IN THE NEWS

Minimum alcohol pricing can go ahead in Scotland, says court

The Holyrood government’s plan to introduce a blanket minimum price for alcohol has been backed by the Scottish courts in a ruling hailed by health campaigners as marking “a great day for Scotland’s health”. The court of session in Edinburgh rejected a challenge by Scotland’s drinks industry, which claimed the plan to set a minimum price at 50p per unit of alcohol – a measure that would see a 70cl bottle of whisky priced at a minimum of £14 – was in breach of European law.

The Guardian

Toolkit launched to help staff better interact with clients with mental ill health who are from different cultures

A new toolkit has been launched to help mental health and social care staff better interact with clients from other cultures. The ‘Cultural Competency Toolkit’, developed by equalities charity Diverse Cymru, provides guidance on how staff can take action to overcome the barriers that Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) people often face when accessing services because of differences in culture.

Diverse Cymru

We need to increase mental health research in young people

In October 2016, the Royal Pharmaceutical Society announced their new research programme to tackle mental illnesses in young people. Around 75% of mental illnesses start before people turn 18 years. RPS are calling for widespread public support for research and long-term commitment to sustainable funding. They launched their campaign to put young people’s mental health on the agenda. Readers can “swear to tackle mental illness” or read their manifesto for young people’s mental health.

Royal Pharmaceutical Journal

Suicide risk 'higher in community'

Suicides of people being cared for in the community are higher than among hospital inpatients, a report says. There are around 200 suicides a year of people cared for by crisis teams - three times the number in hospitals. A third had been discharged from hospital in the previous fortnight, while a further third had been using the service for less than a week. The University of Manchester report suggests crisis teams in the UK are under too much pressure.

BBC
WELSH GOVERNMENT

The Draft Budget was announced (18 October) to take forward the new Government’s forward programme Taking Wales Forward. In 2017-18 it will provide £240m to the Welsh NHS to meet the on-going growth in demand and costs of services and in the next four years includes £1bn to transform and maintain the NHS estate.

Programme launched to help people recovering from substance misuse and mental health conditions into work. The £7.2 million ‘Out of Work Service’, which has received more than £4.8 million from the European Social Fund, is helping people aged over 25 to overcome the barriers they face to gaining and staying in employment.

£350 million Specialist and Critical Care Centre given green light. Health Secretary Vaughan Gething has given the go ahead for the construction of the new Specialist and Critical Care Centre (SCCC) in Llanfrechfa Grange, Cwmbran. This forms part of the South Wales Programme.

New delivery plan to improve mental health and well-being in Wales, launched by Vaughan Gething. Together for Mental Health strategy covers all ages and contains a range of actions to support people with severe and enduring mental illness. The strategy sets out ten priority areas for service improvement and is implemented through three year delivery plans for government and stakeholders. The first delivery plan covered the period 2012-15; today’s strategy covers 2016-19.

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Health and Social Care Committee

Medical recruitment

The Health, Social Care and Sports Committee is conducting an inquiry into medical recruitment. The Terms of reference are as follows:

- The capacity of the medical workforce to meet future population needs, in the context of changes to the delivery of services and the development of new models of care.
- The implications of Brexit for the medical workforce.
- The factors that influence the recruitment and retention of doctors, including any particular issues in certain specialties or geographic areas.
- The development and delivery of medical recruitment campaigns, including the extent to which relevant stakeholders are involved, and learning from previous campaigns and good practice elsewhere.
- The extent to which recruitment processes/practices are joined-up, deliver value for money and ensure a sustainable medical workforce.

The deadline for submissions is 18 November.
**Public Health (Wales) Bill**

The Chair of the HSCS Committee has given **advance notice** of the Committee’s intention to issue a call for evidence on the general principles of the Public Health (Wales) Bill subject to its introduction and referral to the Committee.

**Winter Preparedness Inquiry**

The Chair has **written** to the Cabinet Secretary and to the Minister outlining a number of key themes which have emerged. (31 October 2016)

**Committee’s Future inquiries**

The Committee’s future inquiries and outlining the general terms of reference. The inquiries will look into the following areas:

- Dementia;
- Primary care;
- Loneliness and isolation;
- Use of anti-psychotic medication;
- Public health and sport.

And for each will consider the following:

- Its impact on health inequalities;
- The extent to which a preventative approach has been pursued to health and well-being;
- The evidence of effective and efficient spending commitments;
- Its effect on matters relating to the health and social care workforce;
- The implications of the UK’s withdrawal from the EU.

**Finance Committee**

**National Assembly Finance Committee asks if the Welsh Government spending money in the right areas?**

The draft budget sets out how the government intends to spend £15 billion pounds over the next financial year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>£</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health, Wellbeing and Sport</td>
<td>7.3bn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Government</td>
<td>3.4bn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communities and Children</td>
<td>709m</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economy and Infrastructure</td>
<td>1.3bn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.6bn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment and Rural Affairs</td>
<td>368m</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central Services and Administration</td>
<td>296m</td>
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</table>

**Total**                                    **15.0bn**

The Finance Committee has set up **an online discussion** for people to share and debate ideas about the draft budget. It will also be taking evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and relevant bodies and individuals. Other National Assembly committees will be scrutinising proposed budgets in their respective areas and reporting their findings back to the Finance Committee.
PARLIAMENTARY NEWS

Shadow Cabinet Reshuffle

Barbara Keeley, MP for Worsley and Eccles South, has been appointed to the role as Shadow Minister for Mental Health (with the new added remit of Social Care) in Jeremy Corbyn’s Shadow Cabinet. Ms Keeley has served on the Health Committee since 2011, and was the Vice Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Carers. She had also served as Shadow Older People, Social Care and Carers Minister when Corbyn was first elected in September 2015. Jonathan Ashworth, MP for Leicester South, has been appointed Shadow Secretary of State for Health.

RCPsych gives evidence to the Lords Committee on the 2003 Licensing Act

Professor Colin Drummond, Chair of the RCPsych Addictions Faculty, appeared this week before the Lords Committee which was looking into the impact and effectiveness of the 2003 Licensing Act. It was a lively session with a clear divide in the Committee. Some Peers seemed keen on expanding the licensing laws to include health considerations and to introduce Minimum Unit Pricing for alcohol while others seemed considerably more skeptical.

REPORTS

Age UK: ‘Hidden in Plain Sight: the unmet mental health needs of older people’

According to this report, the current availability of mental health services does not meet the increasingly high demand from an ageing population. It also found that over a third of mental health trusts in England have no policies for providing integrated care for people over 65 with both mental and physical health needs.

- Implementation of Mental Health Taskforce recommendations should include a work stream dedicated to meeting older people’s mental health needs.
- Local health and care commissioners should fully understand the prevalence of common mental health conditions among the over 65s in their areas.
- Each clinical commissioning group and local authority should consider appointing “older people’s mental health champions”.
- All services should be appropriately funded and equipped to deliver fully integrated care that addresses mental and physical health and comorbidity.

Mental Health Foundation: Mental Health in Wales – Fundamental Facts

At the moment only 5.5% of health research funding goes to mental health in the UK. In Wales, we need to invest in research and data collection as there is a scarcity of information available – in terms of what is captured at a Local Health Board level and also how it feeds into the national picture. Unlike England’s psychiatric morbidity survey, there is no such survey in Wales which looks at who is accessing support, and at what point. Neither is there regular information about investment in mental health and where it's going. We need a clear picture of mental health in Wales, which includes issues of current scale and impact and research that looks at what works in order to build a mentally healthy society.
**NHS Confederation briefing - is mental health crisis care is in crisis? (England)**

The NHS Confederation have produced a briefing asking whether mental health crisis care is in crisis. The key points from this briefing are:

- Anecdotally, MHN members inform us that there are occasions when there are no routine acute mental health assessment beds available across the country.
- There is concern that committed government funding for mental health is failing to reach the front line of care.
- There are further concerns that the sustainability element of STP (sustainability and transformation plans) funding has largely been apportioned to the acute sector.
- People with a mental health problem are three times more likely to attend A&E.
- Suicide by service users under community crisis teams is increasing.
- Peak hours for mental health presentations to A&E are between 11pm and 7am.
- Good practice examples from MHN members show how local areas can operate as a whole system to benefit individuals and the wider system of care.
- Mental health crisis care needs to be a priority area for transformation.

**Samaritans Cymru: Wales – Impact Report**

We are committed to reaching as many people as possible who may be struggling to cope and our 2015/16 Impact Report demonstrates how we do this:

- Influencing public policy
- Work in schools
- Work in prisons
- Working with the media
- Free to call number (also for Welsh speakers)
- Working with the railways

**Diverse Cymru: Cultural Competency Toolkit**

A Practical Guide for Mental Health professionals, other professionals and front-line staff working within the Mental Health, Health and Social Care sector in Wales. Concerns have been expressed over a number of years that services are not being delivered to people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities experiencing mental illness and distress in a way that meets their needs. BAME people with specific mental illnesses are often over-represented and, at times, misdiagnosed in certain sections of mental health services. There is also an underutilization of service provision due to the low take-up rates of minority groups. The impact of terminology (i.e. ethnicity, ‘culture bound disorders’) has become evident through national surveys on health and mental health across different ethnic groups, and exploration into the development of anti-racist health promotion and practice
EVENTS

RCPsych Psychiatric Trainees’ Committee Led Conference, Return to Practice, London. Please email ptcsupport@rcpsych.ac.uk to register your interest. 21 November.

'Capacity, Consent and Compulsion' - RCPsych in Wales & The Welsh Psychiatric Society joint meeting, Friday 25 November, St Pierre Hotel, Chepstow, Monmouthshire NP16 6YA

RCPsych POMH-UK is pleased to announce the 2017 regional workshops to which may be of interest to colleagues in Health Boards in Wales as an introduction to POMH and how it works.

• **Wednesday 11 January 2017**: hosted by West London Mental Health Trust at the Royal College of Psychiatrists in London
• **Wednesday 25 January 2017**: Hosted by Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

The link to the registration form can be found on our [website](http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk).

MENTAL HEALTH BLOGS

**Does taking antidepressants during pregnancy harm the child?** - Ian Jones

When it comes to taking antidepressants in pregnancy, women and their doctors have a difficult decision to make. Depression in pregnancy and following childbirth (the postpartum period) is common and has potentially serious consequences. Suicide is a leading cause of maternal death in the UK....

LISTEN OR WATCH AGAIN

**Rethink Mental Illness:** A new film featuring mental health ambassador and former Labour spin doctor Alastair Campbell has been launched that highlights the need for a fair deal on supported housing for everyone affected by mental illness.

**Sunday Politics Show:** Rebecca Evans, Minister for Public Health and Social Services speaks to the BBC Wales Sunday Politics Show on Autism and is there a need for an Autism Bill in Wales?

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