



# **RCPsych Wales** **2020 Highlights** **Report.**



2020 has been a year **full of challenges**, a year **full of adaptation**.

It felt right to highlight some of the achievements, and reflect on the strength shown by the Psychiatry community in Wales.

We hope you enjoy this short report.

Dr Clementine Maddock, Vice-Chair  
Ollie John, Manager  
Royal College of Psychiatrists Wales

**In July, Prof Keith Lloyd came to the end of his term of office as Chair of RCPsych Wales, and was succeeded by Dr Maria Atkins.**

**We owe a great deal to Keith and he departed on the announcement of several further notable achievements:**

- Wales saw the **highest** % of members attaining fellowship across any region of the UK, and
- the **highest** % of members voting for the RCPsych presidential elections.
- In 2019 and 2020, Wales has achieved an **100% fill rate** into core training, and
- between 2019 and 2020, Wales achieved the **highest fill rate** for specialty training across the UK at **92%**.

Whilst a number of projects initiated and overseen during his tenure are littered throughout this report, we'll be issuing a report on his full term of office in February.

**Thank you Keith and welcome Maria**

## Recognition

Wales saw much recognition at this year's RCPsych Annual Awards, the first virtual award ceremony that the College has held.

- CWTCH Cymru won [RCPsych Team of the Year](#) in recognition for their work in Sustainability.
- Veryan Richards was awarded a **presidential medal** for her work in advocating the patient representative voice.
- Prof Sir Mike Owen, Cardiff University, was awarded an **honorary fellowship** in recognition of his work in neuroscience.

We've recently heard that Dr Jacinta Tan will be recognised within the RCPsych **Inspirational Women** campaign to coincide with this year's International Women's Day in March.

Whilst at the end of 2020, we received the fantastic news that Prof Alka Ahuja was awarded an [MBE for her services](#) to the NHS in response to the pandemic. Alka's vision and determination in establishing TEC Cymru and the Welsh Government's response to the pandemic through video consultation and telehealth has been immeasurable. This was a coordinated response across the whole of the health and care service and will leave a legacy of how future health services are delivered.

**Congratulations Alka**

## Support

We've **increased our staffing resources** in Wales. Liz Williams has recently joined the team as our new policy officer, succeeding Louis Mertens; whilst Annie Fabian, our Wales coordinator, is now in post full-time.

The team has worked tirelessly to support members in what has been a tumultuous year. This has included **supporting members in new ways**; producing digital resources, webinars, eNewsletters and bulletins alongside virtual member events.

Our executive committee represents every psychiatric speciality, with additional dedicated officers and representatives, and **we've met more regularly** throughout the pandemic; making use of the benefits of virtual platforms, engaging regularly with colleagues in NHS Wales and other stakeholders to **advocate for members** and support a response to the pandemic

[rcpsych.ac.uk/wales](https://rcpsych.ac.uk/wales)



# responding to covid

The response has been on many fronts, and they'll be much we'll learn from and hold onto after this has passed.

At the outbreak of the pandemic, the College issued [clinical guidance](#). This was adapted and made available in Wales to reflect the legislative and operational differences with colleagues in England.

Webinars were developed as we learned more about the impacts of the pandemic. Dr Clementine Maddock presented on [Mental Health Act legislation](#) in view of Covid, as part of the RCPsych members webinar series; as did Prof Alka Ahuja and Dr Jacinta Tan, this time on [Sustainability and mental health care delivery](#).

We also hosted a webinar from TEC Cymru on using [Attend Anywhere](#) software for video consultations.

We developed public messaging to advise on managing mental health during the changing restrictions.

Prof Keith Lloyd gave guidance to broadcast television on **anxiety in coming out of lockdown** arrangements, whilst Prof Alka Ahuja gave guidance for **maintaining mental health** whilst re-entering lockdown during the Winter months.

We continue to advise the communications team at Welsh Government and the **'Keep Wales Safe'** campaign as a **partner**, developing public messaging for maintaining mental health and well-being during the restrictions.

This year the Welsh Parliament's scrutiny has been dominated by Covid and we've given **specialist evidence** to several committees on these issues.

We'll continue to gather the views and experiences of the membership in Wales, **advocate** and make sure they are **reflected and understood** by policy makers in Wales.





### **Health, Social Care & Sport**

Dr Clementine Maddock identified a comprehensive and wide range of challenges that patients, carers and staff have experienced during this time, as well as giving commentary on how **services have adapted**. Dr Maddock presented the risk factors associated with the impacts of Covid, and also identified the need to **invest in recruiting more psychiatrists** to Wales to meet current and future demand.

### **Children, Young People & Education**

Dr Kristy Fenton gave comments on **challenges ranging from school closures** to the diversity of wellbeing and mental health issues. Dr Fenton also gave detail on the capacity of health professionals to support children and young people, how services have adapted and the digital infrastructure.

### **Culture, Welsh Language & Communications**

Ollie John gave evidence to committee members, identifying a number of art and mental health projects including 'Opening Up in Lockdown'. This particular project, developed by RCPsych Wales and hosted by Patrick Jones highlighted the **relationship between art and mental health through Covid**, through a series of podcast interviews with health professionals and artists from different fields.

### **Medical Research**

Prof James Walters and Prof Keith Lloyd gave evidence to the cross party group, highlighting the **research advances** of the MRC Neuropsychiatric and Genomics Centre at Cardiff University, and the variety of programmes offered through Swansea Medical School respectively. Both identified the **unique opportunities** in Wales to further advance mental health research.

# policy, projects & partnerships

We've worked collaboratively and in partnership with our members through identified projects and faculty activity. This has really made a huge difference in 2020.



There has never been a more **important time** for mental health.

The current global crisis with Covid highlights the **crucial contribution** of both psychiatry and psychiatrists. It's so **heartening** to see the **collective efforts** being undertaken in Wales to shape policy and improve patient outcomes

Dr Katie Fergus, Exec Committee Policy Lead  
Liz Williams, RCPsych Wales Policy Officer  
Royal College of Psychiatrists Wales

**We have worked directly with members, endorsing and supporting the development of a number of projects that are having positive an impact on the delivery of services.**

**Bipolar Education Programme Cymru (BEPC) with the National Centre for Mental Health (NCMH)**

BEPC is an award-winning group psychoeducation programme which aims to improve the **quality of life** for people with bipolar disorder.

During Covid this programme has been adapted for online delivery. We have endorsed the programme and will be working with NCMH to support its **development and availability** across Wales.

**Cultural Competence in Mental Health Services with Diverse Cymru**

We have worked with Diverse Cymru to promote a framework, training and set of guidance to deliver culturally competent mental health services.

Prior to Covid, we were seeing a welcome, and higher than anticipated uptake in registration for the programme with **every health board** in Wales committing.

The programme was highlighted within the **First Minister's Advisory Group** report into the impact on Covid on BAME populations in Wales.

Following recommendations to **increase roll-out** of the training, Welsh Government funding was secured for Diverse Cymru to administer and deliver the training with our support.

## **Connecting with Telehealth in Communities and Hospitals with CWTCH Cymru**

The CWTCH programme is an innovative project establishing video consultation and telehealth sessions in CAMHS services in Aneurin Bevan UHB.

The CWTCH programme was evaluated following its pilot and generated positive findings and returns following its implementation.

**The CWTCH programme subsequently informed Welsh Governments response to the pandemic, and the establishment of TEC Cymru and the national rollout of video consultation across the whole health and care service.**

CWTCH developed additional clinical guidance to support members at the outset of the pandemic.

The CWTCH programme has won awards for its work, including the South Wales Argus Award for Research Impact, and notably the UK **RCPsych Award Team of the Year 2020** in recognition of their work in sustainability.



## **Alcohol Related Brain Damage with University of South Wales**

The need to increase awareness of Alcohol Related Brain Damage (ARBD) has been highlighted in the Welsh Government's new treatment framework for ARBD, in which the first tier of the recommendations is for **training of ARBD** for all professionals who work with individuals with, or who are at risk of ARBD.

The University of South Wales (USW) have developed an **awareness programme** for Alcohol Related Brain Damage. This project is being conducted in collaboration with The Pobl Group, a large third-sector organisation that specialises in health and social care throughout Wales.

A multi-level training package, underpinned by research and with **expert consultation from addictions psychiatrists** in Wales, is being delivered to health and social care frontline staff.

We'll be working with USW to promote and develop this work.

**Our support varies between projects and is always determined by how we can compliment and assist a project in its development.**

**Each project is different, and we've helped in development, advocacy or promotion of the work to different extents, and dependant upon needs.**

**If you have a project that you feel would benefit from the support of RCPsych Wales, please get in touch.**

## Together for Mental Health

Early in 2020, we welcomed the publication of Welsh Governments last iteration of the Together for Mental Health strategy. The plan has been reissued in response to Covid.

The delivery plan committed to several areas where the College had lobbied for increased investment and focus. Highlighting just a few selected areas for this report, we welcomed:

- Support to increase adoption to the RCPsych Wales endorsed' Diverse Cymru Cultural Competency Toolkit,
- HEIW and SCW to develop a workforce plan for mental health in Wales,
- Extension of the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016 to adult inpatient mental health settings,
- Welsh Government, NHS Wales and the Wolfson Centre for Mental Health to work together to strengthen existing partnership and rapidly translate new research into practice thereby improving the mental health and well-being of young people,
- Development of the evidence based All Wales Traumatic Stress Quality Improvement Initiative for all ages, taking into account other specific population groups including victims of sexual assault, perinatal mental health, refugees, asylum seekers, people in prison or in contact with criminal justice system and other vulnerable groups,
- The establishment of the specialist in-patient perinatal mother and baby unit in Wales.

## Faculties

This year our faculties in Wales have shown their significance in responding to emerging challenges throughout the pandemic. Some faculties have met regularly through virtual meetings, with others forming messaging groups. This regular contact has been **invaluable as services have adapted and reconfigured** at short notice to pressures, sharing local and transferable knowledge along the way.

With support of the RCPsych Wales office, several faculties have distributed **eNewsletters and bulletins** on regular occasions. This is something we'll continue to encourage and work with faculty chairs to develop.

We continue to develop purposeful projects with faculties, as an example, this year we've seen:

- the perinatal faculty collaborate with NHS Wales to **ensure every community team** is registered to the CCQI quality network
- the old age faculty support two health board pilots for remote consultations for memory services, and deliver a reflective learning event '**lessons from a pandemic**'
- the addictions faculty work with Welsh Government to consider the utility of a **national problem gambling clinic** for Wales, whilst feeding into the steering group for the substance misuse delivery framework.



**The work undertaken by faculties in Wales is so important.**

**Faculty Chairs have contributed and met regularly as a part of the RCPsych Wales executive committee, discussing challenges and solutions and feeding directly into briefings and evidence sessions for Welsh Government and the Welsh Parliament.**

**Several faculties will be producing their own annual reports.**

# training & development

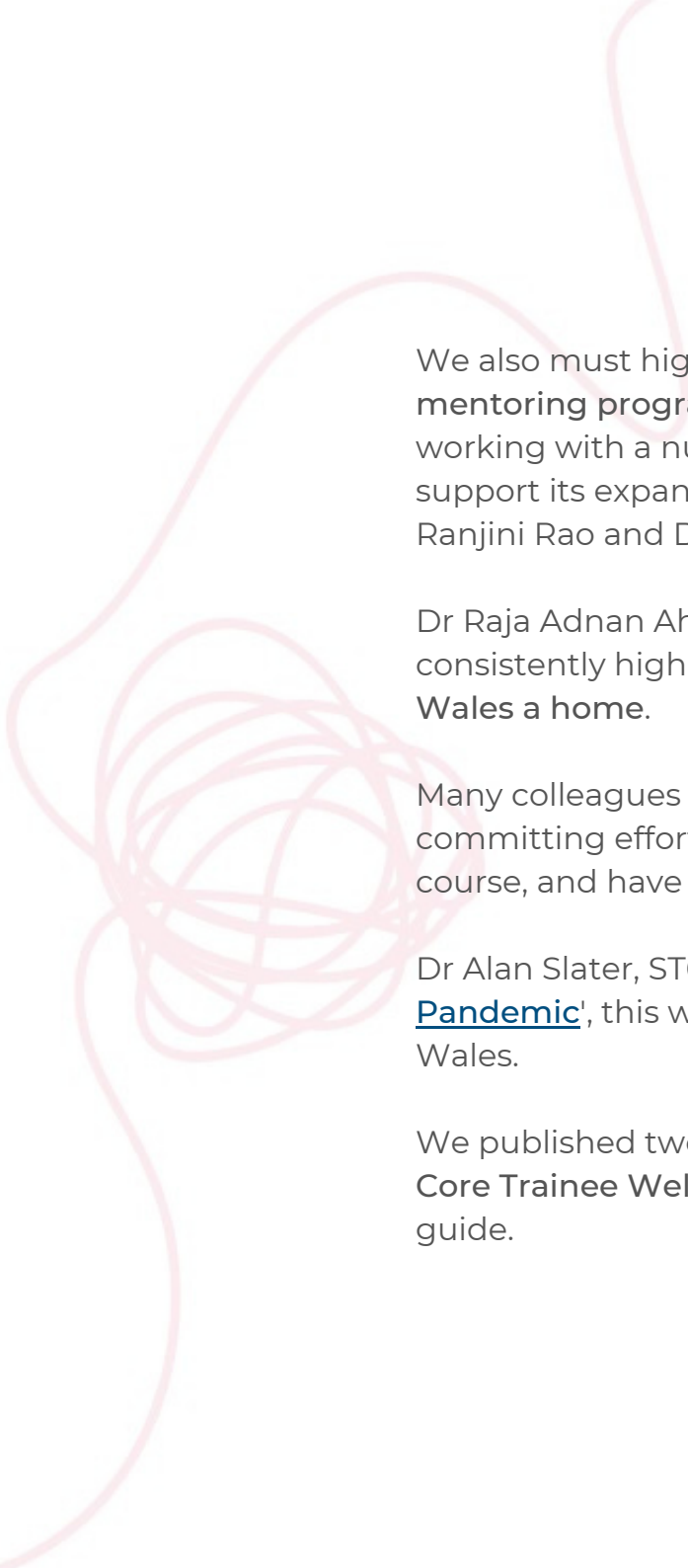
Wales benefits from a small, committed and high quality training programme. We'll continue to support students, trainees, doctors and consultants in their development in engaging and innovative ways.

We welcomed new members to Wales, in recognition of the superb work that's been undertaken in recruiting, supporting trainees and ensuring that Wales is known for offering a fantastic programme.

- In both 2019 and 2020, Wales has achieved a **100% fill rate** into core training.
- Between 2019 and 2020, Wales achieved the **highest fill rate** for specialty training (ST4) across the UK at **92%**.
- The **Train.Work.Live** programme offering support from Welsh Government for recruitment and retention has been extended.
- The Train.Work.Live programme was also the **headline sponsor** of the BMJ conference, and there was plenty of Welsh Psychiatry presence on the programme.

We congratulate Dr Paul Emmerson on his appointment as RCPsych specialist adviser for Portfolio Online, and Dr Ian Collings as HEIW Director of Medic Professional Support & Development.

Dr Ian Collings also became a face of the RCPsych Choose Psychiatry campaign, and was able to communicate the training programme available in Wales over blogs, podcasts as part of the campaign.



We also must highlight the significant work that's been undertaken in developing **mentoring programmes for international medical graduates** in Wales, we'll be working with a number of committed members who've initiated this work to support its expansion throughout Wales; thanks Dr Jen Rankin, Dr Jess Foster, Dr Ranjini Rao and Dr Raja Adnan Ahmed.

Dr Raja Adnan Ahmed has been heavily involved in this work, as well as consistently highlighting the benefits of training in Psychiatry and in making **Wales a home**.

Many colleagues have been involved in delivering **mock CASC examinations** and committing efforts to support trainees. These have taken place this year virtually of course, and have been of tremendous benefit in preparation.

Dr Alan Slater, ST6 in Old Age Psychiatry developed and chaired '[Lessons from a Pandemic](#)', this was a hugely beneficial learning event for Old Age psychiatrists in Wales.

We published two new digital guides, designed for the Welsh context, a **Wales Core Trainee Welcome Guide** and '**Becoming a Psychiatrist**' a GCSE & A Level guide.

## Digital resources

We showcased a series of [neuro developmental resources](#) that had been developed by CARIAD (tertiary neuro developmental service) in ABUHB and compiled by Dr Anne Marie McKigney and Prof Alka Ahuja. These resources were included and highlighted within the **clinical guidance** issued by the College at the beginning of the pandemic.

We worked in partnership with NHS Wales to produce the **Wales Perinatal Mental Health Network** resource '[Sharing our Successes](#)'. This resource highlighted examples of practice from perinatal community mental health teams as well as 3rd sector organisations across Wales. We'll send out a 'call' in 2021 for updates, but there are some excellent videos to highlight innovative practice.



**public  
engagement**

**We developed several campaigns for the public during 2020, these have been delivered through various formats, some online and through social media and some developed for the media.**

### **Bipolar Awareness**

To coincide with our endorsement of the BEPC work from NCMH, we commissioned two talented young artists to create **original artwork** to further create awareness around **Bipolar**.

Ethan Dodd has created a series of medieval flags that represent Bipolar, whilst Cerys Knighton created a series of sensory models that reflect what living with Bipolar means to her.

Cerys appeared on S4C to talk about Bipolar and her project with RCPsych Wales.

We will shortly be presenting this work, and will be planning to prominently exhibit the artwork at accessible public iconic public buildings in Wales when next appropriate.

### **Eating Disorder Awareness Week with the Celebrate Everybody project**

Dr Jacinta Tan and presenter Jessica Davies delivered a workshop through the 'Celebrate Everybody' project to primary school children from Alway Primary to coincide with Eating Disorder Awareness Week.

The Celebrate Everybody Project, delivered by children and young people's mental health services and supported by the RCPsych Wales, aims to **increase resilience against poor body esteem**. The event focused on the negative portrayal of celebrities in the media and the pressures of young people on social media sites such as Instagram.

The initiative achieved its outcome of creating awareness and media interest, and offering a valuable experience to the young people participating. [The event was featured](#) on the BBC evening news and received a significant online engagement.

### **Opening Up in Lockdown**

Poet, playwright and author Patrick Jones hosted a [series of YouTube videos](#) that looked to explore the **relationship between arts and mental health**, particularly during Covid.

Patrick interviewed an impressive variety of artists and health care professionals on their experiences, the value that the arts play in people expressing and **understanding their mental health** among other things.

The series was well received, with **positive comments and good engagement**. It was also referenced as part of the Welsh Parliaments scrutiny of the impact of Covid on the Arts and Culture sector in Wales.

### **'Be Kind, Be You' campaign, for mental health awareness week with Jess Davies**

To coincide with Mental Health Awareness Week, we partnered with Jess Davies and a number of prominent Welsh figures in sharing a **message of kindness online**.

The 'Be Kind, Be You' campaign was devised by Jess Davies, with our support a campaign video with a strong message was launched attracting a significant online audience, including over **125 thousand unique views** on Twitter alone.

The campaign video was filmed, narrated, and edited by Jess Davies, who also features in the video [alongside individuals who have experienced trolling and hate online](#). Michael Sheen, Owain Arthur, Femi Oluwole, Divina De Campo, Ovie Soko and Connagh Howard, amongst many others feature in the video.

The video and its message of sharing kindness has gathered much support.



## Young Adults Mental Health

During the Christmas lockdown, we supported 4 young adults in developing a series of videos for Instagram that explore some of the circumstances and [pressures that young adults can face](#) that can lead to problems in future.

Mared Parry, Ellis Lloyd Jones, Jess Davies and Melanie Owen did an excellent job in discussing themes of:

- **loneliness**
- **finance**
- **relationships and**
- **body image**

Mared, Ellis, Jess and Melanie have a portfolio of work for BBC and S4C and have an **audience on social media** who have benefited from the content, with some excellent feedback so far.

Each of the four share reflections, experiences and how they've found support in managing these instances.

## Literature Wales

We continue to work in partnership with Literature Wales and over 2020 we were really pleased to offer a **new project to support freelance writers and artists** during the challenging period whereby projects and opportunities had dried up due to the restrictions.

We have offered two rounds of commissions for original work, allocating bursaries. The first round supported 10 artists to undertake **digital participatory activity that focused upon mental health and well-being**.

The recently announced, and soon to be awarded, second round of commissions sees four further projects being supported that will focus on **projects that engage communities and low income groups**, enhancing mental health and well-being.

We'll be displaying this exciting work in 2021, and announcing plans shortly.

# setting our priorities

2021 will see us advocating parity between physical and mental health on several fronts, building upon the successes of 2020 and supporting members in improving outcomes for patients.

The Welsh Parliamentary elections are scheduled for May 2021, whereby the electorate will have the opportunity to determine the next Welsh Government.

In early 2020, we published '[Good Mental Health for Wales](#)', our manifesto for the next Welsh Government and political parties in Wales. The manifesto argues for **parity between physical and mental health** and sets out a number of priorities and recommendations for better mental health in Wales.

We've recently developed our [Welsh language scheme](#), which we'll keep monitoring in efforts to improve the accessibility of the work of the RCPsych Wales team.

In Feb 2021, we'll be issuing further recommendations for Welsh Government that reflect **priorities in responding to Covid**. We'll also be responding to Health Education and Improvement Wales & Social Care Wales' **workforce plan for Mental Health**.



\*taken from  
'Good Mental Health for Wales'

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Ahead of the Senedd 2021 elections

The Royal College of Psychiatrists Wales is calling for **parity** between mental and physical health services, with timely access to the **right services** in the **right place** and communities working together to reduce poor mental health\*



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