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Introduction

The English health system has recently undergone significant change via the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The Royal College of Psychiatrists successfully lobbied for an amendment to this Act which explicitly recognised the importance of both physical and mental health. This became known as the 'parity of esteem' amendment.'

The College has since published an extensive report on how to achieve parity between mental and physical health in England. Many of the areas considered by this report (such as avoidable premature mortality, the stigma associated with mental illness and the low levels of treatment compared to incidence) are also significant problems in parts of Europe.

Objective

To inform delegates about the English experience regarding parity of esteem, in order to inform their own engagement with nation-specific issues as necessary.

Aims

The detailed aims of this session are to outline the English experience in (1) securing a legislative basis for parity of esteem, (2) defining parity of esteem as a concept and (3) identifying the England-specific issues which needed to be addressed in order to achieve parity. It is intended that delegates will be able to use the information provided as a template for action in their own country, as necessary.

Methods

N/A

Results

N/A

Conclusions

The longstanding lack of parity between mental and physical health remains inequitable and socially unjust. It is hoped that English experience will lead to improvements which can be exported to other European nations as necessary.