Mental Health
Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh

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There is a well described link between mental and physical health and wellbeing,¹ and we therefore call for an integrated and holistic view to be included in the next mental health strategy. Around 30% of people with a long-term physical health condition also have a mental health problem. The evidence also shows that people with mental health issues are dying early due to associated physical behaviours and that, for example, stopping smoking improves mental as well as physical health.² Mental health promotion should be given more prominence with respect to physical health due to the burden of morbidity and reduced life expectancy.

Specifically looking at cognitive mental health, there has been a major focus on dementia and some good work has been done in this area nationally. One downside of this focus has been the lack of appreciation that, for the majority of patients, physical and cognitive frailties co-exist. We therefore need to bring older adult mental health and elderly medicine services much closer together to allow a person centred approach to truly work.

¹Faculty of Public Health. Relationship with physical health and healthy lifestyles. http://www.fph.org.uk/relationship_with_physical_health_and_healthy_lifestyles