Communications Framework

For

College of Psychiatrists of Ireland

External Affairs & Policy Department

December 2015

(Review in 3 years)

Introduction

The College of Psychiatrists of Ireland was formed in 2009. It is the professional body for psychiatrists in the Republic of Ireland.

College Mission Statement

The Mission of the College of Psychiatrists of Ireland is to promote excellence in the practice of psychiatry.

The College fulfils its mission through the following actions:

1. Education and Training of psychiatrists
2. Provision of lifelong learning for psychiatrists
3. Advocacy for resources to support best practice in the delivery of mental health services.
4. Promoting best practice in education, training and research in psychiatry.
5. Public education in issues related to psychiatric illness, psychiatric services and mental health promotion.

The College supports the delivery of mental health services in line with the recovery model and supports the delivery of the national policy on mental health services A *Vision for Change*.

The College of Psychiatrists of Ireland is the sole body recognised by the Medical Council and the HSE for the training of doctors to become specialists in psychiatry and for the continuing assurance of the career long competence of specialists in psychiatry.

Background-

The College of Psychiatrists of Ireland (CPsychI) is constituted under 3 pillars:

*   Professional Competence

*   Postgraduate Training

*   External Affairs and Policy (responsible for communications & public education).

Objectives of College Communication Framework

The overriding goal of the Framework is to ensure that all communications and activities support the mission of the College of Psychiatrists of Ireland.

CPsychI will communicate with its members and stakeholders effectively and efficiently so that greater awareness of the key issues relating to mental health, mental illness and best practice in psychiatry is created.

CPsychI will engage with the public on appropriate issues related to mental health so as to improve understanding and awareness of the factors that promote and impede good mental health. CPsychI will promote understanding of what is best practice in psychiatry through proactive public education and reaction to public debate on psychiatry.

Guiding Principles for internal and external communication

The College communication Framework has been formulated on the following principles:

- Communications on key issues will be considered and relevant.
- Communication will be open and transparent.
- Communication will be made in a timely fashion.
- Most relevant information and issues for dissemination or discussion will be widely available on our website, in newsletters and in published reports.
- Our communication will be accessible, easy to understand, relevant, reliable and robust
- Key communications decisions must be considered and approved by the Director of Communications and Public Education in consultation with the President and Management Committee and be in line with the College mission and bye-laws before being acted on.

Audiences

Key audience groups include:-

- College members

- Allied mental health professionals and groups that represent them

- Service users, carers and groups that represent them

- Members of the Oireachtas and the Department of Health

- Health Service Executive

- Mental Health Commission

- The Medical Council

- Private Mental Health Service providers

- Other national and international professional groups.

- Other health agencies

- General Public

- Media

Key Strategic Aims

1. The College will conduct all communications in accordance with its overall aims and objectives as laid down in the constitution of the College.
2. All communications will give due regard to national legislation and other guidelines from relevant Irish bodies such as the Mental Health Commission, Irish Medical Council, Health Services Executive and the Irish Health Products Regulatory Authority.

3.   All communications will give due regard to the policies and recommendations of international sister professional bodies and relevant international bodies such as the World Psychiatric Association, the World Health Organisation and the European Psychiatric Association. Overall communications will be designed to provide clarity, understanding and greater awareness of best practice in psychiatry and in the delivery of mental health services.

4.   The College will also endeavour to bring consistency and consensus to public debate on key issues in psychiatric practice, mental health service delivery and other mental health issues to minimise the risk that lack of clarity and consistency could create confusion and concern among key audience groups.

Who speaks on behalf of the College?

1.   Any communications from the College should come from the President or the Director of Communication and Public Education unless they have delegated communication on a particular issue to someone else.

2.   Any communication from the College must be congruent with the College mission and bye-laws and any relevant College policy documents and position papers.

3.   If possible communication on major issues that the College does not have an agreed position on should not occur without consultation with members of the College Management Committee and the relevant Faculty or committee chairman.

4.   The College, as a professional body, respects the autonomy of its members, and recognises there will be issues on which members differ. Despite the resultant difficulty in achieving consensus on every issue the College may comment on issues related to psychiatry if: a) the Management Committee and a majority of the College Council supports CPsychI making comment on a particular issue and b) the Management Committee and a majority of the College Council support the general content of the comment and c) the Director of Communications and Public Education has taken all possible steps to fulfil the requirements of the motions on this issue agreed at the 2013 EGM of the College (vide infra in Government Submissions)

5. Members can only speak on behalf of the College if they have received approval from the Management Committee through the Director of Communication and Public Education.

6. If a member wishes to speak publicly on matters in their own right they are asked to make it clear to the audience that they are doing so in their own right and not on behalf of the College. Members speaking in their own right can seek advice from the College Department of External Affairs and Policy prior to speaking publicly. Members who do speak on an issue in their own right are requested to let the Department of External Affairs and Policy know of this as media queries may result and advance warning facilitates preparation for such queries.

7. The College does not comment publicly on or advocate for individual services, industrial relations issues or current, pending and past cases either in services or the courts. The College, from time to time, will comment on situations relevant to the mission of the College, in a broad sense with reference to the relevant recognised and recommended best practices and to national and international policy procedures and documents.

Media Risk Management

The Communications strategy will prioritise developing position statements on matters that the College considers relevant to the public interest. When the College is requested to address matters in the public arena, it will respond with due cognisance of the level of risk associated with the particular issue. Any such response will keep in mind the importance of ensuring communication further promotes the aims and objectives of the college. Where this will not be the case, the request for communication should be declined. To assist in dealing with such matters the following hierarchy of issues has been agreed:

Category 1 – areas of high risk
Category 2 - areas of medium risk
Category 3 - areas of low risk.

Category 1: A National Issue, a direct threat to the reputation of the College. The response will be managed by the Director of Communication and Public Education and the External affairs and Policy Department. All relevant personnel of The College will be involved in constructing a response on issues that The College does not have an agreed position on. Any public response will be approved by the Director of Communication and External Affairs in consultation with the President of the College (or the President's Deputy if the President is not available).

Category 2: A Priority Issue, important but not as controversial as a National Issue. Has specialist relevance. Such issues will be managed by the Director of Communication and Public Education and the External Affairs and Policy Department in consultation with the chairman of the relevant CPsychI Faculty or Committee where appropriate. Chairman will consult their Faculty members on issues where an agreed position is not in existence.

The President, Vice-President and CEO will be informed of any such public communication.

Category 3: Administrative and lower level pro-active and specialist Issues. These will be managed by the External Affairs and Policy Department staff in consultation with the Director of Communication and Public Education and the Chairman of the relevant faculties. E.g. Statements on conferences, debates, specialist matters etc. Chairman will consult their Faculty members on issues where an agreed position is not in existence.

The President, Vice-President and CEO will be informed of any such public communication.

The EAP department has a SOP on College media interaction outlining and summarising the process for media issues of varying level. See appendix 8.

Internal Communication

The College is managed on a day to day basis by the Management Committee. The Council is advised by the Management Committee on all key decisions regarding staffing, budget, policy and operations. Council is the final decision making authority of the College.

Routine communication with members will be achieved through the website, emails, letters, conferences, workshops and faculty meetings.

Communications queries from the College members will be managed in a structured and timely fashion. Additional administrative queries will be dealt with by the appropriate team member who will consult with their manager, other staff members and/or the relevant Faculty

Head/Pillar Lead/the Chief Executive as required. All interaction with members both ingoing and outgoing will be recorded.

Where an issue/problem is raised by an individual member, a decision will be taken by the President, CEO & Director of Communication and Public Education on who will manage the specific issue within the College structure. The timeliness of processing this decision is of critical importance. All communications will receive acknowledgment and a preliminary response within one working day. If further contact is needed a timeframe for this will be clearly stated in the preliminary communication.

Any member wishing to pursue a query related to communication, policy or public education should contact the External Affairs and Policy Department by telephone or email. Faculty and Committee Chairmen wishing to discuss a Public Education or Communication issue may contact the Director of Communication and Public Education directly or through the External Affairs and Policy Department.

External Channels of Communications

The College will communicate externally through a range of communication means - website, social media, emails, newsletters, documents, press statements, media interviews, publications, videos and so on. All communication for external media must be cleared by the Manager of the External Affairs and Policy Department and/or the Director of Communication and Public Education unless this is officially delegated to o a specific person or group within the college.

The protocol and management of College communication externally utilising social media platforms are outlined in appendix 7 and 8. 'A Social and Digital Media Policy' for College team members forms part of the College Handbook for staff.

Queries from the general public will be dealt with following the College protocol outlined in appendix 4.

College Website

The College website www.irishpsychiatry.ie is the main communication tool for external affairs (public, media, allied professionals, government bodies, NGOs and so forth) and internal affairs (members & trainees). It provides information under several sections some of which will have restricted access (i.e. for members and/or trainees only).

It comprises a route into the VLE (virtual learning environment) for training modules and on line CPD for members (both run using Moodle and Camtasia Studio software).

The website content and monitoring is co-ordinated and managed by the External Affairs & Policy Manager in conjunction with the College office team managers. The VLE is co-ordinated and managed by the office e-learning team and a team of psychiatrists. The Director of Communications and Public Education is responsible for editorial monitoring of content that is not day to day information. Content should be planned in a timely fashion following the College protocol for presenting and seeking approval of papers or the Blog Protocol or other relevant protocols. (Appendix 4).

Content and communication on the website will be up to date, informative and in line with the College communication strategy objectives and overall goals of the College and its specialist areas and workgroups.

Publications

Newsletters

CPsychI will publish a regular ebulletin to be distributed to all members. The content of these newsletters will focus on College activities, updates to members, publications & research within College Faculties and other relevant College notices/news. The ebulletin will also provide a forum for discussion of issues of relevance to members. The College will also publish a regular Trainee e-Newsletter. Any newsletter produced by the College will be approved by the Manager of the External Affairs and Policy Department and/or the Director of Communication and Public Education. The College also publishes a Professional Competence Scheme (PCS) newsletter on an ad-hoc basis, approved by the PCS Director.

Annual Report

The CPsychI Annual Report will be published on an annual basis to all members.

Process for development of College Papers

Proposals for College Papers can be made by any member through the relevant Faculty or Committee. Once accepted by the relevant Faculty or Committee the proposal will be developed for submission to the Director of Communication and Public Education and the Management Committee (except in the case of proposals for Policy which will be submitted to the Director of Policy and the Management Committee). If the proposal is accepted then it will be developed to final draft form in line with the guidelines in the appendices of this document and submitted to the Director of Policy and the Management Committee for approval. Once accepted by both, the final draft will be sent to the Council of the College for final approval and, if Council agrees, it will be published by CPsychI in the relevant format.

Paper Categories:

Positions

Policy

Perspectives

College Statements

Government Submissions

Positions

The College will develop and hold written positions on a range of formally agreed, relevant issues, which will be made available to members.

Policy

The College will enunciate policy positions on relevant subjects from time to time which will guide the Council and Faculties of the College in their work in developing the role and activities of the College.

Perspectives

The College will publish papers referred to as Perspectives. The aim of Perspectives will be to stimulate productive debate on issues in Psychiatry that may be such as to militate against CPsychI having an agreed Policy or Position on them but are of such professional and/or public

interest that attention and debate needs to occur. A Perspective may be submitted to Council for approval by any Faculty or Committee of the College.

A Perspective could form the basis of / may have potential for further development into a College Policy or Position paper.

CPsychI Statements

The Council of CPsychI on the advice of the Management Committee and/or a Faculty or Department Head will prepare and issue statements on issues relevant to the public interest in relation to Psychiatry. Each Faculty will, at the end of each Faculty Meeting, prepare a list of topics and responses for the Director of Public Education and Communications to facilitate a timely response to any issues that may require a statement. Each Faculty will endeavour to have outline statements prepared on issues anticipated to be relevant to the interests of CPsychI and the public interest.

Government Submissions

The College will make submissions to Government or to Government or Statutory Bodies either in response to calls for such or on issues where the Council or a Faculty deem such necessary for the College to fulfil its Mission. Where possible the membership or relevant groups of members will be consulted before the submission is made. If time does not allow for this then any submission must be made with reference to previous College discussions on the issue.

Each Faculty will, at the end of each Faculty Meeting, prepare a list of topics and responses for the Director of Communications & Public Education and will endeavour to prepare short information sheets on such issues to facilitate a timely response to any requests for submissions.

The President and Council must consult and ascertain the views of the membership of the College prior to submissions being made on major policy matters to Government (Motion passed at the Extraordinary General Meeting of the College of Psychiatrists of Ireland held on Thursday 12th September 2013 at 2.00 pm in the Davenport Hotel, Dublin 2.). The view of REFOCUS is also ascertained prior to submissions being finalised.

The methodology for drafting, sign off and amendment of each of these documents are outlined in appendices 1,2 & 3 of this document

Process for amending the Communications framework

Any member of the College can raise a proposed amendment to the College communication framework and any such proposal should be made to the Director of Public Education and Communications. The suggested amendment will be considered by Director of Public Education and Communications in consultation with the Management Committee. If the Management Committee accept the proposal it will send it to Council for final approval and inclusion in the framework. The decision made in regard to the proposed amendment will be communicated to the proposer.

Appendices

Appendix 1.

Position Statements

Definition: A statement of a point of view or attitude on a certain question that is accepted as an official view of the College:

Protocol for Writing a Position Paper:

1. Any member of the College can propose that the College should take a position on a certain issue.

2. If a member of CPsychI wishes to propose a Position Statement they should initially make the proposal to their Faculty. CPsychI committees that have members who are not members of the College may also propose Position Statements for the College.

3. Proposals for Position Statements should include the following: Rationale for writing the paper; Issues which need to be addressed; Methodology and reasons for inclusions and exclusions; Names of contributors to the statement.

4. Proposals should be sent to the Director of Communication and Public Education for approval.

5. The Director of Communication and Public Education will recommend that a proposal should be developed into a Position Statement if the proposed Position Statement is congruent with the aims of the College.

6. Once the statement is completed it should be sent to the Director of Communication and Public Education for consideration.

7. The Director of Communication and Public Education may return the paper for editing or may refer it to the Management Committee with a recommendation for acceptance.

8. The Management Committee may return the paper for editing or may refer it to Council with a recommendation for acceptance.

9. Council may return for editing or accept it as a College Position paper.

10. This process will continue until Council is satisfied that the Position Paper represents appropriately the position of the majority of members and is congruent with the aims of the College.

11. The President and Council must consult and ascertain the views of the membership of the College prior to submissions being made on major policy matters to Government

(Motion passed at the Extraordinary General Meeting of the College of Psychiatrists of Ireland held on Thursday 12th September 2013 at 2.00 pm in the Davenport Hotel, Dublin 2.).

12. Before final acceptance the Council should consult with REFOCUS.

Timescales:

In accepting a proposal for a Position Paper to be written the Director of Communication and Public Education should recommend a clear timeframe.

Appendix 2.

Policies

A Policy is a plan or course of action intended to influence and determine decisions, actions, and other matters

Protocol for writing Policies:

1. Any member of the College can propose that the College should have a Policy on a certain issue.

2. If a member of CPsychI wishes to propose a Policy they should initially make the proposal to their Faculty.

3. CPsychI committees that have members who are not members of the College may also propose Policy for the College.

4. Proposals for Policies should include the following: Rationale for the policy and the Issues which need to be addressed.

5. If accepted by the relevant Faculty proposals should be sent to the Director of Policy for approval. The Director of Policy will consult with the Director of Communications and Public Education and make a decision.

6. The Director of Policy will recommend that a proposal should be developed into a Policy if the proposed Policy is congruent with the aims of the College.

7. The Director of Policy will delegate its development.

8. The final policy document must contain a systematic plan for enacting the policy.

9. Any final policy document must outline a process for review of the effect of the policy.

10. The Director of Policy will then send it to the Management Committee with a recommendation for acceptance.

11. The Management Committee may return the policy for editing or may refer it to Council with a recommendation for acceptance.

12. Council may return the policy for editing or accept it as a College Policy.

13. This process will continue until Council is satisfied that the Policy represents appropriately the position of the majority of members and is congruent with the aims of the College.

14. Before final acceptance the Council should consult with REFOCUS.

Appendix 3

Perspectives

Perspectives are viewpoints on issues in Psychiatry that are of such a nature as to militate against The College having an agreed Policy or Position on them but are of such professional and/or public interest that attention and debate needs to occur. Perspectives will be developed to promote informed debate within The College and outside to help the College to develop Policies or Positions on complex issues related to the practice of Psychiatry.

Protocol for writing Perspectives:

A perspective should address an issue relevant to Psychiatry bringing together expert opinion and/ or data that will illuminate opinions and facts about the issue in a critical way that leads to the formulation of conclusions that will be enunciated in the document to prompt further discussion within the membership of College committees and in the general public once the perspective is published.

Perspectives do not represent College policy or an agreed position of the College.

Members of any College Faculty or Committee may propose to their faculty or committee that an issue needs informed debate formalised as a perspective. Proposals for perspectives should be submitted, with the following information: Reasons for the perspective, broad theme/title, time scale for completion. Before work commences on this perspective, the proposal should be sent by email to the Director of Communications and Public Education for approval. If agreement is forthcoming then the proposer will be asked to develop the proposal into a Perspective.

Once the Perspective is written it will be sent to the Director of Communication and Public Education for review. This may result in requests for changes or clarifications. Once the Director of Communication and Public Education approves the final document, it will be sent to the Management Committee.

The Management Committee may return the final Perspective for editing or may refer it to Council with a recommendation for acceptance.
Council may return the ~Document for editing or accept it and send it for publication by the College as Perspective.

Appendix 4

Procedure & Protocol for dealing with queries from the general public.

1. Calls from members of the general public requesting to speak to the President, Officers or Directors of the College.
   - State clearly that they do not work from these premises and that queries/requests can be made to them in writing (by letter or email). Provide the College mailing address and/or relevant college email address for the written query /request.
   - Do not offer to speak to any of the above on a caller's behalf.
   - Never allow direct telephone contact with the psychiatrist in question or provide their personal or work contact details.

2. Calls asking how to make a complaint about a psychiatrist.
   - State that the College is a professional membership organisation with an educational remit and is not a disciplinary body.
   - Callers should be directed to make a complaint to the psychiatrist's employer in the first instance.
   - Callers should also be directed to the Medical Council (information on their website www.medicalcouncil.ie).

3. Calls from people wishing to see a psychiatrist, either for themselves or a family member, friend and so on.
   - Advise them to go to a family doctor / GP for a referral.
   - Explain that psychiatrists work in catchment areas in the public health system and are accessed via referrals (from GPs) so it is not possible to 'choose' a psychiatrist within the public system.
   - Advise them that the College does not have lists of psychiatrists for this purpose.

4. Calls from people looking for details of <u>private</u> psychiatrists.

- Suggest contacting private Independent Service Providers in their area or preferred location.
- For the Dublin area, suggest that they contact the St John of God Hospital services or St Patrick's Hospital / Lucena Clinic for Children for further information.
- Advise them to go to a family doctor / GP for a referral

5. Calls from solicitors.

- It is College policy <u>not</u> to provide lists of those who give court reports to solicitors. They can access this information from the Law Society.
- If a solicitor names a psychiatrist (who may or may not have carried out work for them previously) ask that they email their specific request to you. Then contact the psychiatrist by telephone or email and let them decide if they wish to engage with the solicitor or not. If they wish to engage they should contact the solicitor directly.

Appendix 5

College Website – Protocol for Content & Design

1. **Updating & uploading new content** is carried out for each section of the website by the relevant CPsychI office team member. The CEO, EAP Manager, Digital Communications Administrator and e-learning co-ordinator have overall editorial access to the website *content management system (CMS)* and are named *administrators* on the CMS. Others have editorial access to specific areas only and are named *site editors* on the CMS. New content should not be published on any section of the website without prior approval of the relevant Pillar/section manager & director.

   Updating content should be carried out on a regular basis to maintain a 'live' feeling to the site, as well as ensuring that information relevant to members, such as meeting time and dates, is changed in a timely fashion.

2. **SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) manual:** a manual found on the College Z Drive is available which provides editors of the CMS details on uploading and editing content to maintain where appropriate a standard look and so forth.
   It also provides minor training on the CMS.

3. **Member only sign in areas**
   Only current members of the College can access member only areas. This requires login with a user name (email address as supplied to the College) and password (membership number)

Appendix 6

Protocol for College Blogs

CPsychI Blog:

The **CPsychI** External Affairs and Policy (EAP) Pillar maintains and moderates the blog on a day to day basis with consultation and sign off made by the Director of Communications and Public Education.

Function:

CPsychI hosts a blog in order to highlight aspects of psychiatry. Blog posts will be written for psychiatrists, mental health professionals, service users and carers and members of the public with an interest in mental health. Blog posts are personal perspectives to stimulate productive debate on issues in Psychiatry that are of particular relevance to Psychiatrists, Mental Health Professionals, Service Users and/or Carers. Blog posts are not formal positions or policies of the CPsychI.

The advantages of having a blog are to generate sharable information; establishing the College as an information resource for members and the general public; engaging with others on social media; building rapport with outside organisations and interested stakeholders; engaging with and educating members.

Blogging attracts traffic to the website. By posting regular, relevant content, the College will give its audience, both new and existing, an enticement to visit the website.

Blogging can also have beneficial long term effects like establishing authority. By writing about things your audience want to read about, the audience may see you as an expert in the field and trust the authority of the voice of the College.

Blog Authors:

The Blog will be managed by the EAP staff and will be authored by Members of the College, members of REFOCUS and others by invitation of the Director of Communications and Public Education. Posts do not reflect the views of the College but should be congruent with the

mission of CPsychI. The College will not publish content that does not reflect the College's aims and objectives. The College will not publish content that is harmful or offensive.

Posts meant for the College blog must be first sent for review and a final decision on posting by the Director of Communications and Public Education.

Blog posts are welcome from Psychiatrists, Mental Health Professionals, Service Users and Carers and other interested stakeholders. Posts will be published at the discretion of the Director of Communications and Public Education or a person/group delegated to make this decision by the Director of Communications and Public Education.

Managing the Blog:

Comment functionality should allow the author and the Director of Communications and Public Education to disable responses as is appropriate for each Blog Post.

A Committee of editorial advisers will be established to monitor the accuracy of factual content of Blogs

Blog responses are monitored by CPsychI staff working within the EAP Pillar and referred to the Director of Communications and Public Education if anything contentious is published online. Inappropriate or offensive comments will not be published.

Analytics will be used by CPsychI staff working within EAP Pillar to monitor interaction with and visits to blog.

Appendix 7

Protocol for College Social Media Accounts

College Social Media:

As of 2015, the College uses two main forms of Social Media:

Twitter: Micro Blogging service that enables users to send and read posts of up to 140 characters. (Tweeting). The college twitter handle is @irishpsychiatry.

Linkedin: Seen as the professional social medium, Linkedin targets building networks for professionals and organisations and providing a forum to share their expertise with like-minded users.

Why the College uses Social Media:

Social Media is now equally if not more effective at reaching large audiences with messages the College wishes to convey. Social Media has the ability to bring greater attention and awareness to the work of the College, improve its reputation and allow fast communication with like-minded people.

Management of Social Media:

Social media is managed by EAP staff within the College under supervision of tthe Director of Communications and Public Education.

Content Shared on Social Media:

Social Media is often viewed as a casual, colloquial space to connect with people but one must remember that content posted through Social Media channels reflect the official 'voice' of the College. Therefore, to compensate for the informal environment, a professional but natural and friendly tone is advised. Incorrect spelling, grammar or "txt-speak" is not acceptable.

As much as is possible, links shared on social media should direct back to the College website.

If the link does not direct back to the College website, the content of the webpage should not contradict the mission statement or positions that the College holds. Similar to the College blog

& REFOCUS papers (see Appendix 6) Tweets and articles shared through Social Media can serve as perspectives to stimulate productive debate on issues in psychiatry that are of particular relevance to Psychiatrists, Mental Health Professionals, Service Users and/or Carers.

Level of engagement:

Social media accounts must be updated regularly and consistently. Accounts should also be monitored regularly to ensure that comments/queries addressed to the College are responded to and that any inappropriate posts or interactions are dealt with promptly.

Negative Sentiment:

With increased posting frequency and higher levels of engagement, it is possible to attract negative or aggressive sentiment from other users.

"*A communications void will exist; if you don't fill it, someone else will. Acceptance of this statement is critical to effective communications management.*" (Tadie, 2011).

Negative sentiment should be immediately reported to the the Director of Communications and Public Education. Depending on the level of engagement the negative post is garnering, it is best practice to acknowledge the tweet with a neutral reply. Most social grievances can be nullified by helpful info.

If this does not solve the grievance, the College should move to take the conversation offline. Without agreeing or disagreeing with their statements, reply with a contact details for a member of EAP staff that they can discuss the issue further with.

Legal considerations:

Social media are still a relatively new phenomenon, and in legal terms, it is a developing area. While the medium may be different, many of the legal considerations associated with print and broadcast need to be borne in mind (such as libel or defamation). There have recently been a number of high profile cases surrounding social media.

TADIE, E.B., 2011. *Stay Calm and Tweet: A Best Practice Approach to the Use of Social Media in a Crisis Situation.*

Appendix 8

Standard Operating Procedure

College Media Interaction

Below is an easy reference to the process of dealing with media activity and queries and when they occur.

Media refers to all media platforms - national, regional and local broadcast and print media and social media (twitter, blogs, facebook, LinkedIn and so on).

All queries by the media or about issues in the media must be directed to the EAP Department.

➢ The query must go to the Manager first by phone and /or email.

➢ If the Manager is unavailable, then the query should be directed to other staff members within EAP.

➢ The Director of Communications & Public Education must be informed by the EAP department at some point. The timing of such contact will depend on the nature of the issue involved (See below)

Major issue

The Director of Communications, the President, the Vice-President, the Chief Executive and the Manager of EAP must be contacted <u>by phone by the EAP Department</u> and informed if:

➢ an issue arises in media that is of College member's concern, of national significance, of grave concern, of public safety and /or affects service users/patients, carers and the profession of psychiatry including trainees.

➢ the reputation of the College is at stake or incorrectly depicted in media

➢ there is a risk of Litigation involving College interest
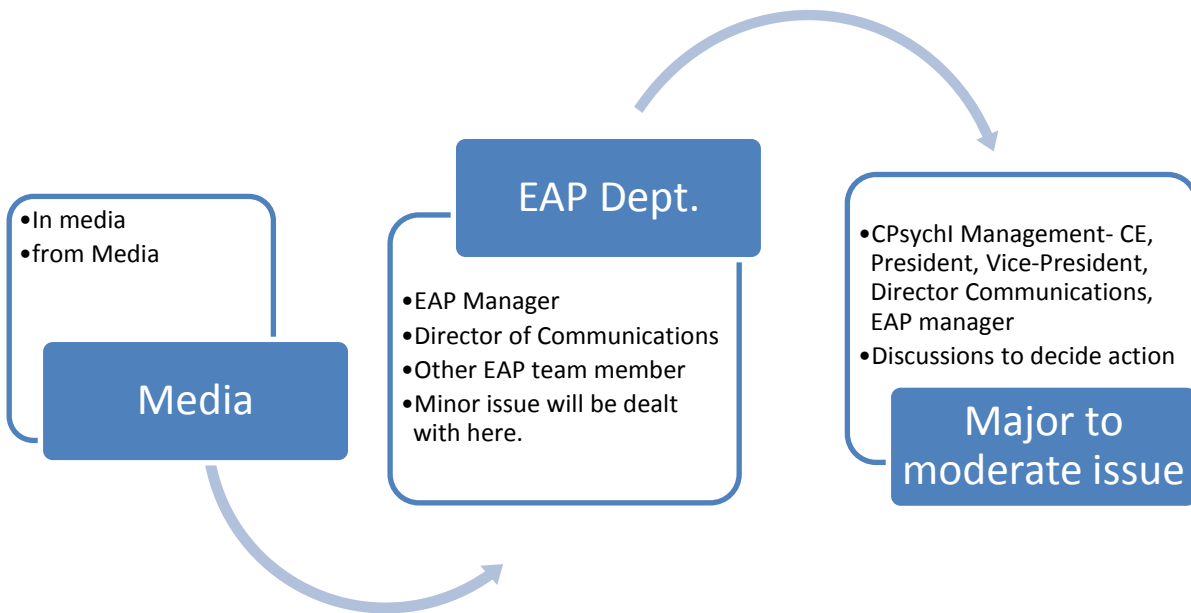
➢ urgent correction is required

The Director of Communications and the EAP Manager <u>must be informed</u> first of any major issue. Any response to a Major Issue must come from the Director of Communication and the Manager of EAP who will consult with the President, the Chief Executive and relevant officers of the College depending on the issue in question.

Medium issue

Contact and inform the Director of Communications, the Manager of EAP and the Chief Executive before responding. Refer to category document.

Minor issue

The EAP department will decide if the query should be followed up on her not and will inform the Director re the query and action/answer taken if any. Usually an email to inform the Manager and Director is sufficient. If the minor query involves asking a member psychiatrist to be involved the Manager and/or Manager will advise but both must be informed of the decision.

Media
- In media
- from Media

EAP Dept.
- EAP Manager
- Director of Communications
- Other EAP team member
- Minor issue will be dealt with here.

Major to moderate issue
- CPsychI Management- CE, President, Vice-President, Director Communications, EAP manager
- Discussions to decide action

Appendix 9

CPsychI Staff Social Media Policy (2014)

This Policy document, provides guidance and direction to College staff when utilising all types of online social media sites and networks. This policy applies to all College employees either participating personally, or communicating on behalf of the College, while online.

This guidance document should not be considered in isolation but needs to be read in conjunction with the College Handbook, including your employment contract.

Misuse or abuse of social and digital media can cause significant injury to third parties and can also impact negatively on the credibility of the College. This is particularly relevant in the context of safeguarding personal information. The College is potentially vicariously liable for injury caused by misuse or abuse of social and digital media channels by it's employees. Consequently the College takes any misuse or abuse of social and digital media by College employees very seriously and can lead to significant disciplinary and legal actions.   Like all employee policies, there is significant personal responsibility placed on each employee.

Information Security Policy

Each user is responsible for respecting and protecting the privacy and confidentiality of the information they process at all times

Electronic Communications Policy

Confidential information regarding College business practices and procedures or personal information about any College members or employees must not be posted or discussed on internet social networking websites, internet video hosting/sharing websites, internet discussion forums, message boards or internet chat rooms.

The College reserves the right to take such action as it deems appropriate against users who breach the conditions of these policies or Data Protection regulations. College employees who breach these policies may be denied access to the organisation's information technology resources, and may be subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and dismissal as provided for in the College disciplinary procedure.

Code of Standards and Behaviour

There is an implied term of mutual trust and confidence between employer and employee in all employment contracts. A very negative, defamatory or damaging posting or communication by an employee may entitle the College to proceed with the Disciplinary Process, including investigation, and discipline up to dismissal if warranted. If defamatory material is posted on a social networking site, defamation claims may arise against the employee.

Employees must not improperly disclose, during or following termination of employment, information gained in the course of their work.

Social Media Policy

1. Representing the College

The same rules that apply to our communications in traditional media, like newspapers, television and radio, also apply in online news or social media sites or networks. The External Affairs and Policy Department has a Communications Policy which is available on our website. If in doubt please contact the EAP Department.

Official comment from the College to be broadcast online should be in line with the College Communications Policy.

2. Personal Social Media Profiles

Everyone is entitled to explore and engage in social media communities in a personal capacity, at a level at which they feel comfortable.

In regard to online communities and forums, if you choose to identify yourself as a College employee on social media profiles, or in your commentary on personal topics within social media sites, it is important to use common sense and be aware of the nature of your comments and their possible consequences.

It is important that all employees are aware of the implications of engaging in forms of social media and online conversations that reference the College or your association with the College. Data Protection requirements and defamation law all still apply in comments that are made while off-duty and online. If an employee comments online in a personal capacity while identified as a

College employee, these comments can be attributed or perceived as the official position of the College.

Personal blogs created by College employees, particularly if referencing College activity or positions and policy, including microblogs like Twitter accounts, should have a clear disclaimer that the views expressed by the author in the blog are the author's alone and do not represent the views of the employer. Authors should write clearly and in the first person, to clarify that the views or comments are personal.

Social media activities should not interfere with your College work commitments.

Remember, when using social media in personal time:

1. Be respectful of all individuals, races, religions and cultures; how you conduct yourself in the online social media space not only reflects on you – it is a direct reflection on your professionalism and your employer.

2. You may come across negative posts about the College or psychiatry, but should avoid responding yourself. The post in question should be forwarded to the Communications Department.

3. Be conscious when mixing your business and personal lives. Online, your personal and business profiles are likely to intersect. The College respects the privacy of all employees, but you must remember that Members and colleagues may have access to the online content you post. Keep this in mind when publishing information online that can be seen by more than friends and family, and know that information originally intended just for friends and family can be forwarded on very easily.

4. Know that the Internet is permanent. Once information is published online, it is essentially part of a permanent record, even if you "remove/delete" it later or attempt to make it anonymous.

Data Ownership

Any database or online connections used and built up on social medical platforms (e.g. and not limited to Twitter, LinkedIn or Facebook) in the course of a College employee's role are the property of the College.

If an employee chooses voluntarily to utilise their existing or pre-employment online database and connections to carry out a function for the College, the database and connections and pertinent information therein are the property of the College and cannot be retained or used upon exiting employment with the College.