

Press Release 5/10/15

College of Psychiatrists of Ireland Explores Dignity in Mental Health for World Mental Health Day 2015.

Dignity is a basic human right that should be afforded to everyone, regardless of social status; too often, those with mental and psychosocial disabilities are denied their right to dignity.

Dignity in Mental Health is the theme of World Mental Health Week this year. The College of Psychiatrists of Ireland welcomes this symbolic occasion, which shines a light on those deprived of dignity, due to mental ill health.

The College of Psychiatrists of Ireland has acknowledged the importance of this day with its *Dignity in Mental Health Series on A Living Word*, on RTE Radio 1. Five perspectives from professionals, service users and carers, will air each morning from Monday 5th until Friday 9th of October.

The College supports dignity as a core value in mental health care and promotes this ideal through its training of Psychiatrists and its advocacy for best practice in the delivery of mental health services.

Dr John Hillery, Director of Communications and Public Education for the College has commented saying; *'The fact that people with mental health problems continue to endure conditions, in many countries, that diminish their dignity should energise us all to advocate for meaningful supports for people with mental health problems. Unfortunately even in Ireland there remains some way to travel. The College of Psychiatrists of Ireland will continue to emphasise a philosophy of Recovery and dignity in its training and other activities.'*

Professor Brendan Kelly, Associate Clinical Professor of Psychiatry has said; *'Dignity is impossible to define in words. Maybe that's because dignity is so central to what it means to be human. When our dignity is intact, we do not notice it. It is our silent companion, our secret strength. But when we lose our dignity, the loss is unmistakable. We all feel it. Powerfully. Unmistakably. Now.'*

Laura Louise Condell, See Change Ambassador has shared her story; *'I have spent much of my life waiting and little by little that eroded my dignity and sense of self. Waiting for appointment dates, in waiting rooms, waiting for referrals,*

waiting for prescriptions, waiting for phone calls back that never come, waiting for somebody to take me seriously.'

Jeanine Webster, Carer and Member of REFOCUS says; 'Being a carer brings the utmost pain. It also brings the utmost love. Perhaps caring and dignity do go together as it takes us to the deepest parts of our being and says to another 'You matter - I care'.

Ends.

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