

# National Assembly elections 2016






## Prioritising primary mental health care in Wales

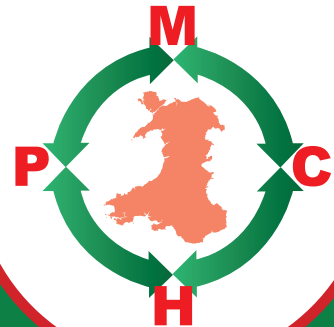
**Wales Mental Health in Primary Care network (WaMH in PC) is a special interest group of the Royal College of GPs. It was established in 2003 to help promote and improve primary mental health care across Wales.**

We are calling on candidates in the National Assembly elections to pledge that, if elected, they will do all they can to:

- Improve access to psychological therapies.
- Improve support for GPs and primary care practitioners.
- Improve integration between different parts of the health service, local authorities and the third sector.

*Do you support us?*

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## Improve access to psychological therapies

In our most recent practitioner survey, access to psychological therapies was identified as the biggest barrier to delivering effective primary mental health care in Wales. Although the Mental Health (Wales) Measure 2010 has started to improve access, we know that waiting times for one-to-one psychological therapies are still too long for too many people. We urge the next Welsh Government to build on its work over the past few years and do more to reduce these waiting times in the future.

## Improve support for GPs and primary care practitioners

Our survey also indicated that mental health is becoming an increasing part of the primary care workload and that GPs and other primary care practitioners would like more support to deliver high quality care. The survey also identified that primary care workforce is feeling under pressure and would benefit from more support to look after their own mental health and wellbeing. We urge the next Welsh Government to ensure that GPs and other primary care practitioners receive more information, training and support so that they can best support people with mental health problems and look after their own wellbeing.

## Improve integration between different services

Our survey also highlighted problems with communication and integration between different parts of the health service, as well as between health, local authorities and third sector services. Bureaucracy and unnecessary organisational barriers can frustrate professionals and prevent patients from getting the holistic support they need in a timely manner. We urge the next Welsh Government to improve integration between services.

85% of respondents said timely access to psychological therapies is one of the top three barriers to the successful delivery of primary mental health services.

72% of respondents said mental health was 'difficult' or 'very difficult' to manage at primary care level.

## Find out more:

Download our report about delivering primary mental health care: [bit.ly/WaMHinPCreport2015](http://bit.ly/WaMHinPCreport2015)

Download the RCGP election manifesto: [bit.ly/RCGPWmanifesto](http://bit.ly/RCGPWmanifesto)