

2011



LESBIAN & GAY SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

ROYAL COLLEGE OF PSYCHIATRISTS

Annual Report 2010-2011

ACTIVITIES OVER THE LAST YEAR

Annual Business Meeting

The SIG's Annual Business Meeting was held on 24 June 2010, at the Royal College of Psychiatrists' Annual Congress in Edinburgh. Steve Hopker and Susanna Galea stood down from the Executive Group and attending members gave a vote of thanks for their support. No officers were up for election. Luke Mearns joined the group as a further Executive Group member. Although attendance at the SIG's Annual Business Meeting was better than in 2009, it was still relatively low despite our putting on a breakfast to welcome members. It was thought that many SIG members did not make it to the College's Annual Congress and thus it was decided to hold the 2011 SIG Annual Business Meeting at a side meeting (see below).

Academic Contributions

At the College's Annual Congress on Thursday 24th June 2010 the SIG put on a symposium which was well attended:

S42 The evolution of psychiatric diagnoses - past and present controversies

Chair: Dr Sandra Evans, Queen Mary University of London and East London Foundation NHS Trust and QMUL, Barts and the London SMD, London

The rise and fall of homosexuality as a diagnosis

Professor Michael King, University College London Medical School, London

Transsexualism as a current ICD10 and DSMIV diagnosis

Professor Stephen Whittle, Professor of Equalities Law, Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester

The rise (and fall) of Asperger Syndrome

Professor David Skuse, Institute of Child Health, London

Survey of Membership

A survey of members, drafted by the SIG, was undertaken in May 2010. It was the view of the SIG Executive Committee that little was known about the membership of the group and how it could engage members more actively. Areas covered by the survey included: members' opinions of the aims of the group, members' participation in academic activities organised by the SIG, members' attendance at SIG AGM meetings, and member's personal sexual orientation and any difficulties in the workplace relating to this. Fifty-eight members responded

of whom only 8 had been to a SIG meeting since 2006. This surprised us greatly, given the strong attendance at all our SIG seminars and symposia. Our conclusion was that 1) many people interested in the SIG's activities are not SIG members and 2) that many of our members do not attend the College's Annual Congress. We therefore decided to arrange a symposium at the College on the topic that was most commonly suggested by respondents' to the questionnaire, namely transgender Issues.

Meeting of the SIG 20 May 2010: TRANSGENDER: TIME TO CHANGE

The SIG Executive planned a symposium for SIG and other College members to update them on issues of management of transgender people. It was also planned that we would hold our Annual Business Meeting following this event. Five expert speakers in the field agreed to participate and the meeting was advertised. However, due to a surprisingly low rate of registrations (given this topic was suggested by our membership) the meeting was cancelled as it was not economically viable. This cancellation was a great disappointment to members of the Executive who felt that they were responding to members' wishes and had put together a stimulating programme.

Other presentations

- **Old Age Faculty (of RCPsych) conference in Stratford upon Avon.**

David Richards from Age UK, a colleague from the APP and Sandra Evans (SIG Treasurer) led a joint workshop on 17th March 2011 entitled *Mental Health of Older Lesbians and Gay men*.

- **Ageing, Growth, Time And Change: Working With The Older LGBT Person**

David Richards and Sandra Evans led this workshop on 14th May 2011. Many therapists (some who work in the NHS) were grateful for the learning environment. They reported poor Equality + Diversity training outside London, with poor attendance by doctors. Two reported patronising attitudes from NHS staff to LGB patients.

Advice giving

- 1) The SIG continues to advise the DoH on current research that concerns gay, lesbian and bisexual people as a high risk population.
- 2) The SIG is also advising Arab LGBT groups who are being pathologised by new power groups arising out of the so-called Arab Spring and in other Arab states not affected by revolution.

Training package on the needs of GLB Service Users

This remains available to organisations wanting to use this as part of their diversity training. Training can be delivered by some members of the SIG. The training package has been adapted as a CPD online module.

Website

The layout of the website has been updated and is now regularly kept up to date by Gian Galeazzi. The SIG Executive Committee is of the opinion the website also serves a public information function. Consequently additional links to websites that would be of interest to the general public continue to be added.

Finances

Current balance: £900. The only income source is academic meetings and the training package.

Executive Committee

Michael King is Chair of the SIG. Other members of the executive committee are Sandra Evans (finance officer), Luke Mearns, Helen Killaspy, Shawn Mitchell and Gian Galeazzi.

Michael King, 31 May 2011