



**AMRCW**

**ACADEMY OF MEDICAL  
ROYAL COLLEGES WALES**

**ACADEMI COLEGAU MEDDYGOL  
BRENHINOL CYMRU**



**Academy of Medical Royal Colleges Wales  
Election Manifesto 2016**

The current NHS in Wales is unsustainable. There is enthusiasm in the workforce to provide care under the Bevan values. The workforce is the most valuable NHS asset and doctors are supportive of an effective and efficient NHS.

Ahead of the National Assembly for Wales Elections 2016 the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges Wales (AMRCW) has compiled a list of all the key policy actions it requires of Welsh Government by 2020. This document provides a consensus view of the cross-specialty issues and overarching policies which AMRCW believes need to be delivered in primary and secondary care.

The following actions are needed now in order to maintain and improve health and health services for the patients in Wales.

- Deliver integrated care
- Ensure the system of primary care is properly resourced
- Develop an improved medical workforce and training strategy
- Provide 7 day consultant present care for acute and emergency care
- Invest in prevention programmes to tackle obesity
- Reduce health inequalities
- Invest in IT infrastructure
- Recognise the equal importance of mental and physical health

## 1. Deliver integrated care

AMRCW believes that a 'whole system' approach to healthcare must be taken to deliver integrated services across Wales. The whole system needs to be addressed and re-modelled before any new workforce strategies are implemented.

AMRCW calls for :

- Care planning must include secondary, primary and social care
- Care coordinators to be present in all clusters to better enable links with hospitals and other care providers. The care coordinators will support minimum inpatient stays, and efficient use of outpatient and diagnostic services resulting in reduced delays
- Increasing use of a shared care record accessible to all relevant care staff
- Mechanisms in place for GPs to access diagnostics in a prudent manner and opinions when required - including further use of email and tele-medicine

## 2. Ensure the system of primary care is properly resourced

Primary care needs to be at the heart of the NHS in Wales if it is to maintain and improve standards of care for patients in Wales. With a period of prolonged underinvestment and a changing demographic, primary care faces significant challenges and is under considerable pressure. If this pressure is not met it is transferred to hospital services.

AMRCW calls for :

- Increase in investment for primary care
- Extending GP specialty training to four years
- Increase in general practice workforce with a wider skill mix
- More outreach from specialty services

### 3. Develop an improved medical workforce and training strategy

It is recognised that there is increasing pressure on hospital, clinical and pathological services due to rising admissions and under resourcing in the primary and community settings. A larger medical workforce is needed in many specialties.

AMRCW calls for :

- A focus on addressing the recruitment and training challenges in Wales
- A medical workforce and training strategy that sets out a clear vision and provides the required number of healthcare professionals to deliver the future healthcare services in Wales
- A strategy to attract medical students to Wales
- Sufficient staffing levels in both primary and secondary care
- Promotion of generalism as a career option

### 4. Provide 7 day consultant present care for acute and emergency care

A call is being made by Government for the provision of a 7 day consultant present care for acute and emergency care. AMRCW supports this concept and to enable this to happen,

AMRCW calls for :

- Availability of adequate 7 day diagnostics and support services
- Provision of a clear definition of 7 day working for each specialty
- Clarification on the role of on call consultants in each specialty and admitting unit
- Robust job planning to ensure adequate (and appropriate) staffing at all times allowing for adequate rest time
- A safe junior contract which fulfils learning and service needs

### 5. Invest in prevention programmes to tackle obesity

There is widespread agreement within AMRCW that obesity is the number one public health issue that needs to be addressed. Severely obese people can expect to die 10 years prematurely mirroring the loss of life expectancy similar to those who smoke, and is now estimated to cost the NHS in Wales £73m<sup>1</sup>. Obesity is one of the major causes of diabetes type 2, and it also increases the risk of cancer, high blood pressure and depression. Tackling the obesity epidemic can only be addressed with a holistic approach for children and adults that includes evidence based legislation and collaboration.

AMRCW calls for :

- A cross – governmental group for public health chaired by a minister that sets tackling obesity as an immediate priority
- Clear advice to the public and health professionals on the need for recommended levels of physical activity
- Ensure nutrition, diet and physical activity are included as core topics in the national school curriculum
- Preserve and protect access to leisure and recreational centres for all citizens in Wales
- Clearer guidance to the NHS on care planning for those who are obese including improved provision of level 3 services
- Improved food labelling
- Local authorities to be required to consider positions of schools when approving applications from fast food outlets

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/888/news/18813>

## 6. Reduce health inequalities

It is widely recognised that the determinants of health are related to socio-economic, environmental and economic issues. AMRCW believes that there is a crucial need to reduce the health inequalities in Wales.

AMRCW calls for :

- Continuation of the founding principles of the NHS whereby care is provided free at the point of access according to need
- NHS to work with local authorities, charities and communities to identify individuals and communities at greater need who have difficulty accessing care services
- Improved mental health provision with a specific focus on the community
- Encourage expansion of employment opportunities in areas of high unemployment
- Wider availability of rehabilitation services for those unfit for work for more than four weeks

## 7. Invest in IT infrastructure

Communication with patients remains largely paper based. Bringing healthcare informatics into the 21st century is considered vital for accelerating patient care, cutting waiting lists and delivering integrated care.

AMRCW believes that improvements in data collection and data utilisation will better facilitate communication and information sharing between primary and secondary care. This will enable a better use of equipment in diagnostics and treatment, and better patient flow through the treatment pathway, ultimately improving the quality of patient care.

AMRCW calls for :

- Development of IT systems that allow health professionals to exchange information seamlessly, and that can be accessed from any site in Wales
- All referrals, investigation results, discharge communications and outpatient reports to be transmitted electronically
- An overarching Welsh Health IT interface integrating data from the numerous current Welsh health IT silos, including socioeconomic and demographic correlates. This will permit comprehensive live analysis and audit by Welsh Government, Health Boards and clinicians of entire patient pathways and health outcomes, thus facilitating rational resource management and prudent service development

## 8. Recognise the equal importance of mental and physical health

AMRCW recognises the significant inequalities that mental health faces in comparison to physical health, and strongly advocates that mental health is afforded the same respect, importance and understanding as physical health. AMRCW wishes to ensure that people with mental health needs are provided the same opportunity for treatment as those with physical needs.

AMRCW calls for :

- Employment of a Director of Mental Health and Intellectual Disability at every Local Health Board at executive board level, to drive quality through improved standards, a strengthened workforce and new training pathways

*The Academy of Medical Royal Colleges Wales (AMRCW) comprises 16 medical Royal Colleges and Faculties. It provides a source of expert and independent medical and dental leadership and advice in relation to the delivery of healthcare in Wales. An Academy Lay member, drawn from the Community Health Council in Wales, represents the interests of the public and patient.*

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