

WF 10

Ymchwiliad i gynaliadwyedd y gweithlu iechyd a gofal cymdeithasol

Inquiry into the sustainability of the health and social care workforce

Ymateb gan: Coleg Brenhinol y Seiciatryddion

Response from: Royal College of Psychiatrists

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RESPONSE OF: THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PSYCHIATRISTS IN WALES

RESPONSE TO: National Assembly for Wales Inquiry into the Sustainability of the Health and Social Care Workforce

The Royal College of Psychiatrists is the leading medical authority on mental health in the United Kingdom and is the professional and educational organisation for doctors specialising in psychiatry.

This evidence was prepared by the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Wales.

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RCPsych in Wales - Previous workforce consultation responses

The RCPsych in Wales has previously submitted responses to Welsh Government consultations on workforce. These include:

- Welsh Government – [Health Professional Education Investment review](#)
- Welsh Government (commissioned) - [review into the NHS Workforce](#)

RCPsych Workforce Census

- The RCPsych has recently published the results of its [Workforce Census](#)

NHS ten- year plan on workforce

In March 2015, the minister announced that a [10-year national workforce plan for the NHS](#) will be developed, bringing together work already underway, including prudent healthcare principles. It will be informed by two areas of work – the primary care workforce plan and the independent review of the NHS Wales workforce (see above).

The RCPsych in Wales is pleased to respond to this inquiry by the National Assembly for Wales.

1. Do we have an accurate picture of the current Health and Care Workforce? Are there any data gaps?

The RCPsych conducts Psychiatry workforce censuses for Consultants and Staff and Associate Specialist Grade Psychiatrists every two years (link above).

The Royal College of Psychiatrists census was conducted at the end of 2015 and gives a snapshot of staffing as of 30 September 2015. We are pleased that nearly 90% of NHS trusts/Health Boards responded to the workforce census, up from 79% in 2013.

Summary of findings

The detailed findings are set out in the report of the workforce census for 2015 but the headlines are:

- A reported increase in filled consultant posts (up 5.9% from 2013).
- A gradual and continuing shift towards gender parity in consultant staffing.
- An ongoing rise in the number of vacant or unfilled consultant posts, concentrated in General, CAMHS and Old Age psychiatry, and in the London area.
- A decrease in the number of filled SASG posts, a reflection of the ongoing recruitment difficulties at that grade.

Trusts/Health Boards continue to report job plans of above 10PAs as very much the exception – this almost certainly represents a hidden cut in manpower, taking account of the number of vacant posts.

The long anticipated increase in retirement numbers as a result of pension changes has not yet become an eventuality – this is an area that the College, along with others such as Health Education England, will continue to monitor and gather intelligence on, to ensure that the supply of psychiatrists is sufficient to meet the demand for high quality services.

Feedback from College Assessors attending Advisory Appointment Committees indicates that competition ratios for consultant posts is lower than in other parts of the UK, though competition for posts appears to be declining nationally.

Competition rates for consultant posts – by applications – by region, since January 2014

Region	Competition
London	6.7
South East	4.4
Eastern	4.2
AVERAGE	4.1
W Midlands	3.8
N Ireland	3.3
Trent	2.9
North & Yorks	2.7
South West	2.6
North West	2.4
Wales	1.7

(Source: RCPsych workforce 2015)

2. **Is there a clear understanding of the Welsh Government’s vision for Health and Care Services and the workforce needed to deliver this?**

The RCPsych in Wales was encouraged by the announcement in March 2016 by the then Minister of Health and Social Services that a 10- year national workforce NHS plan for Wales would be developed. We responded accordingly to the consultation process that lead to this announcement (links above).

Within its [manifesto document](#), the RCPsych in Wales calls upon Welsh Government for development of a National Workforce and Training Strategy which places greater emphasis on medical professions that are in recruitment and retention crisis such as psychiatry.

Together for Health (2011) is the Welsh Government’s five- year strategy for the NHS in Wales. It aims to address financial problems and other pressures, including a rising elderly population, changes in clinical practice, enduring health inequalities, an increase in the number of people with chronic illnesses, and poor organisational performance.^[2]One of the main plans of the Welsh Government outlined in the strategy is ‘Workforce Development’.

^[2] Welsh Government (2011), *Together for Health*, Cardiff: Welsh Government, p.1

The RCPsych in Wales would again stress that the rising elderly population in Wales will impact significantly on future services in Older Adult Psychiatry. There is a trend indicating a shortfall of Older Adult and General Adult Psychiatrists in Wales. Historical low numbers of Core trainees are now leaving gaps in higher training rotations in Wales. Demand forecasts for Consultant Psychiatrists until 2026 are available in the [RCPsych in Wales response to the Review into the NHS Workforce 2015](#).

3. **How well-equipped is the workforce to meet future healthcare needs?**

The RCPsych in Wales thinks the current workforce is not well enough equipped to meet future healthcare needs.

In 2011, the NHS in Wales responded to the Strategy by commissioning Marcus Longley, Professor of Applied Health Policy and Director of Welsh Institute for Health and Social Care, to review the state of NHS. The purpose was to determine what factors were influencing changes in service provision, and to provide possible solutions. One of the main findings of the report was that 'Unless action is taken quickly, the shortage of medical staff in some services is likely to lead to the unplanned closure of those services'.

There are also barriers to workforce planning within the current Health Board structures. These include relatively small numbers of psychiatrists employed by each health board especially in smaller psychiatric sub-specialities, limited connections between health boards and deanery structures.

Psychiatry has one of the highest number of locum posts of any specialty in the Wales. This is not sustainable and does not fit the principles of the Prudent Healthcare Agenda.

4. **What are the factors that influence recruitment and retention of staff across Wales?**

The RCPsych (UK) has recently revised its [recruitment and retention action plan](#). This document provides a detailed set of initiatives developed to improve recruitment and retention across the UK.

The RCPsych in Wales believes that in order to improve rates of recruitment, young people should be targeted at secondary school age and medical schools to be well informed of NHS careers. Work experience, careers fairs and Young People's debates on Mental Health provide young people the experience and knowledge to make an informed decision about their future career.

The RCPsych in Wales has published its [Recruitment and Retention Action Plan 2015 - 2017](#) and works constantly to improve the rates of recruitment and retention in Wales. We strive to:

- Reduce stigma and promote good mental health within secondary schools in Wales.
- Reduce stigma and promote psychiatry within medical schools in Wales.
- Ensure high quality and supported training at core and higher level within psychiatry in Wales.

Retention of Psychiatrists and trainee psychiatrists is a major issue. Factors that influence this include lack of good quality training experience in some areas,

stigma within the medical profession and pressures on services. Wales specifically has issues with rurality and some Health Boards find it difficult to recruit to rural posts. Discussions with members in Wales have highlighted that pay is not *the* major factor in recruitment. Quality of service provision, support services, work-life balance and job satisfaction are seen as priorities.

The RCPsych in Wales is aware of the impact that the new junior doctor contract is having in England. We are encouraged that no plans to implement such a contract have been announced in Wales. This would lead to a further reduction in Recruitment and Retention of psychiatry doctors in Wales.

It remains to be seen what impact leaving the EU will have on Recruitment and Retention in Wales. The College in Wales will not speculate on this issue.

5. Are there any particular issues in some geographical areas, rural or urban areas, or areas of deprivation?

It has long been documented that there are issues recruiting into some of the more rural parts of Wales. Problems that include, for example, training posts that require the post holder to travel for 2 hours between appointments. This is most apparent in Powys Teaching Health Board and Hywel Dda Health Board. Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board also covers a large rural area with lengthy distances between hospitals.

The use of telemedicine has been discussed and is considered a possible solution. The Mid Wales Collaborative published [‘A review of telehealth, telecare and telemedicine’](#) in January of this year. This method would be extremely useful in the delivery of training and education between health professionals. However, within the specialty of psychiatry, this form of communication between doctor and patient should be approached with caution due to the nature of illness.

Areas of deprivation (urban and rural) have historically been difficult to recruit to.

Additionally, the RCPsych in Wales believes that Welsh Language provision should be provided for patients where this is requested. There is a current lack of Welsh speaking Psychiatrists in Wales.

Professor Keith Lloyd



Chair, RCPsych in Wales/President, RCPsych