



## **Press Statement - 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014**

### **Resilience & Adversity focus at well attended College of Psychiatrists Annual Winter Conference**

The College of Psychiatrists of Ireland recent Winter Conference attracted one of the highest number of delegates to their conferences since the College inception in 2009. Over 350 delegates attended the annual two day event which took place in the Killashee House Hotel conference centre in Kildare with numbers reaching almost 300 on the first day and 245 on the second day.

Entitled '*Resilience and Adversity*', the conference programme, aimed at psychiatrists, included a range of topics presented by international and national experts between plenary sessions and parallel workshops over both days.

**Dr Lynne Drummond, SW London & St George's Mental Health NHS Trust, London**, the first plenary speaker of the conference covered the state-of the-art psychopharmacological and psychological approaches to OCD in her talk '**TREATING PROFOUND REFRACTORY OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER**'. Dr Drummond examined outcomes to these strategies and possible new interventions for the future were identified.

Professor Kevin Browne, University of Nottingham Medical School, UK ended the first morning session with '**HOW EARLY ADVERSE LIFE EVENTS AND TRAUMA CAN AFFECT LATER FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS**'

"Research on living with child maltreatment and parental addiction contains evidence for the consequences and effects on the victimized child. These include mental health problems such as depression and substance abuse, anger and aggression, social and emotional relationship difficulties in later life, isolation and low self-esteem" explained Professor Kevin Browne in his presentation.

Continuing Prof Browne said,

"One of the most disturbing consequences of child maltreatment is the fact that victimized children may later perpetrate abuse and neglect as a parent or offend in the community. This association is not straight forward, as not all abused children will become offenders and likewise not all offenders have a history of child maltreatment". Prof Browne outlined from recent research the risks and probabilities of victims becoming perpetrators as a result of childhood maltreatment.

Friday's plenary sessions were equally stimulating, varied and informative with a session on '**ETHNIC MINORITIES AND MENTAL HEALTH: LEARNING FROM STAKEHOLDERS**' presented by Dr Shari McDaid, of Mental Health Reform, Emilia Marchelewska of Cairde & Mr Thomas McCann, Traveller Counselling Service, Dublin.

Dr McDaid outlined how Mental Health Reform embarked upon an engagement process in 2012 with representatives of black and minority ethnic community groups including the traveller community, in order to develop a position on promoting culturally sensitive mental health services in line with Recommendations 4.8 of *A Vision for Change*, Ireland's blueprint for mental health services. She presented a summary of the findings through an outline of the resulting briefing paper and recommendations.

Ms Marchelewska provided delegates with background to the Cairde approach and project to identify issues such as cultural and community perceptions of mental health difficulties and requirements for migrants and the services to deal with them by also outlining finding and recommendations.



## College of Psychiatrists of Ireland

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Mr Thomas McCann, traveller and psychotherapist spoke to delegates about the need to set up the Traveller counsellor service and what he encounters daily, what needs to be addressed between mental health crisis of travellers, the services available and the gap that urgently needs to be filled not only culturally between the services available and required but the mental health professions understanding and approach to Travellers.

Mr McCann called on psychiatrists to address the gap by urgently assess the training for how support to and treatments for travellers are delivered and particularly in vital aspects such as supervision which through his own experience when training as a psychotherapist were lacking and non-existent.

Prof Brendan Kelly, Consultant psychiatrist at the Mater Misericordiae University Hospital Dublin, completed the conference's plenary sessions with an informative and entertaining look at **'HUMAN RESPONSES IN THE TIME OF PESTILENCE - A WALK THROUGH HISTORY FROM THE PLAGUE OF ATHENS TO THE CURRENT EBOLA EPIDEMIC'**

Prof Kelly's talk focused on psychological responses to plagues, epidemics and other apparent threats of mass infection, ranging from earliest times, through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, up to the current response to Ebola drawing on medical and historical sources, as well as issues within the history of psychiatry relating to contagion, miasma and hysteria.

The annual conference included a wide range of parallel workshops both days from topics such as *Visual Hallucination & Delusion: A neurological perspective to Relationships Matter to Sodium & Psychiatry to How Can we support Carers?:The Carers and Research Perspective*. [See full two day programme here](#)

**Interviews (less than 10 minutes each) with three plenary speakers are attached for further information: Prof Kevin Browne, Dr Lynne Drumund and Prof Brendan Kelly.**

Photos attached.

Ends

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