

Addictions Faculty Executive Committee Report August 2011



The July Exec meeting saw the initiation of a number of potentially significant areas of work, as well as the satisfaction of reviewing the launch of a project that has recently come to fruition.

Older Substance Misusers. The launch in June of [*Our Invisible Addicts*](#), a College Report by the Addictions and Old Age Faculties on substance misuse by older people, was successful in attracting media attention that stimulated debate on this under-recognised subject. At the same time, some of the coverage focused on a particular recommendation on alcohol intake which reduced the impact of other important messages contained in the report. The Exec will be setting aside time at its annual Strategy Day in October to further develop its media and communications strategy.

Alcohol will be a key area of that strategy, and Exec members will be present at the party conferences this autumn to get the Faculty's messages across. Work has begun, jointly with the Royal College of Physicians and others, on a new edition of *Alcohol: Our Favourite Drug*, first published by the College in 1986. It is planned as a book-length report, with recommendations, in accessible, non-technical language. The previous edition was one of the College's best selling publications, and the updated version is intended to influence the current debate on alcohol as the new public health infrastructure continues to evolve.

New trends for addictions psychiatry. Looking further ahead, the Exec has begun to develop ideas for a new piece of work on new drugs, and new trends in drug use and behavioural addictions – a report which could set out the full range of addiction psychiatrists' potential skills and contribution, beyond the more traditional areas of treatment for alcohol, heroin and cocaine. Ideas from Faculty members on suitable topics are welcome and should be sent to the Chair via acrowe@rcpsych.ac.uk.

Engaging and Influencing. Exec members continue to engage with policy and political developments relating to addictions, which continue to develop apace - the NTA's Recovery Oriented Treatment Group delivered its [interim report](#) in July, and *Building Recovery in Communities* is expected in the autumn. The Chair has met with Ministers or their

advisers in a number of government departments in recent months; and Exec members are actively offering to contribute addictions psychiatrists' perspectives to emerging work on addiction to medicines, following the publication of [DH-commissioned reports](#) in this area in May. The Exec has also responded to the [DH consultation on outcomes](#) for Drugs Payment by results.

Contact: acrowe@rcpsych.ac.uk