Foreword

Dear Readers,

It gives us a great pleasure to introduce to you the very first newsletter on behalf of the Diaspora Committee of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. This is the beginning of a continuing series of newsletters which hopefully will keep you informed about the Diaspora activities in UK. The aim of this endeavour is to celebrate achievements and activities of each diaspora organisation, keeping readers informed of recent updates as well as signposting interested clinicians (eg International Medical Graduates and other members and fellows of the College) to their relevant organisation.

This first edition comprises of information of different Diaspora Organisations in relation to their recent activities, but in future we wish to capture your views on key themes pertinent to the Diaspora groups and also scientific papers on international activities. Our special thanks goes to Dr Hasanen Al-Taiar for his hard work in bringing this to fruition. We are also grateful to the Diaspora Organisations who have contributed to this newsletter including BAPA, Hellenic Psychiatric Association, BPPA, Iraqi Mental Health Forum, and BIPA amongst others. Hopefully, we will see the next edition coming out during the summer of this year. We wish you a good reading and will be grateful for your feedback.

Best wishes

Prof Sab Bhaumik
Chair, Diaspora Committee RCPsych

Dr Mateen Durrani
Hon Secretary, Diaspora Committee RCPsych

8th April 2015
British Arab Psychiatric Association (BAPA):
The last BAPA Meeting/ AGM was held on the 30th and 31st of May 2014 and election of new president Dr. Walid Abdul-Hamid after Dr. Nadim Almoshmosh successfully completed his 2 years term. Dr. Peter Hughes head of the volunteering SIG at Royal College of Psychiatrists gave a WHO mhGAP training during the meeting to the participants of the AGM which was greatly appreciated by the members who attended the meeting/ AGM. Dr. Hasanen Al-Taiar will continue to be a very successful secretary for BAPA.

The deteriorating security and safety situation in the Arab World and the increasing conflicts and resulting trauma problems made BAPA work with the Humanitarian Assistance Programme (HAP) for UK and Ireland to help train mental health professionals in the Arab World on EMDR which one of the NICE effective and evidence based therapy for trauma. BAPA has been involved in the HAP EMDR training of 30 mental health professionals from Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Libya and Jordan in Istanbul, Turkey. These trainees during and after the 3 parts training courses were supervised by UK based EMDR trained BAPA psychiatrists. The training was accompanied by trauma services needs assessment survey on the participant of the first cohort that showed the need for further training of Arab mental health professionals. As the first cohort training has worked so well, another part 1 training course that is going to be held in Istanbul for 34 participants later in May 2015.

The New president of BAPA was invited to the Iraqi Mental Health Forum (IMHF) AGM that was held on 22/11/2014. In a short presentation Dr. Abdul-Hamid explored his hope for BAPA to become again an umbrella for the other Arab Organisations like IMHF and the Sudanese Psychiatric Association to hold a conference together and to undertake mental health charity and educational activities in Arab countries. The success of the Iraqi Mental Health Forum that was established following the Iraq War has encouraged the establishment of a Syrian task force. The task force will support Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries as they cannot operate inside Syria because of safety issues. Local Syrians in the United Kingdom will be involved in the support.

Dr Walid Abdul-Hamid (BAPA president)

Hellenic Psychiatric Association (HPA) updates:
The HPA(UK) became a member of the Hellenic Centre (Paddington St, London W1) - this offers us a stable venue for our academic activities. It also widens our horizons (as our meetings are included in the general programme of the Hellenic Centre with includes a variety of events including social, the arts/exhibitions and lectures. science, medicine and
many other) allows access of our lectures to a wider audience Greek and non-Greek with an interest in Greek related matters as well some media coverage.

Our group contributed to the 22nd Panhellenic Congress in Psychiatry at Ioannina, Greece in April 2014 - in round table discussions, workshops and lectures. Our 2nd yearly Asclepian Oration was held on the 23rd January 2015 at the Hellenic Centre on the subject of “Changing concepts of Autism in the 21st century”, very eloquently delivered by this year’s Asclepian Orator, Prof David Skuse. The auditorium was full and there was a lively discussion at the end with the active participation of both mental health professionals and lay people - the lecture can be heard in full if interested (http://www.livemedia.gr/video/134679)

We also issued our latest bulletin.

Dr Eleni Palazidou (chair of BAPA)

British Pakistani Psychiatric Association (BPPA)

BPPA has been closely involved in supporting the families, teachers and students following the tragic massacre of 134 children and teachers by terrorists in Peshawar, Pakistan. We organised a training program, spear headed by Prof. Arshad Hussain, Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry and Child Health, University of Missouri-Columbia School of Medicine. He trained at Maudsley and is a fellow of the RCPsych. Prof. Hussain has developed “Teachers As Therapists” model of capacity building according to which local teachers in war zones and the disaster areas are trained to identify the psychological consequences of exposure to trauma in children and provide interventions to cope with their trauma. Workshops were held in Peshawar and as per the comments of the Resource people, the teachers sessions were really successful and more alive as they all were learning from a place of experience where they had actual conditions in their mind and were eager to understand and solve them. The fear that they may not pick up the more rigorous things like Cognitive therapies was misplaced and they did really well.

The curriculum of the program is designed to train the mental health professionals and teachers to identify the psychological consequences of exposure to trauma and some intervention techniques that can be effectively used to help children to recover. The participants practice these techniques during the training. Other workshops are planned throughout 2015, in various cities of Pakistan over the coming months.
BPPA is holding its 14th Annual 2 day conference on the 12 & 13 September and the theme this year is Trauma, Resilience, and Mental Health. They are joined by BAPA. This is the second joint BPPA/BAPA conference and promises to be another success. Details will be available shortly on the BPPA and BAPA websites.

**Dr Mateen Durrani (BPPA president)**

**Iraqi Mental Health Forum (IMHF-UK):**

The Iraqi Mental Health Forum-UK hold a summer meeting on Saturday 6 June 2014 in Leicester Hospital Academic Centre. Presentations focused on revalidation in addition to audit presentations from Iraqi colleagues. IMHF hold a successful Annual General Meeting on Saturday 22 November 2014 at the Iraqi Cultural Centre, London. The theme of the AGM focused at the current humanitarian crisis in Iraq and how the IMHF could help in supporting the mental health services, relief organisations and rebuild the national reconciliation in Iraq. Themes discussed on the day were:

How IMHF could we could support mental health services in Iraq:

- Building capacity, links and improving training of Iraqi colleagues.
- Setting up a scheme for ‘visiting psychiatrists’ who could visit Iraq and undertake clinical and educational commitments in Iraq.
- Setting up a project for medical education similar to OxPal project currently running and supporting Palestinian students and psychiatrists.

How can IMHF-UK support the relief organisations in Iraq

- Devoting a group of IMHF members to work with NGOs.
- Liaising with existing NGOs to support relief efforts.

How IMHF could help national reconciliation in Iraq

Attitudes towards Forgiveness, Reconciliation and Healing (AFRAH) is a project led by a group of Iraqi psychiatrists. The aim of it is to deliver a questionnaire that promotes forgiveness and reconciliation in the Iraqi community.

**Dr Hasanen Al-Taiear (IMHF secretary general)**
British Indian Psychiatric Association (BIPA):

Since 2014 elections BIPA has a new Executive Committee (EC) with Dr Seshagiri Rao Nimmagadda as President, Dr Anand Ramakrishnan as Vice President, Dr Santosh Mudholkar as General Secretary, Dr Abrar Hussain as Treasurer and Dr Venkatesh Muthukrishnan as Joint Secretary. The other EC members are Dr Sab Bhaumik, Dr JS Bhambra, Dr Ananta Dave, Dr Simon Bijil Arackal, Dr Donna Arya, Dr Manorama Manonmani, Dr Aoife Singh, Dr Rohit Gumber, Dr Jyothi Aryambhat, Dr Pankaj Agarwal and Dr Srikanth Nimmagadda. BIPA will be holding its 19th Annual Conference on 13, 14 June 2015 at The Derbyshire Hotel, Carter Lane East, Alfreton, Derby DE55 2EH on 13th & 14th June 2015. There is a stimulating scientific program on a range of topics relating to Biological Psychiatry &amp; Neurosciences, International Medical Graduates (IMGs), Mental Health Act 1983—new code of practice and issues relating to General Medical Council (GMC) and regulation of doctors.

The guest speakers include Prof Matcheri Keshavan, Stanley Cob Professor of Psychiatry, Harvard University, Boston, U.S.A; Prof Peter Jones, Professor of Psychiatry &amp; Deputy Head of Medical School, University of Cambridge, U.K. and Prof Louis Appelby, Professor of Psychiatry, University of Manchester, U.K. There are other distinguished speakers as well and the full scientific programme is available on BIPA web-site. We had a busy start to the New Year with the 6th Annual conference of Indian Global Psychiatric initiative (IGPI), which is the organization for about 15000 overseas psychiatrist of Indian origin on 6, 7 January 2015 and 67th Annual Conference of Indian Psychiatric Society (ANCIPS) on 8-11th January 2015, both were held in Hyderabad, India. Hyderabad, now a leading high tech city, a nodal centre for producing films in southern India and once upon a time India’s wealthiest princely state under the British Raj prior to independence provided the right back drop for stimulating discussions.

BIPA is a founding member of IGPI and the conference was attended by psychiatrists from U.S, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland in addition to U.K. The highlight of this conference was half day workshop for Indian postgraduates in Psychiatry on teaching and research. Shri E S L Narasimhan, Hon’ble Governor of Andhra Pradesh and Telengana was the Chief Guest and he inaugurated the Conference. BIPA officers met with office bearers of Indian American Psychiatric Association (IAPA) to develop a memorandum of understanding to foster closer links between the two leading organisations. Dr. Seshagiri Rao Nimmagadda was awarded IGPI award for Leadership 2015. BIPA was invited by Dr T. Asokan, President of Indian Psychiatric Society (IPS) to present scientific symposium on the topic of “Criminal responsibility and role of psychiatrists in criminal courts”. Dr Seshagiri Nimmagadda and Dr Santosh Mudholkar, (both are Consultant Forensic Psychiatrists practicing in U.K) participated in BIPA symposium at the 67th Annual Conference of Indian
Psychiatric Society (ANCIPS) in Hyderabad, India during 8-11 January 2015. The presentations were very well received and generated a lot of stimulating discussion regarding assessment and treatment of mentally disordered offenders in general and sex offenders in particular. Dr Anand Ramakrishnan gave a presentation on Mental Capacity Act 2005 and its relevance to Indian context.

Last year BIPA organized a series of conferences on Medical Leadership and preparing for Consultant interviews in Leicester, Bradford and London. The lead presenters were Prof Dinesh Bhugra and Prof Sab Bhaumik. All the conferences were very well attended and were open to all trainees. The Medical Leadership conference held on 5th April 2014 at the Royal College of Psychiatrists was particularly a huge success. It was attended by trainees from diverse cultural backgrounds training in different parts of the country. Due to overwhelming response registrations had to be closed two weeks in advance for this event. The RCPsych as a conference venue also received positive feedback. In 2014 BIPA also started mentorship programme for trainees. We plan to develop this area further in 2015. Prof Dinesh Bhugra, President, World Psychiatric Association (WPA) was awarded Lifetime Achievement Award by BIPA at BIPA Annual Conference in June 2014. We at BIPA are delighted to hear the announcement that one of our colleagues and BIPA member, Dr Subodh Dave, Consultant Psychiatrist, Derby was appointed Associate Dean, Training at the Royal College of Psychiatrists in 2015.

BIPA will continue to work with other diaspora organisations and the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

**Dr Santosh Mudholkar (BIPA general secretary)**

We are hoping to get more updates from other Diaspora organisations e.g. Sudanese, Sri Lankan Psychiatric Association for the next newsletter.

If you have any questions regarding the work of Diaspora organisations and the support it offers, please contact Cara Dibble cdibble@rcpsych.ac.uk or Dr Hasanen Al-Taiar haltaiar@yahoo.com

Thank you

**Dr Hasanen Al-Taiar**

April 2015