



THE ROLE OF ACADEMICS IN PSYCHIATRIC EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Dr Wendy Burn

About me

- Consultant Old Age Psychiatrist in Leeds, recently redeployed to the inpatient unit
- Dean Royal College of Psychiatrists (RCPsych) 2011-2016
- President RCPsych 2017-2020
- National Mental Health Clinical Advisor for NHS England Workforce, Training and Education



Contents

- Why we need academic psychiatrists
- Academic psychiatry in the UK
- Training pathways for academic psychiatry
- Opportunities for academic psychiatrists to teach and train and share knowledge
- Some inspiration from academic psychiatrists

- Why do we need academic psychiatry?

Increasing demand for help with mental illness

- Numbers seeking help are increasing
- In 2020 the Centre for Mental Health modelling suggested up to 10 million people will need new or additional mental health support for depression, anxiety, PTSD and other mental health difficulties over the next few years

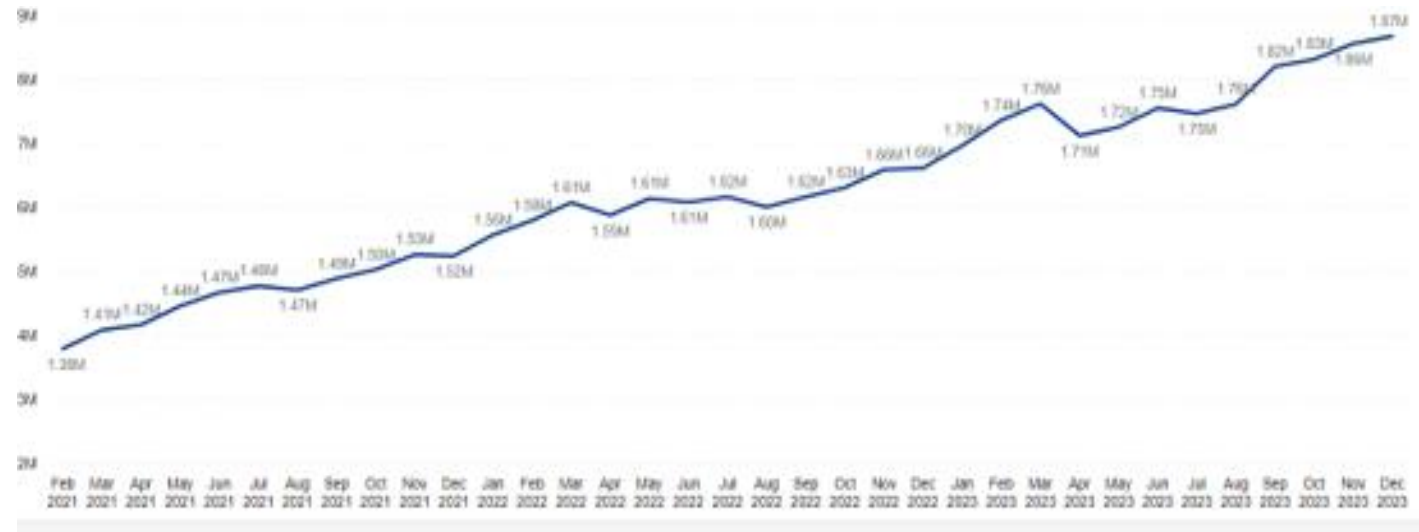
Centre for
Mental Health



Most recent data for England December 2023

- 1.87 million people were in contact with mental health services, at the end of December (Compared to 1.35 million in December 2020)

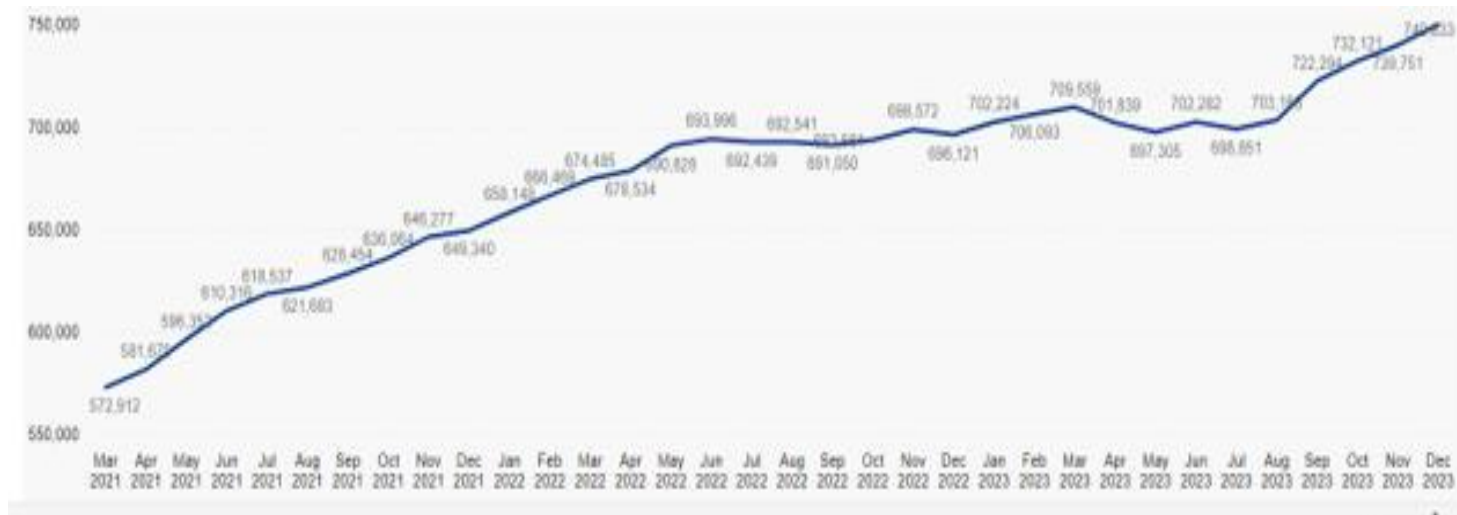
From NHS digital



Most recent data for England Children and Young people December 2023

- 750K people were in contact with children and young people's mental health services in December 2023 (compared to 573K in March 2021)

From NHS digital



Most recent data for England December 2023

- 380K new referrals were received (326K in Feb 2021)
- 2.2 million care contacts were attended (1.84 million in April 2016)
- 22K people were subject to the Mental Health Act (15K in April 2016)

From NHS digital



Knowledge of mental health conditions

- We are behind physical healthcare
- The brain is the most complicated organ in the body
- Investment in research has been low
- We urgently need to develop a better understanding of mental illnesses and provide new treatments



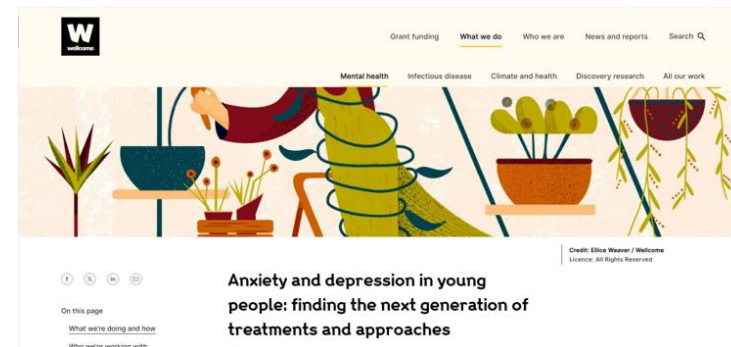
Mental Health Funding – a Cinderella service

- Mental health services have always been a poor relation of physical health services
- Mental illness represents up to 23% of total burden of ill health in UK but only 14% of NHS England's budget



Mental Health Research funding

- Historically this has been poor but is improving
- New charities to fund mental health research
- New £42.7 million investment into mental health research announced by the NIHR and the Office for Life Sciences in 2023
- Mental Health research is now a priority for Wellcome



Academic psychiatry

- We need a pool of talented academic psychiatrists who can strengthen our understanding of mental illness and make scientific advances in its prevention, diagnosis and treatment



What is an Academic Psychiatrist?

- Oxford University: “Academic psychiatrists are doctors who undertake research into the causes and treatments of mental illness, alongside their clinical work. They are the leaders of their profession, and make an important contribution to teaching and training”



Academic Psychiatry input into teaching and training has reduced

- When I trained the Professors and Lecturers had a substantial involvement in teaching
- This has reduced over the years
- Partly due to Universities increasingly concentrating on research



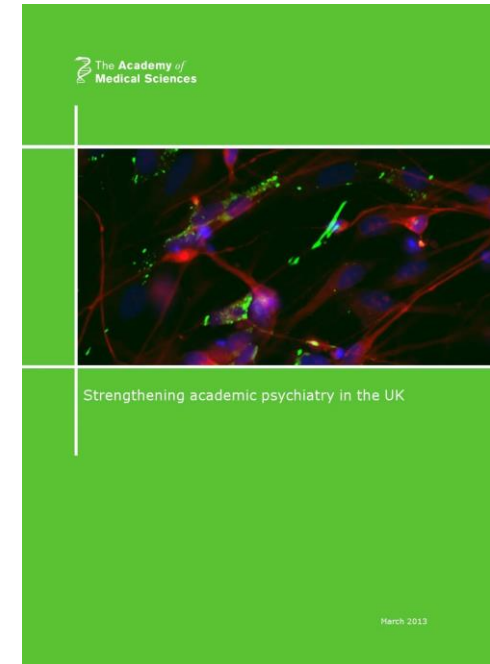
The Research Excellence Framework (REF)

- The REF was first carried out in 2014
- Managed by Research England for whole UK
- Outcomes inform the allocation of around £2 billion per year of public funding for universities' research

REF 2029
Research Excellence Framework

Academic Psychiatry in the UK

- Concerns for many years
- Strengthening Academic Psychiatry in the UK was published 2013



Strengthening Academic Psychiatry in the UK

- Lack of academic capacity
- Low spend on research into mental illness
- Stigmatisation of mental illness
- Lack of research training



Recommendations

- Enhance recruitment to academic psychiatry
- Increase research opportunities for academic psychiatrists
- Integrate psychiatry with other neuroscience disciplines



Training as an Academic Psychiatrist

- If you're interested in how research translates into clinical settings, you will find Academic Psychiatry an interesting field
- This video explains what an Academic Psychiatrist does, what makes the specialty different from others in psychiatry, and why it makes a great career choice





Academic training pathway

- First possible entry point to Academic Training is at Foundation level
- Specialised Foundation Programme (SFP)
- Combines clinical training with training in research methods and includes a four-month academic placement during F2
- From 2025 can request this but allocation of places will be random



Academic training pathway

- Complicated!
- Varies in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Varies between Universities



The Wales Clinical Academic Track (WCAT)

- Each WCAT post provides training from entry through to CCT
- Salary funded three-year PhD
- 20% protected academic time during clinical training
- Trainees can apply at any stage of their training after Foundation, with exception of their final year



Academic training in England: Academic Clinical Fellowship (ACF)

- Run-through post
- Core training, 75% clinical and 25% academic
- Apply for funding for PhD or research MD as Out-of-programme-Research (OOPR)
- Return to complete higher training

NIHR | National Institute for
Health and Care Research

Academic training in England: Academic Clinical Lecturer (ACL)

- For higher trainees
- Post-doctoral
- 50% clinical training, 50% research
- 4 years or until completion of clinical training



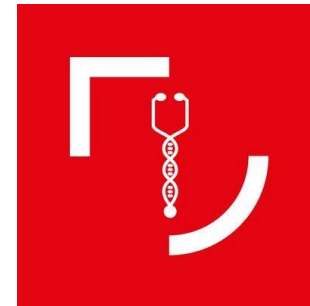
The Scottish Clinical Research Excellence Development Scheme (SCREDS)

- Integrated academic and clinical training within the NHS
- Clinical Lectureships: for people who have not yet done a higher degree (equivalent to ACF) or for people who have a higher degree (equivalent to ACL)



Academic training in Northern Ireland

- No formal integrated clinical academic pathway in Northern Ireland
- Academic Foundation Programme, Academic Clinical Fellow and Academic Clinical Lecturer are all offered in broadly the same way as in rest of UK
- Overseen by The Clinical Academic Training Programme Board (CATP)



Opportunities for input into education and training

- Medical schools
- Postgraduate training
- Involve trainees in research
- CPD
- Share results from research widely



Use of social media

- Many new papers are shared on platforms such as X
- An opportunity to share work
- Enables direct discussion
- Some authors explain their research in a series of tweets



Tweet from educational events

- One of the best uses of social media and how I got started
- Allows others to learn
- Condensing information to a tweet helps you to understand
- Can often tag in the presenter
- Photos of slides but check this is allowed



Question from the USA

- Question from Paul Summergrad, Past President of American Psychiatric Association



Reply from the presenter

- Reply from Dr Nolan Williams, Assistant Professor and Director of the Stanford Brain Stimulation Laboratory
- These conversations and connections make X worthwhile
- A great way to stimulate enthusiasm around research



Sharing Research

- Use research to interest medical student and trainees
- Conferences and talks
- Online events has made this easier

- Some researchers who inspired others (there are many more of them)

Dr Graham Campbell

- Study Psychiatrist for a research trial



His research

- Trial using dimethyltryptamine (DMT) to treat patients with Major Depressive Disorder
- DMT has been used as a recreational psychedelic drug
- Patients are given the drug followed by talking therapy



Dr Kim Kendall

- Clinical Academic trainee in Wales



Her research

- Compared subcortical brain volumes in people carrying at least one of the 12 copy number variants (CNV) associated with schizophrenia to individuals who did not carry these
- CNV carriers had reduced volume in some of the subcortical structures previously shown to be reduced in schizophrenia
- CNV carriers performed worse on cognitive tests than non-carriers



Professor Belinda Lennox

- Professor of Psychiatry and Honorary Consultant Psychiatrist , Oxford
- Research on early psychosis and neuroimmunology



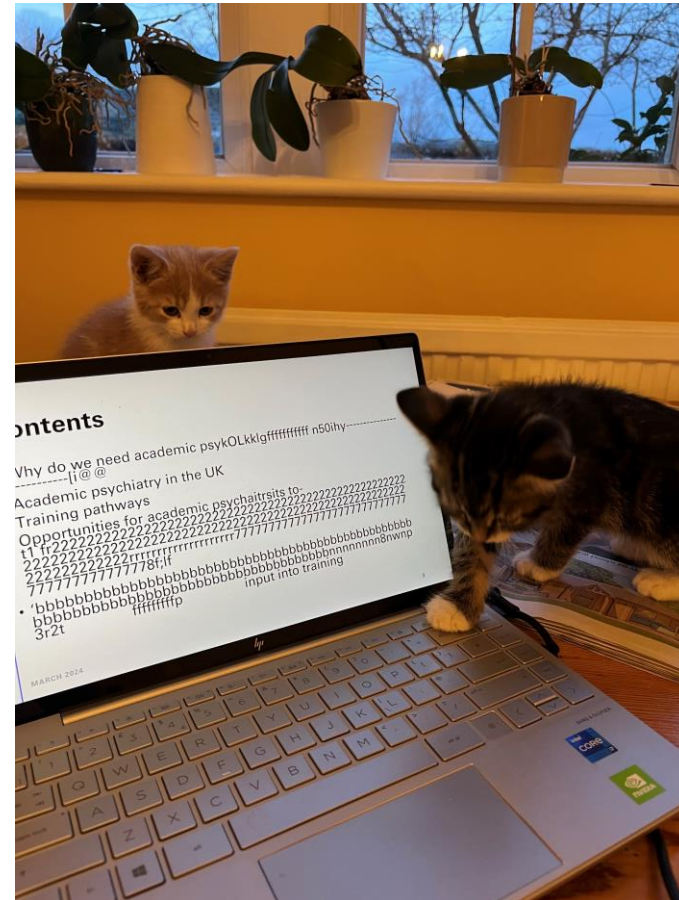
How can we increase the input of academic psychiatrists into education and training?

- Involvement in training at every level
- Advocate for increase in resource
- More flexible training pathways
- Research opportunities for trainees
- High profile for research advances
- We will only solve our current problems with research and sharing of knowledge



Thanks to Tigger and Lily for their help

- This is the first talk they have “helped” me to write
- Things can only get better



- Thank you

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