



Prof Jan K Melichar

Biography



Professor Jan K Melichar BSc MB BS MD FRCPsych, is a Welsh NHS Consultant Addiction Psychiatrist in Newport & Cardiff, Faculty Chair, Addictions Psychiatry, Royal College of Psychiatrists Wales, an Honorary Senior Lecturer (Psychopharmacology, Bath University) and Visiting Professor (University of South Wales), with a diverse portfolio career. His clinical research and service development has always focused on improving both the patient journey and their drug treatment, balancing this with an awareness that good treatment requires an understanding of the whole person. 25 years ago, he started looking at how to improve opioid addiction and treatments for depression, anxiety, and chronic pain. This included early work on Buprenorphine/Naloxone (Suboxone™) and Lofexidine (Britlofex™) with colleagues in Bristol. In 2008, he was awarded one of the prestigious national HEFCE “New Blood” Clinical Senior Lectureships and, with diverse colleagues, he's looked at buprenorphine patches for depression (Bath University), 6-monthly naloxone implants (Perth, Australia) and clinical biomarkers (Nottingham University) in depression. He left to found an early stage medical device start-up, leaving it once it had acquired £1/2M seed investment in 2017. For the past 5 years, he has focused on the significant clinical benefits of long acting injectable/implantable buprenorphine (Buvidal™, Sublocade™ and Sixmo™). In 2020, due to Covid-19, he put a successful bid to Welsh Government to fund nationwide use of the only UK licensed long- acting injectable buprenorphine (LAB)- the weekly and monthly Buvidal™. With colleagues, he rolled it out across Wales and has personally given >600 injections to >100 patients in the past 4 years. Because of



the overwhelmingly clear benefits he and others have shown, Welsh Government has now provided £3M of central guaranteed funding so ~1900 patients are now receiving it in Wales (over 40% of the patient population). He has been involved in work at the University of Bath seeking to pharmacologically understand the benefits of long-acting injectable buprenorphine, with promising results. He has been involved in the development of similar services elsewhere in the UK, as well as in Europe and the Middle East. Professor Melichar has provided input more globally to industry and commissioners, including to the UK Government at the recent UK Government Ministerial Drug Summits. His research interests include facilitating lab-based research to understand what causes the significant allostatic benefit of LAB and the development of properly researched detoxification and cutting-edge trauma pathways for those on it. He previously worked as a Medical Director, Substance Misuse Lead in a Regional Complex Pain service, lead consultant in a Regional Psychopharmacology Unit -seeing patients with treatment-resistant depression, anxiety, and sleep disorders - and set-up a Regional Detoxification Unit. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in 2015 and, in 2022, was elected Addictions Faculty Chair for the Royal College of Psychiatrists Wales and is, since 2023, its Policy Lead.