

Royal College of Psychiatrists in Northern Ireland
Meeting of Devolved Council
Wednesday 23 September 2020 @ 14:00

Present: Dr Wilson (Chair) and Drs Lewis, Subramanian, Sommerville, Mulholland, McNeill, Boggs, Walker, Doherty, McClean, Doherty, Trimble, Walker, Grimason, McGurgan, McMaster and Mr Bill McKnight.

In attendance: Emma Allen, Thomas McKeever and Barry Flynn.

1. Attendance and Apologies.

Drs Rodgers, Anderson, Pinto, Barton, Pinto, Moore and Devine.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the meeting of 17 June were approved.

3. Presentations

• **Library Services**

The Chair welcomed Fiona Watson, Library and Archives Manager, who gave an overview of the service offered to members by the service. She gave a demonstration of the facilities available and how they could undertake research through the service.

It was agreed that members should email fiona.martin@rcpsych.ac.uk should they wish to avail of a log-in to the library services.

• **Department of Health**

Dr McMaster delivered a presentation on the latest work of the department. He outlined the range of working groups which would be established to oversee the development of the mental health strategy and the associated public consultation exercise. He reported that, despite the Covid-19 pandemic, the Minister was keen that work on the strategy would not be delayed. He then gave an overview of the review of the commissioning structures and suggested that it would be desirable if psychiatry were involved in that process.

Dr McMaster also outlined the pressure which existed on mental health with regards to bed resources and the work ongoing to address the current pressures. He clarified the situation as it existed regarding the funding for perinatal services and the reasons for the delay experienced in releasing that funding.

He also addressed a query on the management of Learning Disability patients within any future strategy and suggested that Dr Subramaniam might raise that issue through the Chair of RCPsych NI, who was due to attend an inaugural working group meeting later in the week, where it could be addressed. He also outlined the role that service users and carers would play in the evolving strategy.

BAME Covid-19 reference group

Dr Subramanian outlined his work as a member of the above-mentioned working group, together with an outline of its aims and objective in developing an action plan and a list of recommendations for HSC Trusts.

Emma agreed to follow-up as to who received the recommendations' document in NI and that we will re-send this to Trusts if not received.

The Chair thanked Fiona, Arun and Ian for their contributions.

4. Chair's Business

- **Draft Terms of Reference**

The Council considered a draft Terms of Reference for overseeing its governance arrangements as a Devolved Nation of RCPsych NI. Both the Chair and the NI Manager outlined the principal aspects of the document, in line with the regulations and byelaws and the process that would be undertaken to receive central College approval. Comments should be forwarded to the Manager and Chair by 30 September. Following this date, comments would be discussed/ changes made as appropriate and the document would be submitted to Calum Mercer, at RCPsych by Mid October.

Dr McNeill indicated that he would prefer that Psychotherapy remained as a recognised faculty and that he requested that the Terms of Reference be amended to facilitate that viewpoint. In addition, the Manager advised Dr McClean that elections to the executive committees of the faculties would be managed and overseen by staff within RCPsych NI in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

The Council noted the Terms of Reference as circulated and the process for their final approval.

- **Draft Strategy**

The Chair outlined the main aspects and the work which had been undertaken in the preparation of RCPsych NI's Draft Strategy.

It was agreed that members should forward comments to the Manager and Chair by 9 October.

The Manager agreed to undertake a discussion with the Chair and Bill McKnight regarding options on the role of service users and carers within the evolving strategy.

The Council noted the Draft Strategy as circulated and the process for their final approval.

Mental Health Policy Group (NI)

The Chair provided an update on the latest work of the above-mentioned group including details of the meeting with the Interim Mental Health Champion, who indicated that the group be act as a key resource for her as her remit developed.

- **DoH Strategy update**

The Chair provided an update in this regard and undertook to keep the Council updated as work progressed in conjunction with the DoH in respect of the emerging strategy.

- **Deputy Regional Advisor**

The Council, on the recommendation of the Chair (Dr Wilson), agreed to appoint Professor Gerry Lynch to the above-mentioned role in support of Dr Ryan O' Neill.

- **RCPsych Race Equality & Equality task forces**

The Chair indicated that RCPsych NI was keen to appoint representatives to the working groups and would be happy to receive nominations from local members. Emma outlined that there were several roundtable events for members to input into the developing strategy, which is an aim of the Race Equality & Equality task forces groups, details for which are included within emails from Adrian James.

5. Manager's Business

- **Office Accommodation**

The move to the Innovation Factory is now complete, the RCPsych team having vacated Clifton House on the 24.7.20. The manager updated members on the current situation regarding staff being able to access the College's new offices on a restricted basis at IF due to the Covid-19 pandemic and that the College's position on face to face meetings will not change until June 2021, thus that all meetings, events and CPD will take place virtually until this date.

- **Events Schedule**

The manager outlined main aspects of the Events Schedule and thanked those members for inputting their ideas within the planning process.

- **Carer worker representative**

It was noted that this position was due to be re-advertised in the near future.

- **Reports from Faculties and Committees**

The Council noted the latest updates on the work of the faculties and committees of RCPsych NI.

6. Next meeting

Wednesday 9 December at 14:00.

Chair