



RCPsych in Scotland Winter Conference 2026

@RCPsychScot
#RCPsychScotWint26

30 January 2026
at the Radisson Blu, Glasgow
Registration from 9.10am

Event Booklet

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A register will be taken to confirm attendance upon arrival.



Please turn your phone/devices to silent and your email notifications off for the duration of the event.



Feedback Forms will be circulated for you to complete in the afternoon.



Please note the Presidents lecture section of this conference will be recorded.



Certificates of attendance will be emailed to you within 10 days of the event.

RCPsych in Scotland Winter Conference

30 January 2026 | Radisson Blu Hotel, Glasgow
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Morning Programme: Chaired by Dr Lade Smith CBE, President RCPsych and Dr Jane Morris, Chair RCPsych in Scotland	
09:10 – 09:25	Arrival / Registration
09:25 – 09:30	Welcome and introduction from the Chair
09:30 – 09:45	Resident Doctor Presentation 1: Preparedness for Consultancy in Scotland – Survey Results from the RCPsych in Scotland Workforce and Careers Committee Dr Rachel Ball, ST4, Intellectual Disability Psychiatry, NHS Grampian
09:45 – 10:25	Huntington's Disease Epidemiology and New Treatments Professor Zosia Miedzybrodzka MB ChB, PhD, FRCP, Professor of Medical Genetics, University of Aberdeen
10:25 – 11:00	Metabolic psychiatry: what is it and why is it important? Professor Daniel Smith, Professor of Psychiatry, University of Edinburgh
11:00 – 11:20	Comfort Break
11:20 – 11:35	Resident Doctor Presentation 2: Survey of physical complexity among patients diagnosed with dementia Dr Frances Creasy, ST5 and Dr Catriona Dunlop, ST6
11:35 – 12:10	Dementia blood biomarkers Dr Tom Russ, Consultant Psychiatrist, NHS Lothian, Network Champion of the NRS Neuroprogressive and Dementia Network and Director of the Alzheimer Scotland Dementia Research Centre at the University of Edinburgh
12:10 – 12:25	Resident Doctor Presentation 3: A retrospective review of cases of intentional foreign body insertion or ingestion over a nineteen year period Dr Ruth Begbie, CT2, NHS Lothian
12:25 – 12:35	RCPsych in Scotland Business Update Chaired by Dr Jane Morris
12:35 – 13:30	Lunch
Afternoon Programme: Chaired by Dr Lade Smith CBE, President RCPsych and Dr Jane Morris, Chair RCPsych in Scotland	
13:30 -13:45	Resident Doctor Presentation 4: Measurable Improvement in Trainee Experience: A Resident-Led Redesign of the Psychiatry Onboarding and Induction Process at Royal Cornhill Hospital (RCH) Dr Sanjana Mahanta, CT2, Royal Cornhill Hospital Dr Kevin Thomas Edassery, ST2, Royal Cornhill Hospital
13:45 -14:45	President's lecture: The Impact of Mobile Device Use on Young Children's Development and Health: What We Know So Far Professor Liane Azevedo, College of Health, Wellbeing and Life Sciences Sheffield Hallam University

14:45 – 15:05	Comfort Break
15:05 – 16:35	<p>The Scapegoating Debate - Interactive session with guided discussion & audience Q&A.</p> <p><i>Chaired by Dr Jane Morris, Chair of RCPsych in Scotland and Vice President, Royal College of Psychiatrists</i></p> <p>Roundtable participants: <i>Professor John Crichton, Mental Welfare Commission</i> <i>Dr Rachel Gibbons, Consultant Psychiatrist, Psychoanalyst, Group analyst</i> <i>Maja Mitchell-Grigorjeva, Bipolar Scotland (Third Sector Representative)</i> <i>Dr Amanda Cotton, Medical Manager</i></p>
16:35 – 16:45	Close and Prizes
16:45 – 18:00	Evening Social & Networking Reception

The views expressed by speakers during presentations are their own and do not represent the views of the College. Views expressed during the debate by speakers are their own for the purposes of the debate only.





Speaker Biographies & Presentation Information

Morning Programme

Dr Lade Smith CBE, President RCPsych – Morning Session Chair

Dr Lade Smith CBE is currently the President of the Royal College of Psychiatrists and has specialist expertise in mental health inequality.

Dr Smith is a Consultant Psychiatrist and Clinical Director of Forensic Services at the South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SlaM) and Visiting Senior Lecturer at the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience, Kings College London.

Dr Smith sits on the Board of the NHS Race & Health Observatory, the Trustee Board of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges as a Clinician Trustee and is a Trustee of National MIND.

Dr Smith has been recognised as one of HSJ's most influential "Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic" leaders.

Dr Rachel Ball

Dr Ball is currently an ST4 in Intellectual Disability Psychiatry in NHS Grampian, having completed her core training there in August 2025. In addition to her clinical work, she serves as Vice-Chair of the RCPsych in Scotland Workforce and Careers Committee and is a regional representative on the RCPsych Resident Doctor Committee.

Presentation Overview: "Preparedness for Consultancy in Scotland – Survey Results from the RCPSYCH in Scotland Workforce and Careers Committee"

This presentation will present the findings of the recent RCPsych in Scotland Workforce and Careers Committee "Preparedness for Consultancy" survey.

Professor Zosia Miedzybrodzka

Zosia Miedzybrodzka trained in medicine and clinical genetics at the University of Aberdeen and NHS Grampian. She combines her roles as NHS clinical director and honorary consultant geneticist to lead impactful research in gene discovery, clinical epidemiology, and technology assessment, with a focus on genomics evaluation, Huntington's disease (HD), and hereditary cancer prevention. She has driven major advances in Scotland's genetic services. She led NHS Scotland in the 100,000 Genomes Project.

She leads the pioneering North of Scotland HD services for those at risk and affected, developing follow-up clinics, recruiting to therapeutic trials, and first describing the impact of HD on young people. The team have used longstanding family-based records to document the epidemiology of HD in the north with population-based prevalence studies, showing that HD is much more common than previously thought. Her research on the BRCA1 gene in Orkney led to Woman and Home naming her "Britain's Most Amazing Woman – Science Pioneer 2023". She was awarded an OBE in the New Year Honours list for her contributions to medical genetics and research.

Presentation Overview: "Huntington disease (HD) epidemiology & new treatments"

HD is commoner than we thought. Rates in Scotland are amongst the highest in the world, and rates vary even between health boards. New therapies that lower huntingtin are coming to trial bringing tangible hope for disease modification, and knowledge of symptomatic therapies is improving. Reaping the benefits of progress will require realistic planning and investment and needs to start now.

Professor Daniel Smith

Daniel Smith is Professor of Psychiatry, Honorary Consultant Psychiatrist and Head of the Division of Psychiatry at the University of Edinburgh. He has a longstanding clinical and research interest in the causes and treatment of bipolar disorder and is Medical Adviser to Bipolar Scotland. He runs a specialist clinic for bipolar disorder within NHS Lothian. Professor Smith is Co-Director of the [Edinburgh Mental Health Network](#) and Director of the MRC [UK Mental Health and Circadian Science Network](#). He is currently Principal Investigator (PI) for two programme grants funded by the Wellcome Trust: [HELIOS-BD](#) (Lithium's mechanism in bipolar disorder: investigating the light hypersensitivity hypothesis) and [AMBIENT-BD](#) (Ambient and passive collection of sleep and circadian rhythm data in bipolar disorder to understand symptom trajectories and clinical outcomes). He also leads the new MRC [Hub for Metabolic Psychiatry](#) and in 2026 will co-lead a major clinical trial of nutritional ketosis in bipolar disorder (called ENERGEISE-BD) funded by an £8M Discretionary Award from the Wellcome Trust. In 2025 he was awarded The Saltire Society's Fletcher of Saltoun Award for Science.

Presentation Overview: “Metabolic psychiatry: what is it and why is it important?”

The nascent field of metabolic psychiatry is focused on the interface between metabolic dysfunction and severe mental illness. It aims to understand shared pathophysiological mechanisms and develop and test novel metabolic approaches (such as the ketogenic diet) as treatments for mental illness.

Dr Frances Creasy

Graduated from The University of Sheffield in 2010. Trained for 3 and half years in Emergency Medicine in Australia, completing the primary examinations. Completed the Diploma of Tropical Medicine and hygiene at Liverpool School of Tropical medicine in 2017. Completed core psychiatry training in South East Scotland in 2021 before working for 2 years as a specialty doctor and one year in Malawi with the Scotland Malawi Mental Health Education Project. Started higher training in South East Scotland in 2024 and currently working in Midlothian as an ST5.

Dr Catriona Dunlop

Studied medicine at the University of Aberdeen, graduating in 2014. Started core psychiatry training in 2016 in South East Scotland. Currently ST6 Older Adult Psychiatry “Acting As” in NHS Borders.

Presentation Overview: “Survey of physical complexity among patients diagnosed with dementia”

Dr Tom Russ

Dr Tom Russ trained in medicine and psychiatry in Edinburgh, the Highlands, and London and works clinically with older people with dementia. His PhD focused on dementia epidemiology and he is a Reader in Old Age Psychiatry in the Centre for Clinical Brain Sciences at the University of Edinburgh and an honorary Consultant Psychiatrist in NHS Lothian. He is NHS Research Scotland's Clinical Lead for Neuroprogressive and Dementia Research, Director of the Alzheimer Scotland Dementia Research Centre (University of Edinburgh), and an NIHR Senior Investigator.

Presentation Overview: “Dementia blood biomarkers

Dr Russ will give an overview of the biology of Alzheimer’s disease and dementia, discuss the biomarkers currently used in clinical practice, and consider the novel blood-based biomarkers that may be used in the future.

Dr Ruth Begbie

Dr Begbie graduated from the University of Glasgow in 2020. She completed the Foundation Programme in South East Scotland in August 2022, then undertook clinical fellow posts in emergency medicine and critical care before beginning psychiatry training in South East Scotland in August 2024.

Presentation Overview: “A retrospective review of cases of intentional foreign body insertion or ingestion over a nineteen year period”

The presentation will cover the data obtained from reviewing over four hundred episodes of self-harm. It will focus on the demographics, diagnostic picture, and outcomes seen in this patient population.

Afternoon Programme

Dr Jane Morris, Chair RCPsych in Scotland – Afternoon Session Chair

Jane is currently the Chair of the RCPsych in Scotland and Vice President of RCPsych. She is a Medical Psychotherapist who trained in both Adult and CAMHS psychiatry and worked in Adolescent services in Glasgow and Edinburgh before joining Aberdeen's Eden Unit (Scotland's first NHS Unit for adults with severe eating disorders). She was Lead Clinician in the North of Scotland MCN for Eating Disorders, co-wrote three books on Eating Disorders and chaired the 2022 SIGN Guideline on Eating Disorders. During the COVID-19 pandemic she worked in neuropsychiatry and perinatal psychiatry. Her most recent book is 'Improving University Mental Health' (CUP).

Dr Sanjana Mahanta

Dr Sanjana Mahanta is an early career psychiatrist with a special interest in medical education and healthcare management. She is currently focused on championing for the wellbeing of her peers, addressing organisational and administrative hurdles, and proactively managing solutions. She holds the role of Wellbeing Champion (North of Scotland, RCPsych), Medical Communications Lead (Resident Doctors' representative, NES), Co-Chair Resident Doctors' Committee (RCH), Co-chair Resident Doctors' Onboarding Team (RCH), and Core Psychiatry Trainee. Dr Mahanta endeavours to fulfil her personal and professional goals through involvement with various committees and organisations. She is also a writer and artist and aims to share her experiences with various artistic endeavours.

Dr Kevin Thomas Edassery

Kevin is a Core Trainee Year 2 (CT2) in Psychiatry at Royal Cornhill Hospital, NHS Grampian. A 2020 medical graduate from India, he is an active member of the Resident Doctors' Onboarding Team (RDOT) and the Resident Doctors' Committee (RDC). Their professional interests are centred on medical education and enhancing the postgraduate trainee experience. In addition to clinical work, Kevin is currently a lead organiser for a regional Quality Improvement conference scheduled for early next year, aimed at fostering innovation among resident doctors.

Presentation Overview: “Measurable Improvement in Trainee Experience: A Resident-Led Redesign of the Psychiatry Onboarding and Induction Process at Royal Cornhill Hospital (RCH)”

This presentation explores the journey of a resident-led team in overhauling doctor onboarding at Royal Cornhill Hospital. We detail the transition from lecture-heavy inductions to practical, peer-led simulation and workshops. By sharing our implementation process and trainee feedback, we demonstrate measurable improvements in role clarity and day-one readiness. The session offers a sustainable, trainee-driven model for bridging the gap between administration and clinical practice.

Professor Liane Azevedo

Professor Azevedo is a researcher in the field of public health, with a specialisation in the promotion of physical activity among children and adolescents. Her work primarily focuses on early childhood movement behaviour, examining both physical activity and sedentary behaviour. Throughout her career, Professor Azevedo has conducted numerous studies to understand the factors influencing these behaviours and developed targeted interventions to increase physical activity and decrease sedentary behaviour among children and youth. She possesses a particular interest in the effects of screen time on children's physical and cognitive development and is currently overseeing a substantial NIHR research grant dedicated to investigating this critical issue.

Presentation Overview: “The Impact of Mobile Device Use on Young Children's Development and Health: What We Know So Far”

The use of mobile devices among young children is becoming increasingly common. However, our understanding of the factors influencing device usage and its impact on children's development and health is still developing. In this presentation, we will review the most recent evidence on this topic and propose directions for future research.

Debate Speakers:

Professor John Crichton

After studying psychology and medicine at University of Nottingham, John Crichton completed core psychiatric training in Cambridge. He was appointed Nightingale scholar at Cambridge University's Institute of Criminology, completing his PhD in 1997. During this time he was a research assistant on the Robinson Inquiry and completed

the certificate in Forensic Psychotherapy from the Portman Clinic. He went on to hold full time clinical academic appointments at University of Cambridge (1997-8) and University of Edinburgh (1998-2000) and is a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. He has written three books and over 60 peer review publication, recently specialising in homicide prevention.

Prof Crichton was one of the founding Consultants of the first Scottish medium secure mental health services in 2000 and latterly took the lead with female mentally disordered offenders in the clinic. He was the Clinical Director for Forensic Services in Edinburgh from 2009 to 2013 and in the past has also served as Medical Director of the State Hospital and Forensic Mental Health Managed Clinical Care Network.

He was the foundation National Training Programme Director for forensic psychiatry and is an Honorary Professor of the School of Law at University of Edinburgh. In 2009 he was elected Fellow of the Royal College of Psychiatrists and in 2012 was appointed a member of the Faculty of Forensic and Legal Medicine and became a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh in 2022. From 2013- 2017 he was elected Chair of the Royal College Faculty of Forensic Psychiatry in Scotland. From 2015 he has been an Honorary adviser to the International Committee of the Red Cross and undertaken work with them promoting mental healthcare in Chinese prisons. In 2017 John was elected Chair of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Scotland and in 2021 moved to become Treasurer of the College. In 2025 after 28 years at Royal Edinburgh Hospital and five years as a Trustee of the Royal College, Prof Crichton was appointed Medical Director of the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland.

Dr Rachel Gibbons

Dr Rachel Gibbons is Vice Chair of the Psychotherapy Faculty at the Royal College of Psychiatrists and a leading voice on the emotional impact of suicide and homicide in clinical practice. She chaired the RCPsych Working Group on the Effect of Suicide and Homicide for six years and previously led the College's Patient Safety Group. A psychoanalyst, group analyst, and consultant psychiatrist, she has worked in the NHS for over 20 years, developed national guidance on staff support, and received the RCPsych President's Medal in 2024.

Please see Dr Gibbons recently published paper: [Scapegoating in Healthcare: A Primitive Response to Tragedy - Rachel Gibbons, 2025](#)

Maja Mitchell-Grigorjeva

Maja Mitchell-Grigorjeva is the Chief Executive of Bipolar Scotland, the national charity supporting people living with bipolar across Scotland. She has extensive experience in charity leadership, service design and partnership working within the mental health sector, with a strong focus on peer-led and lived-experience-informed approaches.

Alongside her role at Bipolar Scotland, Maja is the Secretary of the European Network for Bipolar, supporting international collaboration, knowledge-sharing and advocacy. She regularly engages with policymakers, clinicians and researchers to improve understanding of bipolar, tackle stigma, and strengthen joined-up support.

Dr Amanda Cotton

Dr Cotton has been a Consultant in General Adult Psychiatry in the Scottish Borders since 2010, initially working across community and inpatient settings and latterly in the community. The services are generalist, affording the opportunity to offer truly integrative care. She has a special interest in perinatal psychiatry and was the local lead for the perinatal service for a spell, a role she relinquished (temporarily, she hopes) due to clinical pressures. She is the Associate Medical Director for Mental Health and Learning Disability Services in the Borders and chairs the Scottish Medical Managers in Psychiatry group, a collaborative of psychiatrist managers who meet to discuss issues facing services and that maintains a link with the Mental Health Directorate of the Scottish Government.

Digital Posters

RCPsych in Scotland Winter Conference 2025

The entries are listed in alphabetical order of submitting author, indicated in bold type. You can view the posters in the event's online [Poster Viewing Area](https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/events/conferences/2026/rcpsych-in-scotland-winter-conference-2026---poster-viewing-area) <https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/events/conferences/2026/rcpsych-in-scotland-winter-conference-2026---poster-viewing-area>

1. **Dr Salma Abozeid (Poster 1)** - *Improving antipsychotic monitoring in adults with intellectual disabilities: A Two-Cycle Audit in South Glasgow*
2. **Dr Salma Abozeid (Poster 2)** - *Improving Post-Fall Documentation and Reporting in Dementia Ward: A Two-Cycle Audit in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde*
3. **Dr Fadi Alhassi**, Dr Nafiz Imtiaz and Dr Sonali Gupta - *Improving Initial Assessment of New ADHD Referrals at Petersfield Centre*
4. **Dr Isha Bhat** – *Standardization of opiate substitution therapy in Brent, London*
5. **Dr Despoina Biri** - *Improving Timeliness of Final Discharge Letters to GPs Following Psychiatric Inpatient Discharge: A Re-audit Following System Changes*
6. **Dr Mai Elawaf** - *Quality Improvement Project (QIP) to review treatment forms (T2B/T3B) for NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Community Mental Health Teams (CMHT) patients*
7. **Dr Zara Hamill** - *Enhancing Women's Sexual and Reproductive Health Enquiry and Service Access at the Ritson Clinic, an Inpatient Addictions Psychiatry Service*
8. **Dr Ramish Hazir** - *Completion of T2 and T3 forms at Meadowbrook Unit (except Copeland ward).*
9. **Dr Ellie Malcolm**, Dr G Covell, Dr H Gilchrist and Dr M Cordiner - *Improving the Completion and Quality of Immediate Discharge Letters within Acute Psychiatry in NHS Lanarkshire*
10. **Dr Abbie Moyes** and Dr Isobel Martin - *Unaddressed System Failures in Inpatient Suicide: Lessons from Coroners' Prevention of Future Deaths Reports*
11. **Dr Elizabeth Ogston** - *Alcohol safety and Cardiovascular observations in patients on Clozapine*
12. **Dr Maneesha Kallukkadan Paul** - *Audit on "Prescription-Only Caseload" of a Community Mental Health Team*
13. **Dr Arish Mudra Rakshasa-Loots** - *Metabolic biomarkers of clinical outcomes in severe mental illness: the METPSY study*
14. **Dr Nandita Ranjit** and Dr Pablo Fiks - *Improving Postgraduate Psychiatry Training Through Structured Face-to-Face Teaching: Three Months of Experience at Lanchester Road Hospital, Durham*
15. **Dr Fraser Walker** and Dr Graham Walker - *Off the Beaten Track: Trainee Reflections from Rural Scotland*

January 2026

Royal College of Psychiatrists in Scotland: 2025 Annual Report

Action

- For information

Author

Jane Morris, Chair of the RCPsych in Scotland
Laura Hudson, Head of the RCPsych in Scotland

Document Date

January 2026

Membership of Devolved Council:

Elected Chair (Elected June 2024)
Elected Vice Chair (Elected June 2024)
Co-opted Finance Officer
Elected ETC Representative (Elected June 2024)
1 Policy Lead
4 Elected Members (2 presently co-opted)
1 Appointed Academic Secretary
14 Appointed Faculty Chairs
6 PTC Representatives
3 Observers (2 Mental Welfare Commission Representatives & Principal Medical Officer for the Scottish Government)
1 Appointed Service User Organisation (VOX: Voices of Experience)
1 Appointed Carer Organisation (currently vacant)
9 Co-opted Representatives: Chair of Scottish Workforce and Careers Committee,
Scottish Wellbeing and Retention Lead,
Working Retired Chair,
Scottish Psychiatry Management & Leadership Group Chair,
Scottish SAS Representative,
Chair of Legislative Oversight Forum
Equity Champion
Sustainability Champion

2025 Meetings Summary:

4 Devolved Council meetings – 3 virtual and 1 in person (average 25 attendees).
4 Scottish Workforce and Careers Committee meetings – virtual (Average 12 attendees).
5 Chair's Drop-in Sessions (112 registrations)
3 Scottish CESR/Portfolio Pathway Group meetings & 2 drop-in information session for members (42 attendees)
3 Scottish Wellbeing Group meetings
3 Scottish Psychiatry Leadership and Management Group meetings (average 25 attendees)
12 (monthly) Legislative Oversight Forum meetings (average 10 attendees)
10 (monthly) Scottish Policy & Public Affairs Forum (average 8-10 attendees)

Scottish faculty executives met regularly throughout the year; however, an estimate of attendee numbers is not available as the RCPsychiS does not routinely provide administrative support).

2025 Events Summary:

14 events held:
2 Academic Meetings (1 in-person, 1 online)
6 Faculty Events (6 in person, 1 online)
 ○ Scottish Liaison Faculty
 ○ Scottish Rehabilitation Faculty (online)
 ○ Scottish Addictions Faculty
 ○ Joint Scottish Eating Disorders and Perinatal Faculties
 ○ Medical Psychotherapy Faculty
 ○ Child and Adolescent Faculty
1 interview skills courses (online)

- 1 Leadership and Management Skills Course
- 1 working retired psychiatrist meetings
- 3 retired psychiatrist meetings

The RCPsych in Scotland continues to provide representation to the following (list not exhaustive):

External:

- Academy of Medical Royal Colleges & Faculties in Scotland
- Scotland's Mental Health Partnership (Co-Chair and Secretariat)
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategic Leadership Group
- CMO's Senior Medical Advisory Group
- National Psychiatry Workforce Recruitment and Retention Group
- Mental Health Specialty Training Board
- Core Mental Health Standards Working Group
- Mental Health Tribunal Service
- External Advisors Network
- Scottish Workforce Specialist Service Advisory Group
- Scottish Mental Health & Capacity Law Reform Workstreams

Internal:

- Council of the College
- Financial Management Committee
- Education and Training Committee
- Choose Psychiatry Committee
- Workforce Committee
- Policy & Public Affairs Committee
- Assisted Dying Working Group
- All relevant Faculty Committees

2025 Highlights

WORKFORCE

After years of campaigning, the RCPsychiS welcomed the **Director's Letter to NHS Employers recommending the abolishment of 9:1 job plans for Consultants, Specialty and Specialist Doctors**. The RCPsychiS will continue to work to ensure this happens not only on paper but with meaningful change to jobs.

The final Psychiatry Recruitment and Retention Working Group report was published by the Scottish Government on 23 June. The Government accepted the majority of the RCPsychiS's recommendations, including ending 9:1 job plans, a move toward realistic job planning, prioritising psychiatry in national workforce planning and supporting the transition from headcount-based to Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) planning for training places – a move which has now been confirmed by NHS Education for Scotland.

The **RCPsychiS was invited by the Scottish Government as expert stakeholders to take part in their Future Medical Workforce** project. Written

evidence has been submitted and members have represented the College in a number of focus groups and upcoming roundtables.

Following many years of exploratory work followed by several years of short-term contractual agreements, **a three-year contract has now been secured to support the Workforce Specialist Service (WSS)**, delivered by NHS Practitioner Health for registered practitioners in Scotland.

The RCPsychiS was pleased to note that the article **“What the next generation of doctors want from a career in psychiatry: longitudinal survey of UK trainees and medical students”** has now been published as FirstView in BJPsych Bulletin. We thank Nagore Penades, Darragh Hamilton and Brooke Marron greatly for all their time and commitment given to this piece of work over the past 3-4 years, and the intention to continue this valuable work with the support of SWCC.

MEMBER & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The RCPsychiS is delighted to have **secured several strong appointments to replace the four Elected Members and Finance Officer**, whose terms of office came to an end in Summer 2025.

Building upon the ongoing successive and effectiveness of our Scottish Legislative Oversight Forum, we have now **established a Policy and Public Affairs Forum. This forum brings together members interested in the policy and public affairs work of the College in Scotland.** The purpose of the Forum is to ensure that mental health and psychiatry remain central to the political agenda in the lead-up to the 2026 Scottish election. This initiative offers an opportunity for RCPsychiS members who are passionate about influencing mental health policy and advancing the College’s public affairs work to play a pivotal role in shaping its strategy, priorities, and manifesto.

2025 saw **another strong year of events, with high turnout numbers, good feedback and members praising the opportunity to meet with colleagues across the country.**

The RCPsych in Scotland looks forward to collaborating with colleagues to **welcome RCPsych Membership and Fellowship ceremonies to Scotland** in June 2026, for the very first time, as an important step toward improving member inclusion.

Chair’s drop-in sessions continue to receive high levels of member engagement and provide forums for discussing topical issues. Sessions this year include shaping the RCPsychiS position on the Assisted Dying in Terminally Ill Adults Bill, Resident Doctors, neurodevelopmental conditions, scapegoating of mental health professionals and the challenges facing general adult psychiatry in Scotland.

Alongside its formal roles on the Scottish Academy of Medical Royal Colleges and Scotland’s Mental Health Partnership, in 2025 the **RCPsychiS strengthened its links with key stakeholder groups**, establishing regular meetings with RCGP, NHS Education for Scotland (NES) and the Coalition of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA).

Devolved Council held its annual strategy meeting and reception on 21 August. With the highest attendance recorded in recent years, workshops were held to discuss & agree priorities for the remainder of the current term of office, grouped into four themes of membership engagement, workforce, policy and public affairs and the RCPsych in Scotland in a Four Nation College.

The RCPsychiS continue to host the **Scottish Workforce and Careers Committee & its Portfolio Pathway/CESR and wellbeing subgroups, Legislative Oversight Forum, Scottish Leadership and Management Group, Working retired and retired groups** and the newly established Scottish Policy and Public Affairs Forum.

LEGISLATIVE, POLICY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Following extensive engagement with members the **RCPsychiS published its [2026 Scottish Parliament election manifesto](#), calling for urgent action on Scotland's mental health emergency**. Launched on 16 June, the manifesto focuses on Awareness, Action and Accountability. Key asks include a legally binding minimum of 10% NHS spend on adult mental health and 1% on CAMHS, a national strategy for neurodevelopmental conditions, and halving the mortality gap for people with severe mental illness and learning disabilities by 2050. We met with all major political parties and their staff to promote the manifesto and priorities. As a result of this, we have secured commitments from all major parties to take forward elements of our manifesto into their own party-political manifesto development process and have continued to meet with them to bring this forward. The **RCPsychiS manifesto for the 2026 Scottish Election was formally welcomed to Parliament** by the new Minister for Social Care and Mental Wellbeing, Tom Arthur MSP, during his very first Ministerial Statement, which focused on support for young people's neurodivergence.

Our report "**[Multi-system solutions for meeting the needs of Autistic and ADHD people in Scotland](#)**", which examines the current situation and makes a series of society-wide recommendations grouped into 10 themes, was **launched at the Scottish Parliament on 2nd of October**. The event received cross-party support and featured speeches from representatives from the SNP, Scottish Labour and Scottish Conservatives.

The College in Scotland has been invited to join a newly established **Adults with Incapacity Law Reform: Ministerial-led Oversight Group and Expert Group**. This group is being convened to oversee the work of the Adults with Incapacity reform. The Chair of our Scottish Legislative Oversight Forum, Dr Roger Smyth, will attend to represent the RCPsychiS.

The RCPsychiS **hosted a Scottish Parliament event on 26 February to launch our new [MSP Guide to Mental Health and Mental Illness](#)**. The event featured a panel discussion with: Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport - Maree Todd MSP, Scottish Labour Spokesperson for Mental Health - Paul Sweeney MSP, Principal Medical Officer for Mental Health - Dr Alastair Cook, mental health advocate - Graham Morgan, and RCPsychiS Chair - Dr Jane Morris. Many RCPsychiS members & stakeholders were in attendance.

We held 88 MSP meetings in 2025. This included every major party represented at Holyrood, and all Health Spokespeople. Staff and Officers met with the First

Minister, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, Minister for Social Care and Mental Wellbeing during the year.

The RCPsychiS had an active presence at all major Scottish party conferences

- exhibiting or hosting fringe events at each. We used these events to speak to key policymakers and party staff, securing many follow up meetings regarding party political manifestos and our contributions to this, results in contributions from MSPs in Chamber, and further developed important relationships with policymakers.

Based on our submission of written evidence, we were invited to give oral evidence to the Scottish Parliament Health, Social Care and Sport Committee on 3 occasions. Our members gave evidence on the Right to Recovery Bill (on two separate occasions) and ADHD and autism pathways.

We were invited to attend roundtables hosted by the First Minister, Minister for Social Care and Mental Wellbeing, Scottish Government, and Scottish Labour.

We hosted 2 Scottish Parliament events – one to launch our MSP Guide to Mental Health and Mental Illness, and one to launch our Neurodevelopmental Conditions report. Both were attended by MSPs across the political spectrum (including Ministers), third sector partners, civil servants, people with lived experience, and our own membership. One event featured a panel with: the Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport, Principle Medical Officer, and Scottish Labour Spokesperson for Mental Wellbeing.

2 Scottish Parliament motions were published, welcoming our reports - one motion welcomed our locum psychiatry report and one on our NDC report. Both received cross-party support.

A Scottish Parliament debate was held, which welcomed our NDC report - the debate had contributions and endorsements from MSPs across parties, including the Minister. Some quotes include:

- Daniel Johnson MSP: the report “sets out a clear plan of what we can do now in wider policy, and in clinical action and policy, to address the issue.”
- Michelle Thomson MSP: “I agree that the report is excellent. I enjoyed reading it, and I congratulate the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Scotland on its work.”
- Dr Sandesh Gulhane MSP: “The Royal College has done its job; it is time for the Scottish Government to do its job,” he said, adding that the report “lays out in clear and evidence-based terms what many of us have been warning of for years.”
- Stuart McMillan described the report as “a very important offer to all of society in Scotland.” He said: “Healthcare professionals have provided a set of recommendations to help. They know that there is money in the NHS system that could be better invested, and the recommendations are very worthy of consideration - because they could genuinely make a huge difference for the people we are here to represent.”
- In response, Tom Arthur, welcomed the report - saying these principles “strongly echo our own approach”

A topical resolution was passed at the SNP conference welcoming our NDC report and its recommendations. This means that it has been adopted as SNP policy.

Scotland's Mental Health Partnership, to which the RCPsychiS continues to provide secretariat, launched its own election manifesto in mid-September.

It outlines an urgent call to action in response to the mental health emergency in Scotland. [View the manifesto here.](#) The manifesto was developed by a coalition of 17 professional and third sector organisations. Key proposals of the manifesto include: increased NHS mental health funding, ethical commissioning, expanded community-based services, stronger governance, and the appointment of a dedicated Minister for Mental Health. The manifesto also calls for targeted action in areas such as primary care, independent advocacy, children and young people, long-term conditions, workplace wellbeing, and alignment with suicide and self-harm strategies.

The RCPsychiS Legislative Oversight Forum, Policy and Public Affairs Forum, and faculties responded to 6 formal consultations & represented the College in multiple related workstreams.

The RCPsychiS was mentioned in Parliament on approximately 28 occasions.

RCPsychiS played an active role in shaping the Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill during Stage 2 by submitting proposed amendments through Jackie Baillie MSP, two of which were debated. These included clarifying that mental disorder alone should not constitute terminal illness - an issue ultimately addressed via another amendment that was passed - and proposing a central register of psychiatrists willing to participate in roles set out in the Bill, which was narrowly defeated. Several protections the College had previously advocated for were accepted, such as raising the minimum age to 18 and ensuring psychiatrists can opt out of participation. Looking ahead to Stage 3, RCPsychiS is considering further amendments focused on psychiatric aspects of the Bill, including revisiting the proposal for a central register, and anticipates contributing to the development of a code of practice should the legislation pass.

Summary of objectives for 2026

The 2025-2028 RCPsych in Scotland Strategy sets out actions across our identified priority areas and provides a focus for activity over the coming years.

Workforce retention remains a central priority for the RCPsych in Scotland. The Scottish Government's Psychiatry Workforce Recruitment and Retention Group brought stakeholders together to take forward the work started by our State of the Nation Report, and the Government has now accepted the final recommendations. 2026 will see the commencement of implementing these recommendations and the RCPsychiS will continue to be involved in monitoring and supporting this work.

The Directive abolishing 9:1 job plans in 2025 is a greatly welcomed step, the RCPsychiS must now support its members in ensuring these changes are implemented.

We will continue to advocate for increased training places to improve the pipeline into psychiatry careers and address current bottlenecks. We were encouraged to learn that alongside the continued 100% fill rate at Core, higher training in Scotland has also now filled nearly every post for the first time in many years. This should further evidence and support proposals to increase training numbers.

The RCPsychiS will support members to re-establish a Scottish General Adult Faculty following a number of years of absence, reflecting the enormous challenges facing the specialty across Scotland. We will work with colleagues across the RCPsych to bring the UK General Adult Conference to Scotland in 2026, providing a key opportunity to bring together & engage Scottish faculty members, and we will also host a joint Scottish General Adult and Older Adult Faculties event in the Spring.

We will also work with colleagues to deliver the first Membership and Fellowship Ceremony in Scotland, scheduled for the spring of 2026 in Edinburgh.

The RCPsychiS will deliver a high-quality programme of events & networking opportunities for members, recognising the important role the College has in connecting colleagues & sharing good practice across Scotland. We will continue to closely monitor engagement and feedback to ensure we offer the best balance between our popular in-person conferences and the accessibility and value of online webinars and shorter events.

The RCPsychiS will also continue its efforts to engage and represent Scottish members in workstreams across the College. Upcoming Chair's drop-in sessions will provide opportunities for members to share their views on priorities for the upcoming Presidential and Dean's election, informing discussions with candidates. We will also continue to gather members' experiences of scapegoating and 'individual blame for systemic failings' to inform UK Wellbeing Committee deliberations, and we will review and contribute to other emerging policy and relevant workstreams as capacity allows.

The RCPsych in Scotland will represent the views of its members as the Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults Bill proceeds through the final parliamentary stages.

Through the work of the RCPsych in Scotland Legislative Oversight Forum, Policy and Public Affairs Forum and Scottish Faculties, we will continue to engage with relevant national legislative and policy workstreams, including the Mental Health and Capacity Law Reform Programme

The RCPsychiS will continue its advocacy for meaningful progress on the development of appropriate pathways for neurodevelopmental conditions to ensure best support for this group & to alleviate untenable pressure on services

It is increasingly apparent that Health and Social Care Integration in Scotland has had a largely detrimental impact on mental health services resulting in significant challenges for frontline clinicians in delivering high quality care. The RCPsych in Scotland will seek to utilise ongoing reform workstreams, including the Population Health Framework and Health and Social Care Services Renewal Framework, to draw attention to these issues and work with members and stakeholders to identify potential solutions.

The Scottish Parliament Election in May 2026 will be pivotal to the work of the RCPsych in Scotland. A brief overview of planned activity is as follows:

Pre-election

- Strategically utilise existing relationships with policymakers in the run up to the Scottish Parliament election (May 2026) and the next Scottish Government budget to ensure that our member priorities are viewed as key electoral issues.
- Continue to work with MSPs and party staff to encourage uptake of our proposals into party political manifestos.
- Draw on relationships, policymaker network and knowledge of Parliamentary processes to position our asks on neurodevelopmental conditions as key campaigning and voting issues in the run up to the election: promote adoption of a needs-based, stepped-care, whole society approach to NDCs in the next electoral cycle and;
- Campaign for dedicated funding for this in the next Scottish Government Budget.

Post-election

- Establish relationships with new MSPs and strengthen relationships with returning MSPs to embed our manifesto priorities into the new Government's agenda and legislative programme.
- Brief MSPs quickly into the new Parliament on the mission of the RCPsychiS, our member priorities
- Contribute to policy and legislative development through written evidence, MSP briefings, and oral evidence to committees on key workstreams relevant to our members
- Deepen collaboration with key national stakeholders to ensure coherent, cross-sector implementation of mental health priorities
- Engage with Scottish Government and Parliament (and mobilise support from the third sector) to secure legislative guarantees for 10% NHS funding to adult MH and 1% to CAMHS
- Continue to campaign for: introduction of neurodevelopmental pathways, improved leadership and accountability in MH, delivery of clear and evidenced public health guidance, investment of resources, and action on public mental health.

We would like to thank all members who contributed their invaluable time and expertise, without which this work would not have been possible.