The Royal College of Psychiatrists in Scotland
Winter Meeting Programme
Friday 29th January 2021
Half day Zoom meeting

The Royal College of Psychiatrists in Scotland is pleased to announce the programme for the Winter Meeting, on Friday, 29th January 2021. The meeting will be held via Zoom due to ongoing Covid-19 restrictions.

The theme for the meeting is the how we can continue to provide high quality psychiatric care to the most unwell and disabled, while protecting, and promoting, their human rights. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) requires the removal of obstacles to, and the promotion of, the full and equal enjoyment of human rights to those with disabilities, including mental disabilities. These principles have a significant impact on our current, and future, mental health legislation and are at the heart of the current review of the Mental Health Act in Scotland. This meeting will explore the tensions between the need to provide treatment and the protection of individual freedoms, our concepts of capacity, necessity and best interests. These issues are of great importance to all of us training and working in Scotland. We are delighted to have four expert speakers in this field, and to introduce a longer panel discussion than at previous meetings to promote greater audience participation.

The meeting will be chaired by Professor John Crichton, current Chair of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Scotland. We will begin with a discussion of human rights and mental health, which will set the context for the rest of our discussions. This first talk will be given by Ms. Judith Robertson, Chair of the Human Rights Commission in Scotland and previously Programme Director for See Me, Scotland's programme to end mental health stigma and discrimination. We will then hear from Dr. Arun Chopra, Executive Director (Medical) of the MWC who will consider how well, or otherwise, the current Mental Health Act works. Dr. Roger Smyth, who sits on the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Scotland Legislative Oversight Group, will then consider the balance between the right to treat, and the right to be treated.

After a short break, we will then hear from Mr. John Scott, QC, who chairs the current review of the Mental Health Act about how we can implement the requirements of the UNCRPD in new legislation. After the formal talks, there will be a panel discussion with all four speakers to consider questions from the audience.