



Royal College of Psychiatrists in Scotland – Briefing ahead of the 2022-23 Budget process

02/12/2021

- Prior to the Scottish Parliament Elections, we successfully called for all political parties and the Scottish Government to commit by 2026 to **10% of health spending to go to mental health** and **1% to go to CAMHS**.
- This funding is essential to help ensure there is **no wrong door** to accessing **the right care, in the right place, and at the right time for mental ill health**.
- We also played a key role in advocating for the **£120m Mental Health Recovery & Renewal Fund** to meet the immediate impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on mental ill health.
- Ahead of the 2022-23 Budget, we wanted to help inform discussions around mental health spending, including a poll demonstrating **the public, cross-party demand for increased investment** into mental health and wellbeing.

We are calling on the Scottish Government to commit to:

1. **Retain the £120m Mental Health Recovery & Renewal Fund into next year**
2. **Begin in this Budget to map out how it will meet its target for 10% of NHS spend on mental health by 2026, as well as its 1% target for CAMHS**
3. **Provide greater clarity on where mental health spending goes and its impact, including in our communities**
4. **Establish a '10% principle' on health spending to go to mental health, and for this to apply to winter resilience funding**

We believe these proposals would signal a willingness **to do what is necessary** for the mental health of the nation and for our most vulnerable citizens, both now and as we recover from this pandemic.

Who we are and what we do

The Royal College of Psychiatrists in Scotland is the professional medical body responsible for:

- setting standards and promotes excellence in specialist mental health care
- supporting the psychiatry profession, including our 1,400 members in Scotland
- collective action to improve support, care and treatment for people with mental ill health.

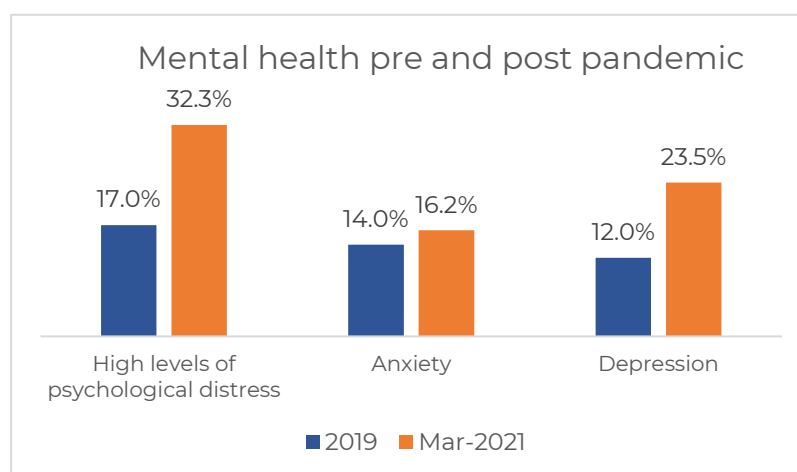
The College aims to:

- improve outcomes for people with severe mental ill health, addictions, intellectual disabilities and autism, and to be among their strongest advocates
- advocate for parity of esteem between physical and mental health care
- through a leadership role on [Scotland's Mental Health Partnership](#), advocate for a 'Promote, Prevent, Provide' agenda on mental health
- project and promote the voice of patients, carers and their organisations, recognising the value of their voice in shaping the care we provide

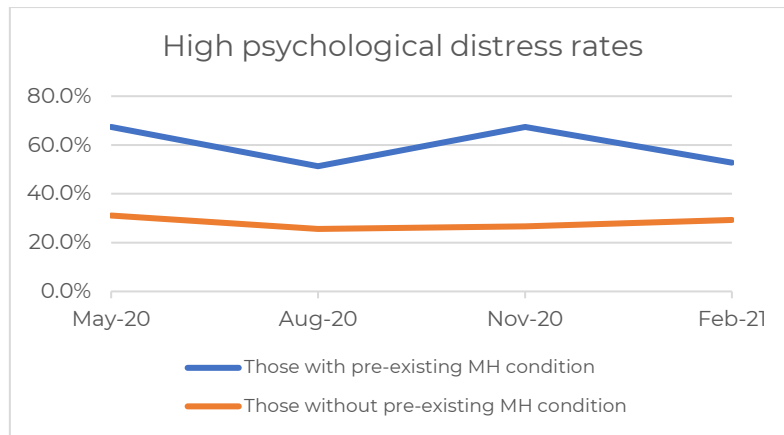
Our proposals for the 2022-23 Budget

Retaining Covid investment to meet the 'fourth wave'

- **Impact of the pandemic** – On behalf of [Scotland's Mental Health Partnership](#), we developed a time series analysis around the Scottish Government's Covid Mental Health Trackers in order to establish the mental health impact of the pandemic over time. It was also to look at whether the '**fourth wave**' of the pandemic's impact, in increased social, economic and mental distress, was emerging.
- **Worsening mental health** – across the population, rates of anxiety, depression and high levels of psychological distress¹ are higher than they were prior to the pandemic. Using the [2019 Scottish Health Survey](#) (the last one conducted prior to Covid), and the latest [Covid Mental Health Tracker](#) study, the equitable data suggests people are now nearly **twice as likely** to be experiencing these.



¹ Indicative of a possible psychiatric disorder



- **Pre-existing mental ill health** – having a pre-existing mental health condition was the strongest indicator of experiencing high levels of psychological distress, having suicidal thoughts or experiencing anxiety.
- **Public perception** – To help inform our engagement work, we also recently commissioned a survey from YouGov to better identify the pandemic’s impact. This found:
 - **Increased demand** – 78% believe demand for mental health services will increase post-pandemic.
 - **Extent of impact** – Since the pandemic began in March 2020, nearly a third of Scots (32%) had suffered anxiety while 24% had suffered symptoms of depression and 23% had experienced loneliness.
 - **Aggravating pre-existing conditions** – It also found 14% of Scots had a mental health problem before March 2020 and the pandemic had made this worse. A further 6% developed a new mental health problem due to the pandemic.
- **What this means** – This indicates the mental health impacts of the pandemic have harmed the wellbeing of all and exacerbated mental ill health.

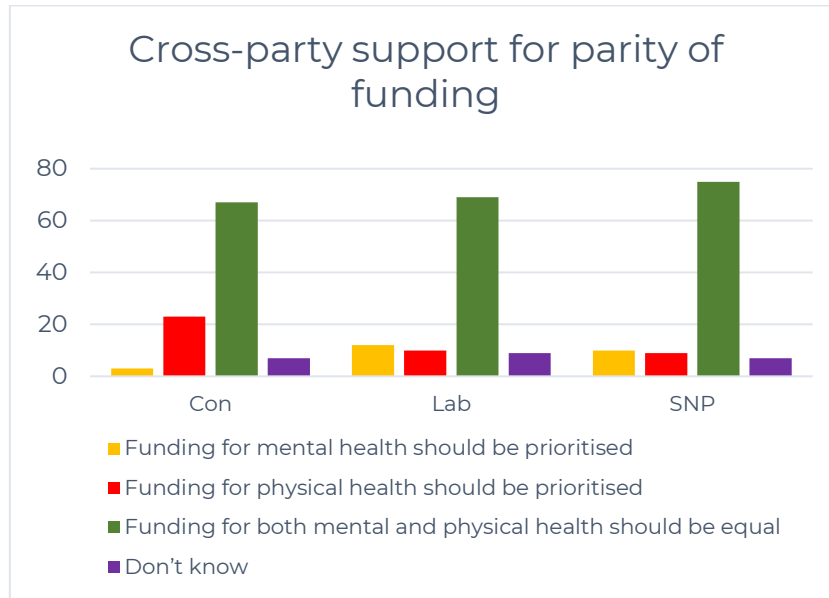
*We call on the Scottish Government to recognise this fourth wave of social, economic and mental distress placing **more people at greater risk than ever** of poor mental wellbeing and exacerbated mental ill health.*

*In doing so, we urge that **the £120m Mental Health Recovery & Renewal Fund is retained in this Budget.***

Greater clarity on where the funding will go

- **No Wrong Door** – through [our manifesto campaign](#) ahead of the Scottish Parliament Elections, we successfully persuaded all political parties to commit to **10% of NHS spending to go to mental health**, and **1% to go to CAMHS**.
- **What this means** – This was to ensure we can deliver a mental healthcare system, from our communities through to specialist in-patient settings, where there is no wrong door to accessing the right care, in the right place, and at the right time.

- **Public support** – we commissioned a public survey to help identify the public’s views on mental health spending. The results included:
 - **Parity of esteem** – 70% of people felt mental and physical health care should be equally prioritised in spending. This fits the commitment from all political parties to parity of esteem between physical and mental healthcare. There was also cross-party support for this, including among SNP supporters (75%).



- **More is needed** – 65% of respondents felt more needed to be spent on mental health services, versus 3% who thought less should be spent.
- **We need to know how it’s used** – 59% of people felt mental health services were inefficient. The only way to challenge this perception is to better understand where the funding goes, both in our communities and in our health and social care services. We also need to understand where it is having the most impact.

We have helped deliver a cross-party political consensus to these proposals.

What we now need is clarity, starting in this Budget, on how the Scottish Government will achieve these targets by 2026.

We also need clarity on where the funding goes beyond topline figures and a commitment to evaluate how it’s used. This will ensure the impact of investment into mental health is maximised in our communities, within our third and social care sector, and in our primary and secondary mental health services.

Help our services meet winter pressures

- **Pressures on our services** – While we recognise the increased funding that has come, including through the Recovery & renewal Fund, our members still report increased demand across specialist mental health services.
- **From the frontline** – data produced by a College survey of Medical Managers on the current capacity pressures revealed:
 - **Rates of occupancy** – Almost all areas reported bed occupancy rates for adult acute admission beds at almost 100% or above consistently for several months. Some areas reported it had breached this rate, with up to 110% occupancy rates reported.
 - **Inappropriate settings** – Some highlighted a lack of specialist inpatient provision for certain care groups, such as under 18's and people with learning disabilities. This resulted in sub-optimal care provision in other settings.
 - **Delayed discharges** – consistently cited was the inability of community social care teams to be able to provide appropriate packages of support and accommodation for a patient to be cared for in the community. These cause delays to both the individual patient being discharged and that space being filled by another person in need.

Recognising these immediate pressures, we are calling on the Scottish Government to commit in this Budget to a '10% principle' to apply to NHS winter resilience spending.

By ensuring a minimum 10% of funding like that announced for delayed discharges is used in mental health settings, we can help ensure winter pressures are mitigated where possible.