

External Affairs & Policy Pillar

Committee & Activity Report for Council
March 2012

Committee Reports



External Affairs & Policy (EAP) Committee

Chair: Dr Anne Jeffers.

Objectives:-

- o improve the understanding of Psychiatry and Mental Health,
- o collaborate with key players in the mental health field,
- o advocate for improvements in the quality of mental healthcare throughout all sectors of society
- o communicate effectively with members and the public.

Eight meetings have taken place to date. From 2012 there will be quarterly meetings with much work & correspondence to be carried out by email & telephone. **Next Meeting:** May 2012

1. Position papers in development:

By the committee –

Benzodiazepine Use, Relationship with Pharma and Depression / antidepressants

By Faculties – Faculty of LD Psychiatry: 2 papers:

1. *Dementia in People with Intellectual Disability'*
2. *'Proposed Model for the Delivery of a Mental Health Service for Children with Intellectual Disability'*

2. 'Homeless & Mental Health' College 2012 Theme activity:

- a. **College AGM January 2012**, keynote speaker Prof Aiden Halligan, Position paper launched – *Specialist Mental Health Services for Homeless People*. Covered on RTE's Drivetime.

- b. Trainee conference **Essay Prize for Medical Students** – organized by the College Trainee Committee.
- c. **CPsychl Spike Milligan Public Speaking Competition 2012 for Medical Students:** 'Out of Sight, Out of Mind- who are the bondholders for our homeless with mental health problems?' **Wednesday 14th March 2012** in the Sugar Club, Dublin. All seven medical schools entered a team. Judges Fr Peter McVerry, Dr Joanne Fenton & Dr Maurice Clancy. Winners this year- Queens University Belfast.
- d. **Multi-Agency One Day Conference for World Mental Health Day/Week 2012** incorporating launch of results of a survey to CDs on how homeless people are looked after and numbers seen and so on. Survey drafted and will be issued soon. Workgroup comprised of Dr J Fenton, Dr A Jeffers, Dr R Loane & two representatives from homeless agencies. Key speaker Dr Philip Timms from London.

Date & Location for Conference: Friday 12th October, Dublin. CPD points to be applied for.

3. **Debunking the myths about Psychiatry:** The Survey for medical professionals is complete, signed off and ready for distribution.

Clinical Advisory Group

Chair: Dr Anthony McCarthy. Membership is Faculty Chairs, ECD & CD chairs, External Affairs Director and Clinical lead for Mental Health.

Objective: To collaborate with and guide the Clinical Lead for Mental Health & corroborate with the HSE on this joint initiative to develop clinical guidelines over the next 5 years.

A Project Manager has been appointed - Ms Rhona Jennings (formerly of the MHC). Dr Brid Hollywood has been appointed from the ICGP as joint programme lead to work with Dr I Daly. Three clinical leads for each of the three groups have been invited and accepted. – Dr Mary Clark for Psychosis, Dr Fiona McNicholas for Eating Disorders & Dr Siobhán MacHale for Suicide & Self Harm.

Other Pillar Activity

A Vision for Change: Progress Report was submitted to the Independent Monitoring Group and a meeting with them will take place in April 2012. The report was compiled by Dr A Jeffers with input from all Faculties.

The Specialist Mental Health Services for Homeless People position paper was also used to mark the 6th Anniversary of AVFC.

CPsychI / ICGP Forum on mental health

Objective: To improve communication and liaison between primary & secondary care in mental health with ultimate goal of improving care & service to service users. **2012 Joint Chair:** Dr Anne Jeffers (CPsychI) & Dr Bríd Hollywood (ICGP).

Next Meeting: May 2012

Dr Vincent Russell & Dr Martina Kelly have co chaired the group for two years but have resigned following major changes in their career.

The Forum has completed three projects:

1. Referral of People with Depression to the Specialist Mental Health Services - Guidance for GPs: launched at various events in both Colleges & available on corresponding websites. Irish Times & Medical journals gave favourable



coverage to the paper.

3. Physical Health Group – research project ongoing. Dr M Kelly (GP) is leading a research project in which nine practices nationally are participating. There is a difference in how Psychiatrists and GPs approach this problem - Psychiatrist can focus too much on biochemical markers, when weight, exercise and smoking are so important. Dr. Ian Daly has identified Physical Health of those with Mental Illness as one of the six clinical programmes for mental health. While waiting development of this clinical program the Forum will begin work on a 2 page guidance document for Psychiatrists and GPs.

4. Mental Health Act 2001- errors with forms, guidance for Form 5.

New projects have been decided for 2012:

a. Joint ICGP / CPsychI Conference 2012 – The third day of the 3 day ICGP summer school, **Thurs 28th - Sat 30th June 2012 in Kilkenny**, will be given over to a joint conference day of presentations and discussions for psychiatrists and GPs with CPD points to be applied

for. Draft programme currently under discussion but main focus is on collaboration.

b. Depression subgroup - advanced project to look at stepped approach models of care, prescribing, screening tools (PHQ9), referral pathways.

c. Psychological /Counselling services subgroup to look at UK / international evidence, evaluation & assessment tools, outcomes, referral pathways, criteria for quality of those employed in such services. This group will feed into the workgroup in place to roll out the government Primary care strategy on providing psychological services.

d. Clinical Programmes subgroup - to assess, advise, focus on the National Mental Health Clinical Programmes in terms of best practice, use of and application of funding and so on.

Possible other projects / activity

- a. Antidepressant prescribing:** document and other initiatives to tackle the issue being discussed & to be developed.
- b. OTC medication:** Protocol on OTC medication. Further discussion and first draft of paper to take place.
- c. Meeting with Minister Kathleen Lynch:** Objective: to outline the work and focus of the Forum, its uniqueness and to suggest its availability to her & the Department on mental health care in Primary Care & Secondary Care.

Human Rights, Ethics & Law Committee

Objective: To update the College and its members of developments in human rights, ethics and legal matters & initiate workgroups as and when necessary to work on submission papers or appropriate action needed from the College.

Members: Prof Harry Kennedy (Chair), Dr John Tobin, Dr Pauline Twomey and Dr Keith Holmes.

Current items:

1. **Mental Health Act 2001 Review:**

The College submission is available on the website under the External Affairs tab and CPsychI publications.

2. **Proposed Capacity & Guardianship legislation**

The College submission is available on the website under the External Affairs tab and CPsychI publications.

3. Criminal Law (Insanity) Act Review

Service User & Family Members / Carers Forum

Aims: To engage actively in genuine partnership with the College of Psychiatry of Ireland so that training, ongoing competence and day to day practice of Psychiatry, is informed and guided by those who have had experience of mental illness, or who have cared for those with mental illness.

Two meetings have taken place & projects have been chosen – one on training as the overarching project and two sub projects – 1. Recovery and 2. Family Members Involvement.

Terms of Reference devised to be assessed and approved by Council before finalizing.

Next Meeting: May 2012

Other Activity

Media

Many members contacted the College re the recent Frontline programme on mental health (January) which was felt to be unbalanced, stigmatizing, lacking in adequate information on available services for people especially those in urgent need of support/help. The College wrote to Frontline and to the Minister for Mental Health following the programme and highlighted particularly concerns about misinformation on medication. See the March ebulletin for further information (available on the website under the Members section).

College Website – Updates

Calendar of Meetings & Events - The calendar facility is currently being redesigned to make it more user- friendly, searchable by category, date, CPD points and so on. It is hope that the projects will be ready by mid- April.

External Organizations with College Representation

Children's Mental Health Coalition College Representation: Dr B Gavin & A Ryder



www.childrensmentalhealth.ie



www.seechange.ie

College representation: Dr E Corcoran & A Ryder

Electronic Newsletter for Members

The number of members opening the e-bulletin continues to be above average (greater than 55%). It is now being compiled and sent every two months.



Contributions & suggestions welcome, including video communication.

Note: it is a tool to 'push' members onto our website as well as providing updates and information to members. Next bulletin will be issued circa May 2012.