

CPsychI Letter to the Editor, Irish Times, 19 April 2012

Dear Sir,

RE: Mental Illness & Medication - We Need Choice and Tolerance.

Thomas Roddy (letter April 19th) identifies two areas that need to be highlighted when it comes to recovery from mental illness.

Mr Roddy identifies the importance of choice within our mental health services. Having the choice of psychotherapy was important for him.

Today less than a quarter of adult mental health teams have access to psychologists or psychotherapists. The College of Psychiatry of Ireland has called many times for the full implementation of *A Vision for Change* (the national policy for how a mental health service should be organised) with fully staffed multidisciplinary community mental health teams which include mental health professionals with expertise in psychotherapy.

Along with choice, our society, our government and our services need to develop tolerance and acceptance around mental illness. Most people who have had experience of mental illness live fulfilling & satisfying lives. Some do so without medication. For others, medication plays a key role in ensuring they reach this level of recovery. This is the case even when psychotherapy is available.

We need to ensure our services are funded to ensure all individuals can receive the most appropriate treatment with a multidisciplinary approach and we need to ensure a tolerance and understanding that for some people the most appropriate treatment is medication.

Yours etc,

Dr Anne Jeffers

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