

**Royal College of Psychiatrists in NI  
Meeting of Devolved Council  
Wednesday 17 June 2020 at 09.30am**

**In Attendance:** Dr G Lynch (Chair) and Drs M Doherty (Vice Chair), L Dawson, J Anderson, O McNeill, Kevina Nix (for C Barton), B Gregg, A Thampi, D Lewis, P Trimble, R O' Neill, F Martin, R McClean and R Wilson.

**Also attended:** E Allen, T McKeever and B Flynn.

**Apologies:** Drs Largey, McMaster, Moore Grimason and Somerville.

**Minutes of 11 December:** Approved and adopted – it was noted that matters arising would be addressed within the agenda.

**Routine Matters**

The Chair extended congratulations to the following members who had been appointed to the roles as outlined:

- SAS Committee – Dr Bob Boggs (Chair) and Dr Gabriel Mulvaney (Vice Chair)
- Forensic Faculty – Dr Paul Devine (Chair) and Dr Boris Pinto (Vice Chair)
- CAMHS Faculty – Dr Mark Rodgers (Chair).

**Website and Communications**

The RCPsych NI Co-ordinator gave a presentation on the changes which had been made to the website and the steps that would be taken to make the site more interactive for members. The Devolved Nations' Media Officer provided an update on the latest media stories which had been released on behalf of RCPsych NI, together with the process which members should follow if they wished to engage with the media.

**Chair's Business**

**RCPsych NI – governance arrangements**

The Council was reminded that it had held a strategy day on 12 March at which a new structure had been proposed to ensure that RCPsych NI complied with the requirements of Devolved Nation status as set out within the regulations. Those proposals sought also to ensure that there existed sufficient communication and accountability for office holders, faculties and staff. The principal changes as proposed are as follows:

- The re-designation of several faculties as specialist committees; together with the re-alignment of reporting lines to the Devolved Council. These are outlined in the [presentation](#) delivered at the strategy day.
- The creation of a Senior Leadership Team comprising of staff and honorary officers of RCPsych NI. The [Terms of Reference](#) for that group were circulated for members' information.

Following the strategy day, a video outlining the proposed structure had been circulated to faculty chairs, vice chairs and members of the Devolved Council for consideration. It was reported that no adverse comments had been received in this regard.

Regarding the proposal to examine workforce planning, Dr Dawson reported that she was due to meet with Andrew Dawson, special advisor to Robin Swann, Health Minister, and she could raise the matter. It was agreed that the Chair and the Vice Chair, together with the Manager and the Chair-elect, would meet to discuss the establishment of a dedicated working group for the College and its scope and membership.

The Council endorsed the changes to RCPsych NI governance arrangements as outlined.

### **RCPsych NI – budget, strategy & manifesto**

The manager advised the Council that the RCPsych NI Senior Leadership Team (SLT) would be seeking members' input for an agreed strategy which would determine a three-year budget to be completed in August for submission to central College. Also, at the strategy day held in March, four themes had been identified for inclusion within the College's manifesto in advance of the next NI Assembly election, they were:

- a regional approach to mental health and building relationships between primary and secondary care;
- the provision of accurate data by the Department of Health to help inform local policy;
- a figure of 85% bed-occupancy rate; and
- an increase in trainee places and a review of workforce planning with regards to psychiatry.

The Council agreed that a meeting be held in July, to which faculty chairs and vice chairs would be invited, to consider the strategy and budget prior to a submission to central College in August.

### **Manager's Business**

#### **Tenancy at Clifton House**

The Council was reminded that in January 2019, the Trustees of the Board of Clifton House had advised RCPsych NI that it would be extending its services and therefore required the space previously occupied by the College.

Given the impact of the virus, the RCPsych NI staff team had been working remotely since mid-March. Also, the College in London had agreed to review its current office accommodation. That review, along with the aim of Clifton House to develop its business model, provided the College with an opportunity to surrender its tenancy at Clifton House. Accordingly, the Chair had advised the Trustees at Clifton House that the College wished to relinquish the tenancy, with a view that fees chargeable during the notice period would be waived. The Trustees acceded to that request.

The Council noted the situation regarding the tenancy at Clifton House and that alternative accommodation would be sought and members would be updated in due course.

## **2021 Events Update**

The Council noted the process of consultation which had commenced for the inclusion of events within the 2021 RCPsych NI schedule of events.

## **Applications for Fellowship**

The Council noted the arrangements which had been put in place to assist members of RCPsych NI who wished to apply for Fellowship of the College.

## **Covid-19 RCPsych NI Reference Group**

The Chair and the manager provided an update on the work of the Covid-19 Reference Group which had been established to provide ethical guidance for members in response to the pandemic. It was reported terms of reference had been agreed and that Professor Ciaran Mulholland had been appointed chair of the group. It was agreed that he be co-opted on to the Devolved Council to report on the work of the group as it progressed.

## **Reports from Faculties and Committees**

The Council noted the [latest updates](#) on the work of the faculties and committees of RCPsych NI.

## **UK Faculty and Committee representation**

It was noted that Dr A Subramanian had been nominated to serve on the central College's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic working group, whilst Dr Catherine Taggart would represent RCPsych NI on the Climate Change working group.

## **Matters raised in advance**

### **Alcohol-Related Brain Damage**

The Council considered the following report, which had been submitted by Dr Gregg, Chair of RCPsych NI Addictions Faculty, regarding the implementation of the 2017 College Report - CR212 'Alcohol-related Brain Damage in Northern Ireland' which had called for the establishment of specialist facilities to address this matter. A copy of the report is [available here](#).

The Council agreed that the proposals outlined within the report would be examined further with a view to a further report being submitted to the next Council meeting which would outline a range of options in this regard.

### **Professor Gerry Lynch**

At the end of the meeting, tributes were paid to Professor Lynch for his time as Chair and the meeting was joined by Paul Rees, Chief Executive of RCPsych, together with a range of members to express their gratitude to Professor Lynch.

Gerry thanked the members and the staff of the College who had assisted him throughout his four-year term and wished Dr Richard Wilson every success as Chair.

Chair