

Issue 3

November 2019

**South Asian International
Division Newsletter**



From the Division Office desk:

Hello everyone. Hope you are at peace with yourself and the world around you! My consultant in Leeds, Dr Tony Zigmond often used to ask us this. Even after a decade, I am still trying to figure out the hidden meaning in this statement. This is the third edition of the newsletter and we have had some encouraging feedback from members.

Dr Divya Nallur (the vice chair) and I attended the RCPsych international congress at London in the first week of July this year. It was a wonderful gathering, the largest ever for the College international congress. It was a good mix of academic and clinically relevant topics interspersed with some stimulating debates, talks and interviews with luminaries associated with the mental health profession. We represented the division at the college meetings, the minutes of which are being circulated to you along with this newsletter.

Dr. Himanshu Mansharamani was the winner of the 2019 College Bursary award for the poster presentation at the International Conference held in London in July this year. Dr. Mansharamani is a senior resident in psychiatry at the Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College, Maharashtra, India.

He presented a poster on "Psychiatric Morbidities in Children of Alcoholic Parents – A Study from Rural India". An abstract of the poster is included in this newsletter and there is also a short write up from him.

As part of our initiative to enhance and improve skills development in the region, the South Asian division teamed up with the psychotherapy training organisation PARC and organized a Basic Training Course in Mentalisation Based Treatment (MBT) by Prof Anthony Bateman. Around 50 delegates attended the three day training workshop and about 150 delegates benefitted from a brief evening session with Prof Bateman. Dr Ashlesha presents a report on this workshop in this newsletter.

In our west to east section, we are happy to feature the work by Dr Kaushal and colleagues in providing mental health treatments via tele-psychiatry to a voluntary organization (Apnagar) running shelter homes in India. We hope that this will inspire some of you to take up similar initiatives. Please do let us know if you would like us to feature any other content in the next edition of the newsletter which will come out next year. Till then, try and find the peace within yourself and the world around you!

The South Asian division of the RCPsych office bearers:

Dr. Sandip Deshpande, Chair Email: docsandypande@gmail.com

Dr. Divya Ganesh Nallur, Vice Chair Email: drdivyag13@gmail.com

Dr. Ashlesha Bagadia, Finance Officer Email: ashlesha.bagadia@gmail.com

Ms Elen Cook, International Affairs Manager, Email: elen.cook@rcpsych.ac.uk

WEST-TO-EAST: HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY DIVISION OR OTHER MEMBERS IN SOUTH ASIA.

In this issue, we are delighted to present the work of Dr Pamela Kaushal and additional contributions from two doctors who have been part of the telepsychiatry project which caters to some shelter homes in India.

Providing Mental Health Treatments to the homeless and destitute through a voluntary organisation - Apnagar - running Shelter homes in India.

Dr Pamela Kaushal MRC Psych, MB ChB, BSc (Hons).

Earlier experiences

In 2018, I took a one-year sabbatical, where I undertook the role of a resident psychiatrist in a sub urban/semi-rural charitable hospital, 3 hours away from Delhi. This was my first ever exposure to providing psychiatric and psychological treatment in India. I came to the realisation that depression and anxiety are alien terms within the Indian suburban and rural populations. Women are more likely to present to a doctor complaining of somatic symptoms, which on further inquiry, happens to be an undiagnosed mental health condition. Psychosomatic illness features commonly in general medical outpatient clinics and access to a psychiatrist is virtually nonexistent. In India the huge stigma associated with mental illness, prevents many people from seeking help. If a mental illness is suspected, it is common for people to seek support from faith healers rather than a doctor.

Shelter home initiative for mental illness

Having worked in psychiatry for the NHS in England since 2008, and in my current role as a consultant in General Adult psychiatry, I have decided to relocate to India, in an attempt to set up a mental health service for a Voluntary organisation, called Apnagar (meaning *my home* in Hindi). Apnagar is a voluntary organisation started in 2000, by Dr B.M Bharadwaj and his wife in the state of Rajasthan, India. They have established 30 Shelter homes covering 7 states in India and 1 shelter home in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Numbers

Currently the total number of homeless and destitute in all the shelter homes is 5181 (3137 males and 2044 females). The largest shelter home which is in the district of Bharatpur in Rajasthan, currently houses 1373 patients with mental illness, 161 patients with intellectual disability and 137 patients with epilepsy.

The Elderly

The organisation has specific shelter homes for the elderly, who are homeless and destitute. Within this group, there are patients with mental illnesses such as dementia. Following rehabilitation, patients who are stabilised on psychotropic medication are followed up through outpatient clinic services, offered by the shelter home, where these patients can continue to receive medication free of cost for up to four to six months post discharge. At present patients with drug and alcohol addictions are not accepted at the Shelter homes.

Reaching Out

In September 2018, an initiative was started by psychiatrists in the UK, to offer telepsychiatry for the largest Apnagar Shelter home in Rajasthan, providing video conference clinics, where these patients could be assessed and offered psychiatric treatments. Currently I am part of this intervention in which 6 psychiatrists (4 from the UK, 1 from the US and 1 from India, are offering approximately 20 clinics per month).

The shelter home management are keen to provide placements for volunteer psychiatrists, who wish to offer their knowledge, skills and training, in providing treatments for the shelter home patients with mental illness. They have also requested ongoing training for their paid employees as well as their volunteers, in the recognition and treatment of mental illnesses.

In September 2019, I am planning an 18-day trip to the Apnagar Shelter homes in Rajasthan and Delhi, to start work on setting up a psychiatric service to include psychosocial interventions as well as medication management. I hope to make use of the MhGAP training manual provided by WHO, as a framework for the provision of training.

(cont)

Reaching Out....

In September 2018, an initiative was started by psychiatrists in the UK, to offer telepsychiatry for the largest Apnaghar Shelter home in Rajasthan, providing video conference clinics, where these patients could be assessed and offered psychiatric treatments. Currently I am part of this intervention in which 6 psychiatrists (4 from the UK, 1 from the US and 1 from India, are offering approximately 20 clinics per month).

The shelter home management are keen to provide placements for volunteer psychiatrists, who wish to offer their knowledge, skills and training, in providing treatments for the shelter home patients with mental illness. They have also requested ongoing training for their paid employees as well as their volunteers, in the recognition and treatment of mental illnesses.

In September 2019, I am planning an 18-day trip to the Apnaghar Shelter homes in Rajasthan and Delhi, to start work on setting up a psychiatric service to include psychosocial interventions as well as medication management. I hope to make use of the MhGAP training manual provided by WHO, as a framework for the provision of training.

Experience of volunteering at Apnaghar, by Dr Sheh Singhal,

Assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry, Sri Guru Ram Das medical institute and research, Amritsar, Punjab, India.

Dr Sheh Singhal - assistant professor in the Department of psychiatry, Sri Guru Ram Das medical institute and research, Amritsar, Punjab, India.

During my postgraduate medical training in Jaipur, I was introduced to the Founder of Apnaghar, Dr Brij Mohan Bhardwaj. I visited the Apnaghar Shelter home, Bharatpur in 2008. Following this visit, I began focussing on the needs of the destitute and homeless, who presented with mental illness. Whenever I was near SMS medical College Jaipur and I encountered any homeless or destitute person who appeared to be mentally unwell, I contacted Dr Bhardwaj, who would make the arrangements for that person to be taken to Apnaghar Shelter home in Bharatpur.

During this initial contact with the Shelter home, I was able to identify six people who were taken in by Apnaghar. Following this exposure, I developed interest in mental health, and took the decision to do my postgraduation in psychiatry. I completed my postgraduation in psychiatry from the government medical College Amritsar, in Punjab.

The government mental Hospital in Amritsar is one of the oldest mental health Institute in North India, where I gained experiences of work with chronic schizophrenia patients who were in this long-term residential setting. During that time, I regularly visited Apnaghar and offered my services to the Shelter home patients on a voluntary basis. Most of the patients at Apnaghar, have a chronic and treatment resistant psychosis. There are multiple psychosocial factors affecting these individuals who lack the support and structure of family or friends. Due to the stigma of mental illness, these patients who come from socioeconomically deprived backgrounds are also the victim of society's stigma against mental illness.

The Apnaghar organisation is running without any support from the government and the entire financial contribution is from private donors. Apnaghar is one of the largest non-governmental organisations (NGO) in India, who are catering for the needs of mentally ill patients especially with psychosis, who are from the poorest communities in India.

Since my association with organisation, I have provided training for the support workers at the Shelter home for the identification of symptoms of schizophrenia, mood disorders such as bipolar disorder, psychiatric manifestations of epilepsy, as well as managing intellectual disability and co morbid mental illness.

I have developed a proforma in which symptoms of various mental disorders have been translated in Hindi. This helps the support workers at Apnaghar to identify the signs and symptoms of mental disorders. Apart from visiting the shelter home, to review the progress of patients as well as catering to the training needs of the support workers, I am also part of the telepsychiatry clinics.

Helping the homeless and destitute populations with their mental health remains my passion, for which I am continuing to work with Apnaghar and hope to continue with establishing the psychiatric service for their other shelter homes around India.

(cont..)

Experience of volunteering at Apnagar

Dr Manisha Wadhwa, MD - Director and Practising at Harmonious Mind Psychiatric Services.

I have always had the desire to professionally offer my volunteer services in countries where there is a need and/or lack of awareness. In one of my visits to India, I came to know about Apna Ghar as one of the biggest NGO's (non-governmental organisations) in India. I came to know that their policy is to accept every referral that comes to them. As I looked through their website, I realised that most of these people were picked with medical or psychiatric issues and a thorough assessment of both their physical and mental health as well as their social needs was done on admission.

Then, a treatment plan was made for each individual, and they were referred to appropriate providers in the system (mostly volunteers).

I was amazed by their commitment and promptly wanted to make a donation, and I returned to the US with a desire to visit the shelter during my next trip. When I returned to India in 2017, I scheduled a visit to Apna Ghar-Bharatpur location. I was highly impressed by the efficiency with which Apna Ghar is managed and the love and affection with which these housemates are treated. Staff and management address all Housemates as "Prabhu ji" which means "God." During the tour, I witnessed the loving touches and verbal prompts from the staff providing support and hope for the housemates. The level of compassion that flourishes in this shelter is unmatched. Many housemates desire to return home when they either do not have a home with someone to take care of them, or are not stable enough to return to society, or do not remember their address.

These patients are rehabilitated with in the system based on their psychosocial capacity. As I explored further with Dr. Bhardwaj, I shared my interest in offering clinical services, possibly long distance in my case.

He welcomed my desire and shared that they have already been working on setting up a telepsychiatry service for the shelter. In October 2018, I began providing a weekly telemedicine clinic with support of a staff member at their end. I realised that most of the population have psychotic disorders or bipolar disorder with or without intellectual limitations. I work with Division of Disabilities patients in my practice in the US, but treating Apna Ghar patients and connecting with them long distance is a wonderful experience. I wish to encourage my fellow psychiatrists to look into this great opportunity to serve an underserved population and obtain some transcultural experience while doing so.

Do you want to highlight any activities that you have undertaken in the last one year? If it is of interest to the others, please do share it

Did you know? You can get an Athens account with your RCPsych membership!

You can access RCPsych Library resources. To get your Athens account details, please write to infoservices@rcpsych.ac.uk with your RCPsych membership number.

Mental Health and Media:

In every issue, we would like to highlight the depiction of mental illness or wellness in books, movies, poetry or other art forms, from the South Asian region. Division members are encouraged to send their entries to:

Ashlesha.Bagadia@gmail.com.

MENTALISATION BASED TREATMENT (MBT): BASIC TRAINING COURSE FOR THE FIRST TIME IN INDIA

A recent increase in mental health awareness in the South Asian region, has contributed to a gradual reduction in stigma and more acceptance of mental health services in general, and psychological therapies in particular. Clinicians are seeing an increasing presentation of personality disorder with a rising need for evidence based treatment for the same. Mentalisation Based Treatment (MBT) is relatively less known to clinicians in India, with most of the knowledge limited to theoretical learning from published material.

In August this year, Prof Anthony Bateman from London, UK (one of the co-developers of MBT) visited Bangalore to introduce the treatment and conduct the basic training program for the first time in India. This program, organised by RCPsych South Asia Division in collaboration with The Parc, an advanced psychotherapy training centre, generated a lot of interest and attendance from clinicians all across South Asia. This is the first step in a series of training courses that enables a mental health clinician to become an accredited practitioner of MBT.

The 3 day training program was attended by psychiatrists, psychologists, psychiatric social workers and counsellors from across the region. Professor Bateman tirelessly led the participants through a combination of didactic teaching, interactive discussions, and hands on skills practice. Participants were introduced to aetiological framework of personality disorder stemming from disruption in attachment systems that can lead to non mentalising modes. Different approaches to assessment and formulation were explored that can better inform therapeutic practice. Finally they were taught how to alter their therapeutic approach to maximise mentalising.

Participants were able to use examples from their clinical practice for role-plays and discuss the cultural factors that may impact on application of this therapy in India and neighbouring countries. The training was very well received and all participants were keen to enhance their learning by enrolling in supervised practice and aiming for advanced training.

An evening seminar was held as a pre-training event which was also very well attended by clinicians from all disciplines of Psychiatry. Prof Bateman gave an update of current evidence in assessment and management of Personality Disorder, with a focus on Borderline & Antisocial Personality Disorder. He introduced concepts of mentalising and its effectiveness in management of personality disorder. The seminar was organised in collaboration with local organisations that worked with personality disorder at various levels, ranging from gate-keeper training to inpatient treatment.

The Division encourages bringing internationally accredited, evidence based training to the South Asian region. Through courses like these, clinicians can up-skill themselves with affordable fees and explore ways of applying treatments to their local practice.

Comments received from participants.....

"I want to express heartfelt gratitude for giving us the opportunity to get trained under the pioneer of MBT, Dr. Bateman. It was an enriching experience and I will look forward to more such experiences in the future."

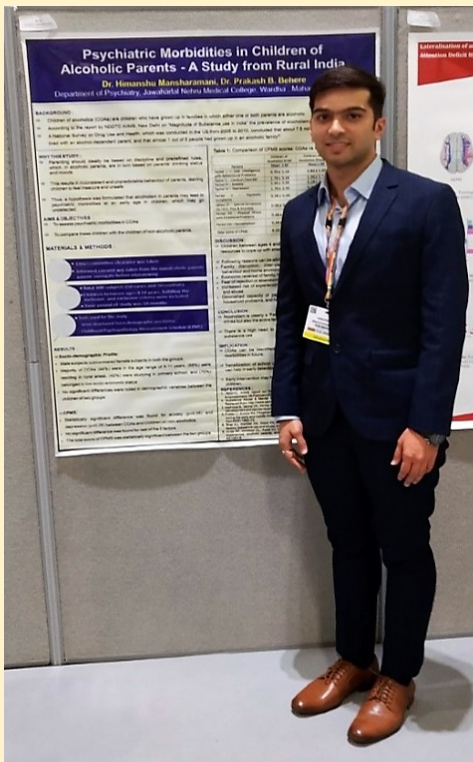
"Thank you for giving me an opportunity to attend the wonderful workshop. It was a nice experience with a mixed group of seniors and youngsters and that was definitely enlighten-

Interested in being a mentor to someone relocating to the South Asian Division? If yes, the division can connect you informally with a prospective Psychiatrist who may be relocating to your city/province or a trainee who might be going to the UK from your region. Please express your interest by an email to any of the division officers.

Report from the 2019 RCPsych South Asian Division College Bursary Winner for Trainees:

Dr Himanshu Mansharamani, Consultant Psychiatrist, Vishesh Hospital, Indore, (M.P.), India.

Dr. Himanshu Mansharamani, winner of the 2019 RCPsych South Asian Division College Bursary Award for trainees. Through the bursary award, the college covers travel, accommodation, subsistence and registration costs to attend the international congress of the RCPsych.



The Royal College of Psychiatrists International Congress was held in London this year from 1st to 4th July 2019. I was lucky to get the bursary award from South Asian Division of Royal College of Psychiatrists. The bursary award is an award in which the college covers travel, accommodation, subsistence and registration to attend the international congress of the RCPsych. At the outset, I would like to thank the office bearers of the RCPsych South Asian Division (Drs. Deshpande, Nallur & Bagadia) for their valuable support at each and every step. I would also like to thank my guide Dr. Prakash B Behere (Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College, Wardha) for giving me the vision to carry out such a research which got recognition at the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

I still remember the day (17th April 2019) when I got call from Dr. Deshpande, early in the morning when I had just woken up. He broke the news to me which felt like a dream till I got an e-mail confirming the same. The paper work started within 15 days with help from the RCPsych London office. I would like to thank Ms Elen Cook, Ms Caroline Simms and Ms Katie Newton for all the support. Visa process went smoothly with the help of recommendation letter from Royal College.

Finally the day arrived, when I had to travel to London. With much of excitement, the trip started in early morning from Nagpur to London, and I enjoyed each and every moment the trip.

On the evening of 30th June, there was a reception at the Royal College of Psychiatrists London office, which was arranged for international delegates. I had the opportunity to meet Professor Wendy Burn (President, RCPsych), Dr. Adrian James (Registrar, RCPsych), and many other International delegates from various countries.



of

(cont)

On 1st July, I attended a session at RCPsych Office, where the Chairpersons from RCPsych international divisions spoke about work experience in different parts of the world. This session was helpful in giving a perspective of work conditions and rules in different countries. In the afternoon, my rapid fire poster presentation on the topic "Psychiatric Morbidities in Children of Alcoholic Parents- a Study from Rural India" was chaired by Dr. Perera.

I attended various scientific sessions for rest of the conference and there was something new to learn from all the sessions. Most of the lectures I attended were related to psychopharmacology, as it is the topic of my interest. On 3rd July 2019, there was a RCPsych South Asian Division meeting at the congress venue, in which office bearers from the South Asian Division and various members from the South Asian countries took part. I was delighted to be presented with a certificate of the bursary award from Dr Deshpande & Dr Nallur at the meeting.

The weather in London was lovely, and I had a chance to enjoy the British Summer. After the congress sessions I found time in evenings to go around the tourist attractions in London. It was a great experience over all for me to learn from this event. I can proudly say that after attending the congress I gained an international perspective of psychiatry. I would encourage psychiatry residents across the south Asian region to apply for the next bursary award, as it will be once in a lifetime opportunity to attend such a grand conference.

Professor Sab Bhuamik



It was with great sadness that the College learned of the sudden death on 9 November of prominent member Professor Sab Bhuamik OBE, who was an Honorary Fellow of the College, as well as a former Chair of the Intellectual Disability Faculty and the Trent Division.

Professor Bhuamik has long been a leading member of the College. As a keen internationalist, he was Chair of the Diaspora Groups Committee, which meets at the College, and a member of the College's International Advisory Committee.

Professor Burn, College President, said: "I was shocked and saddened to learn that Sab had passed away over the weekend. He will be remembered for his intellect, his huge contribution to the care of patients and his global influence. Our thoughts are with Sab's family and friends at this difficult time."

The RCPsych will publish a full obituary for Professor Bhuamik on the College website soon and is planning ways to celebrate his life.

RCPsych MTI Scheme

We are pleased to announce that we are now accepting applications from doctors who want to join the 2020 RCPsych Medical Training Initiative. The MTI scheme enables a small number of trainee psychiatrists from outside the EU to enter the UK to experience training in the NHS for up to two years, before returning to their home country. Applications from doctors must be received by 2 February 2020. Please see the MTI Pages on the RCPsych Website for details:

<https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/training/MTI>

Prizes Open to International Members

Forensic Psychiatry Faculty:

Research Prize

<https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/specialties/faculties/forensic/faculty/prizesandbursaries.aspx#researchprize>

Intellectual Disability Faculty:

The Brian Oliver prize

Bursary for Psychiatrists from Developing Countries

<https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/workinpsychiatry/faculties/intellectualdisability/prizesandbursaries.aspx>

Old Age Faculty:

Felix Poster Prize

Lifetime Achievement Award

Education Bursary

Bursary for psychiatrists from developing countries

<https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/workinpsychiatry/faculties/oldagepsychiatry/prizesandbursaries.aspx>

Rehabilitation and Social Psychiatry Faculty:

International bursary

Lifetime achievement award

Douglas Bennett Prize

<https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/workinpsychiatry/faculties/rehabilitationandsocial/prizesandbursaries.aspx>