



## **Consultation of RCPsychiS Members – Views on the Second Draft of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy**

**Submission date: Tuesday 16 May**

### **Vision**

The Royal College of Psychiatrists in Scotland supports the overall vision of the strategy.

However, the College would welcome greater detail in relation to how the eighth outcome will be achieved, as investment in infrastructure is critical to improve access to and use of evidence and data.

Furthermore, the College believes that, within the vision's outcomes, more attention should be given to severe mental illness across the whole age range.

These outcomes describe 'the differences or changes that we want to see as a result of this strategy.' The College recommends the inclusion of an additional outcome focusing on the need for appropriately staffed specialist services which provide care, support and treatment for people with more severe mental illness.

### **Core Mental Health and Wellbeing Workforce**

The College believes that the expert clinical, research and leadership role of the consultant psychiatrist should be explicitly recognised within the strategy.

### **Recognition of All Mental Health Services**

There is a consistent emphasis on CAMHS and psychological therapies throughout the strategy. Greater recognition is required of the vast range of mental health services which support people in Scotland. The College

believes that efforts should be made to improve access to all services, reducing waiting times across the board.

Having heard from our membership that general adult services are amongst those facing the most prolonged and significant pressure, the College recommends that this strategy provides an explicit commitment to these services, as it does for CAMHS.

This strategy should complement the recent Quality Standards for Adult Secondary Mental Health Services, which the College welcomed. However, as the waiting times target has done so for CAMHS, these standards must be accompanied by extra investment in order to ensure that they are achievable. Greater attention should also be given to workforce recruitment and retention.

### **Primary Care**

The College believes that there is a contradiction between the strategy's pledge to 'build mental health capacity into primary care' and the recent news that the Scottish Government's commitment to recruit an additional 1,000 mental health specialists into primary care has been paused.

The College is pleased to see that the strategy recognises the mental health capacity of primary care services as a key priority and urges the Scottish Government to resume this commitment as soon as possible.

### **Definitions**

The College welcomes the definitions featured in the strategy and view these as an improvement on those provided in the first draft. In particular, the holistic definition of 'mental wellbeing, mental health and mental illness,' which acknowledges the biological, psychological and social factors which impact upon people's mental health.

### **Delivery Plan**

The College would welcome clarity on the Scottish Government's plans for the publication of a Delivery Plan.

At a meeting of Scotland's Mental Health Partnership on 17 January 2023, the previous Minister for Mental Wellbeing and Social Care stated that the Scottish Government would consult on an accompanying Delivery Plan, allowing members of the Partnership to shape its contents. An update on whether this is still the Scottish Government's intention would be helpful.

## **Time to Engage**

Finally, the College would like to highlight the extremely limited amount of time given to respond to the second draft of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy. This has severely hindered our ability to consult with our membership.

As a College, we represent 1400 psychiatrists in Scotland with a vast range of expertise and experience. It is vital that our members are given the chance to take part in consultation exercises such as this one, which have the potential to impact upon the way they work and how services are delivered to patients.