

RCPsych in NI 2 May 2017 RESPONSE to COPNI Consultation on Draft Disability Action Plan 2017-2020:

The Royal College of Psychiatrists in Northern Ireland welcome the Draft Disability Action Plan 2017-2020 issued by the Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland (COPNI), as a key part in ensuring the needs of older people are heard and addressed in the coming years.

The commitment to Dementia and Age Awareness Training for all new staff within one year is very welcome and the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Northern Ireland will be happy to assist with this. The plan to improve engagement with those older people with Dementia and in Nursing Homes is very much needed and also supported.

We would suggest that the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Northern Ireland be added to the list of organisations which COPNI liaises with. We would welcome specific reference being made to older people with Mental Illness as well as those with Dementia.

In addition we think it important that COPNI would plan to engage with key stakeholders in the planning for implementation and monitoring of the new Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016 as part of its role in reviewing the adequacy and effectiveness of the law. The new Act is likely to have a substantial effect on legal rights and responsibilities pertaining to older people. The Draft Disability Action Plan's proposals around financial exploitation are also likely to be impacted by the Act. It is suggested that COPNI might develop its monitoring, research and advocacy roles around the Act in conjunction with other stakeholders such as the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Northern Ireland.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Gerry Lynch', is written over a white rectangular box. The signature is stylized and cursive.

**Dr Gerry Lynch
Chair of Royal College of Psychiatrists in NI & Vice President of Royal
College of Psychiatrists**