



Report form WPA/CPS/SMHC conference Shanghai, 20-23 September 2007

College delegation:

Prof Sheila Hollins, President
Prof Sue Bailey, Registrar
Dr Tony Zigmond, Vice-President
Joanna Carroll, International Manager
Martin Hollins

Objectives:

1. To initiate contact with psychiatrists in mainland China
2. To meet representatives of relevant organisations with the view to discussing collaboration
3. To present a session on mental health legislation around the world

Activities:

Meeting with representatives of the British Council in Shanghai, Friday, 21 September

The initial contact with the British Council in Shanghai had been established by Prof Bailey through her work for the International Institute and the project on restorative treatment for young offenders.

We met Mr David Wang, Projects Manager, and Miss Hu Xuan, Projects Officer, at the Cultural and Education Section of the British Consulate-General where the British Council has their offices. It was an exploratory visit to discuss if and how the British Council could help the College in any potential initiatives in China.

Mr Wang said that their main area of work was education, language examinations and community governance. They were currently focusing on persuading the government to include mental health in the work with young offenders. Their other priority was to promote UK qualifications, primarily in finance. They work closely with DfID and FCO offering legal and financial training to Chinese students.

Mr Wang was involved with the British Council's Working Group on Diversity which addressed issues of gender, race and disability at work. Their main objective is to deliver unmet needs in an innovative way.

We informed them of the College volunteer programme, our work on developing the MRCPsych exams in Hong Kong, the College mental health information materials and International Associateship. We asked whether any of our

initiatives would be of use to our Chinese colleagues and how we could promote them in China.

Outcomes:

1. Mr Wang was very interested in the volunteer programme and said he would be happy to introduce it to relevant NGOs operating in China.
2. He also suggested that the Chinese Health Bureau would be a good place to approach with regards to the promotion of College leaflets.
3. There might be significant interest in some form of an international qualification in psychiatry for Chinese psychiatrists. The career path in psychiatry in China is dependent on achievement in qualifications and publications.

It was a productive meeting which will produce further links and hopefully lead to establishing useful contacts for future volunteer placements and promotion of college educational materials in China.

Visit to the Shanghai Mental Health Center, Saturday, 22 Sept 2007

Following a brief meeting with Prof Zhou Dongfeng, President of the Chinese Society of Psychiatry (CSP), the College delegation was invited to visit the Shanghai Mental Health Center (SMHC), one of the sponsors of the WPA conference. This meeting was also facilitated by Dr Gail Cridland, our only member in mainland China, who is teaching English to Dr Li.

We met Prof Gu Niufan, the former Director of the Center, and Dr Li Huafang, the chief psychiatrist in charge of clinical drug trials, both of whom have studied in the USA and in Norway. Dr Li is applying to be an International Associate.

The SMHC was established in 1935 by the Sisters of Mercy order under the name of Mercy Hospital. It moved into a new building in its current location in 1958 and has a branch hospital for long stay patients. All together the centre has 1878 beds, 1300 staff (900 professionals, 340 psychiatrists who hold a licence including 90+ professors and chief psychiatrists with clinical, teaching and research commitments). There are 12 research departments, including genetics, biochemistry and forensic.

The SMHC publish the Shanghai Archives of Psychiatry, and about 100 publications annually. They welcome about 150 international visitors each year and have active collaborations with Universities in the US, Japan, Australia, Norway and Germany.

Post graduate training in psychiatry

After 5-6 years in medical school which includes some teaching in psychiatry, trainees spend 5-6 years as a resident on rotation in different departments. Assessments which must be passed to get a licence include written exams, clinical interviews, observed neurological examinations and an English test. There is a 70% pass rate. The Shanghai licence is not recognised anywhere else (Beijing has its own). After 5-6 years as an Associate Professor or Deputy Chief, doctors may become chiefs or professors (need a PhD).

Most research is clinical trials (approved by the SFDA) of generic drugs (non-placebo). They have published a book about their clozapine trials. They have no control over publication of negative results as they are “just one county of many”. There are 14 participating centres in China. They require informed consent from participants and reported that about 30% agree to participate.

Forensic services are provided by the police, not the mental health centres. There is a welfare system for people with intellectual disabilities but no service for people with intellectual disabilities who have mental illness.

Community mental health services are developing but still fairly rudimentary. There is interest in developing culturally appropriate psychotherapy service.

The conference

We had some opportunities to talk to other members of the College attending the Congress, including colleagues from Hong Kong. The majority of the 2000 delegates were Chinese with about 300 overseas delegates. The formal business at the Congress included a poster presentation about the College’s international work (enclosed) and a College symposium on Developing and Implementing Mental Health Legislation around the world. We were impressed by the contribution made by Professor Xie Bin from Shanghai Jiao Tong University and Shanghai Mental Health Centre in the College symposium. He spoke about his experience of developing mental health legislation for Shanghai (the Shanghai regulations) and about the development of services. He was articulate, confident and open in his descriptions of some of the challenges involved in developing services in Shanghai.

We have a copy of his presentation. He thought that four other cities have developed their own mental health regulations. Professor Xie described a public education campaign during which 20 thousand leaflets were distributed throughout Shanghai. An NGO, the Disabled Persons’ Foundation, provides financial support to enable poorer people access mental health services. He described the “unlocked” project in which a large percentage of hospitalised patients were able to be discharged by providing free medication. The hospitals developed in the 1950s are now being closed, and new generation hospitals, like the SMHC, are being built.

Other sessions attended included Educational Services where the content and organisation of psychiatry training was discussed. The key leading psychiatrist is Professor Xin Yu, President of the Chinese Psychiatrist Association and Director of the Institute of Mental Health in Beijing.

Actions:

1. To maintain contact with Mr Wang at the British Consulate regarding International Fellowship for 1 year and possible funding.

Lead: Joanna Carroll

2. To invite Professor Xie Bin to speak at our AGM in London 2008

Lead: Director of International Affairs and Director of Conferences

3. To maintain contact with Dr Cridland

4. To consider discussions with Professor Yu about training equivalence and International Fellowships in the UK