalities
- Invest in IT infrastructure
- Recognise the equal importance of mental and physical health

D) Affiliation with UK Academy

For some time the Wales Academy has sought to develop stronger links with the UK Academy and following discussions our proposal to formally become part of the UK Academy has been supported and accepted.

The benefits for both organisations are outlined:

- Strengthening the UK Academy’s stated aim to genuinely be a UK wide organisation
- Cross fertilisation of work and helping avoid a too Anglo-centric approach from the UK Academy
- Recognition of the value of plugging in to the UK Academy by both the Academy in Wales and the Welsh Government
- Opportunity for joint work and projects
- Opportunity for the Academy in Wales to consolidate and grow and bring all Colleges into membership