



Press Release

Wednesday 16th June 2010

The College of Psychiatry of Ireland welcomes the recommendations and annual report of the Mental Health Commission for 2009, which was published today.

The College welcomes the imminent ‘order’ by the Commission to prevent any new acute admissions to three hospitals - St Ita’s, St Brendan’s and St Senan’s - given the consistent message for the required closure in Inspector’s reports over past years because of the poor conditions available to patients, and the persistent failure to address these shortcomings.

The College applauds the Mental Health Commission for its unambiguous message today and undertakes to work closely with them in their mission to set high standards and modernise services and, in the future, to monitor the patient services and press for resources to equip multidisciplinary teams to provide quality alternatives to institutional-based care.

“While we welcome the MHC order and recommendations outlined today we are also alarmed at the slow progress of mental health services in moving from institutional care to the community in a truly meaningful way”, said Dr Siobhán Barry, External Affairs & Policy Director of the College.

“We recognise Minister Moloney’s commitment and passion for the implementation of ‘A Vision for Change’ which includes a reduction in institutional care” she continued “but we have concerns that there will not be adequate provision now not only for acutely ill people to find support and help but, equally, that current residents of the institutions that are for due for closure will have nowhere to go. The impact of such closures needs to be assessed and adequately resourced alternatives developed. The moratorium on staffing impedes new community-based services being developed and simply closing facilities that are not fit for purpose without setting up alternatives runs unacceptable risks for some of our very helpless and vulnerable citizens”.

The College again highlights (see CPsychI ‘A Gloomy View’ Report published in May 2009) that 18 new multidisciplinary teams were promised in December 2005. Had these been realised a rolling programme of ongoing developments might then have begun and the aspiration of a responsive, pro-active, relevant mental health service espoused in ‘A Vision for Change’, become a reality.

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