



The College of Psychiatry of Ireland
Coláiste Síciatrachta na hÉireann

College of Psychiatry of Ireland

Press Statement - 29th June 2011

College of Psychiatry of Ireland comments on report “*Time to move on from Congregated settings - A Strategy for Community Inclusion*”, just released

The College of Psychiatry of Ireland welcomes the report ‘[Time to move on from Congregated settings](#)’ (commissioned by the HSE) regarding the current care provided in Ireland to persons with intellectual disabilities. The College supports the recommendations in the ‘*Congregated Settings*’ report that adults with intellectual disabilities should be living in the community and emphasises that inspections for health and quality care in these community settings need to be implemented.

It is estimated that 50% of people with severe to profound intellectual disabilities will have a mental health problem at some stage in their lives, as will 20 - 25% of those with mild to moderate intellectual difficulties. *“If people with intellectual disability develop mental health problems or difficulties these individuals must and should be afforded the same rights to a person centred mental health service as every other citizen”* pointed out Dr Anita Ambikapathy, Vice-chair of the College Faculty of Learning Disability Psychiatry.

A Vision for Change, (2006) the national mental health policy, recommended the roll-out, within 7- 10 years, of 39 mental health intellectual disability teams nationally, for those with an intellectual disability and mental health problems. To date, only two such teams have been partially developed. *“People with intellectual disability and mental health disorder do not benefit from the same range of mental health services as the general population”* says Dr Ambikapathy *“In many parts of Ireland they are unable to access*

admission to an acute psychiatric unit for assessment, treatment and support". The College emphasizes that people with intellectual disability should have person-centred care and services based on their individual needs which include mental health multidisciplinary teams and specialist care services.

The College of Psychiatry supports the implementation of the recommendations in *A Vision for Change* many of which are highlighted again in [‘Excluded, Expelled and Exported’](#) (College of Psychiatry of Ireland, 2011). This report identified 55 adults with Intellectual Disability, Mental Illness and Challenging behavior, who are currently in facilities abroad, far removed from their families, friends and communities, due to the lack of suitable mental health facilities in Ireland for this vulnerable group.

Over the last number of years the College has had regular meetings with the Department of Health and the HSE, outlining its concerns on the lack of progress for this vulnerable group.

The College welcomes the recent commitment shown by the current government, particularly Minister Kathleen Lynch, and the Department of Health in addressing the problems.

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