Nick Clegg announces the introduction of mental health waiting times

Wednesday 8 October, 2014

BACP welcome this morning's announcement by the Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg in regards to the introduction of mental health waiting time targets.

The news is seen as a positive step forwards in improving mental health care in the UK, but we believe that more will be needed to be done to make parity of esteem a reality for people accessing psychological therapies. These proposals will be outlined in a forthcoming BACP report, Psychological Therapies and Parity of Esteem: from Commitment to Reality, due to be launched on 03 December.

Chair of the Association, Amanda Hawkins, said:

"A guaranteed maximum waiting time for psychological therapy is particularly important, with half of patients currently waiting at least three months for treatment, and 12% waiting over a year. But over and above the need for shorter waiting times, improvements in provision, research and funding for psychological therapies will also need to be addressed to fully achieve parity of esteem between physical and mental health and ensure that these new targets can be met. Services must be appropriately funded and supported in order to avoid potential harm to patients if the existing level of provision is simply rationed in order to meet targets."

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