**RCPsych in Scotland’s response to the Independent Inquiry into Tayside Mental Health Services final report**

On the 5th of February, [the final report](https://independentinquiry.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Final-Report-of-the-Independent-Inquiry-into-Mental-Health-Services-in-Tayside.pdf) of the Independent Inquiry into Tayside Mental Health services was launched. We welcome the inquiry referencing our members' concerns within the report, and the recommendations made under the principles of trust & respect. As the professional medical body of Psychiatry, we were concerned about the stories that were coming out of Tayside and the negative impact that the mismanagement of services was causing Psychiatrists, medical professionals and service users alike. These stories were directly opposed to our members want of providing the best standard of care possible to service users.

There is urgent need for a system-wide review and a move away from fragmented services and the lack of accountability that has become the norm. The practicality of such has led to knee-jerk emergency actions, such as closing wards without any consultation, which is not a sustainable way of operating. Tayside needs strong clinical leadership and the nurturing of a culture of trust and respect. Clear lines of management for all employees is also desperately needed.

We were concerned by the hostility of Tayside towards external stakeholders. Offers of assistance to services were given from HIS and MWC, as well as Psychiatrists but these appear to have only been met with hostility and not followed through.

The College echoes the report’s recommendation that frontline Mental Health workers must be included in decision making and development of services. These voices should be listened to and respected, and not become a tokenistic exercise. On the same note, concerns raised, particularly surrounding matters such as patient safety, must be acknowledged and dealt with properly, and not dismissed as unsupportive and out of touch, as our members have reported.

Focus must also turn to recruitment of substantive consultants to NHS Tayside and a move away from overdependence on locums; essential to support services & give service users consistency & security. The fact that nine services within Tayside are operating without a substantive consultant has led members and other medical professionals juggling thousands of cases, is highly unethical and unpractical and demonstrates the poor efforts of management to retain and recruit the Tayside workforce. The College has previously written a [position statement](https://bit.ly/36ZWXOE) on locums, which highlights some of our concerns with the usage of such doctors and how it is papering over the cracks within the workforce.

RCPsych sets professional service standards that all our doctors endeavour to uphold and we welcome the opportunity to support NHS Tayside’s mental health services.

The report highlights how essential it is to look after the workforce’s wellbeing. We look forward to a positive outcome from Cabinet Secretary Jean Freeman on the Practioners Health Programme Proposal.

We anticipate that the Scott review will consider the legislations around the best ways of ensuring that people receive high quality care and treatment, whether they are being cared for in hospital or in the community. The College welcomes discussions on new opportunities to ensure that services remain effectively targeted as the environment changes and that people get the right care, treatment and support.