

Consultation of RCPsychiS Members – Views on the National Outcomes Review

Submission date: Monday 5 June 2023

1. Are there any changes to the current set of 11 National Outcomes that you would propose? If so, in summary, what would these be?

The Royal College of Psychiatrists in Scotland would recommend that the following amendments are made to the National Outcomes:

- Grow up loved, safe and respected, **with respect for others**, so that we realise our full potential **within society** (Children);
- Live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient, **healthy** and safe (Communities);
- Are creative and our vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely (Culture);
- Have a globally competitive, inclusive and sustainable economy (Economy);
- Are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society (Education);
- Value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment (Environment);
- Have thriving and innovative businesses, **with healthy and flexible working conditions**, quality jobs and fair work for everyone (Fair Work & Business);
- Are healthy and active, **both physically and mentally** (Health);
- Respect, protect and fulfil human rights, **opposing discrimination and celebrating diversity** (Human Rights);

- Are open, connected and make a positive contribution internationally (International);
- Tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally (Poverty).

Most importantly, the health outcome must be updated to include reference to mental health.

The existing health outcome from 2018 makes no reference to mental health:

“Our NHS is pivotal to our health and happiness as a nation and we are dedicated to supporting and equipping it to face the challenges it has now and in future. We also understand that our health is dependent on a wide variety of factors and actors and we therefore need to take a whole system approach to promoting good health and activity.”

There is also no reference to mental health within the consultation paper’s description of Scotland’s wellbeing framework which, instead, chooses to focus on physical health:

“The National Outcomes set out the kind of Scotland we all want to see. The NPF brings together our aspirations for the social, cultural, environmental, economic and physical health of Scotland. It supports policy making that considers all of these aspects of wellbeing, collectively.”

The College in Scotland believes in the principle of parity of esteem, meaning that mental health is viewed in parity with physical health. It is vital that this principle is reflected in Scotland’s national outcomes.

2. Are there new National Outcomes that should be included in the National Performance Framework, if so why should they be included?

Whilst it is vital that mental health is referenced within the national outcomes, the College in Scotland believes that this should be done through the existing health outcome, as outlined in our response to the question above. This would demonstrate equity between mental and physical health.

However, we would recommend the addition of the following outcome:

- Provide compassion, care, resources and, when appropriate, treatment to people too vulnerable to act autonomously.

This would ensure that consideration is given to those with severe mental illness, as well as those who require support with their general mental wellbeing.

3. Are there any changes you would propose to the wider National Performance Framework on set of National Indicators?

The College in Scotland believes that too many of the outcome measures are based on the subjective opinions of samples of people, without account of how those samples are made and how many people failed to respond. However, the College would be wary of making any significant changes to these measures as this would hinder our ability to observe trends over time.

The College in Scotland would recommend the inclusion of a figure which measures the percentage of GDP which Scotland spends on health, and the proportion of that which is then spent on mental health services.

It would also be helpful to include comparative data for all categories which would allow Scotland to measure its performance against other European countries. This is already available for some, but not all, of the data that is currently collected.

4. What impact do the current National Outcomes have on your work?

In the case of psychiatry, the College in Scotland would argue that the opposite is true, and that it is our members who work to positively affect the outcomes.

The deterioration of many of these outcomes is a source of declining morale amongst the psychiatric workforce.

5. What are the main obstacles and barriers in the further implementation of the National Outcomes?

The College in Scotland believes that there are two key barriers to the implementation of the National Outcomes.

Firstly, as outlined above, it is difficult to select effective and lasting measures. To amend these measures then hinders our ability to measure progress over time.

Secondly, it is crucial that any data gathered is integrated into government work and policymaking. There is a sense amongst our membership that we are often 'reinventing the wheel' and starting afresh without consulting the data already gathered. Where there is duplication, it would be good to examine this and restructure the information.