

# **Royal College of Psychiatrists**

## **Three-Year International Strategy**

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### **1. Introduction**

Founded in 1841, as the Association of Medical Officers of Asylums and Hospitals for the Insane, the Royal College of Psychiatrists has a vision, in its current two-year strategy, of a 'strong and progressive college that supports its members to deliver high-quality, person-centred care across the UK, and over the world'.

The College is an international organisation and, as at December 2019, out of its 18,700 members, 3,357 of them – or 18% – were based outside the UK, which means that mental health provision across the globe is delivered by RCPsych members.

Of our 3,357 international members:

- 90 are based in Africa
- 868 are based in Europe
- 205 are based in the Middle East
- 631 are based in the Americas
- 323 are based in South Asia, and
- 1,240 are based in the West Pacific.

Among the biggest memberships in individual nations are:

- 655 in Ireland
- 596 in Australia
- 404 in Canada
- 284 in Hong Kong
- 207 in India
- 183 in the USA
- 166 in New Zealand
- 137 in Singapore
- 72 in Pakistan, and
- 59 in Malaysia.

As a College, our international members are represented by six international RCPsych divisions:

- The African Division
- The European Division
- The Middle Eastern Division
- The Pan-American Division
- The South Asia Division, and
- The West Pacific Division.

As well as having members all over the world, around half of our UK-based members obtained their primary medical qualification outside the UK.

This means that while, as a College, we have a lot to offer psychiatry and wider mental health services globally, we have also benefitted from amongst the best professionals and best practices from around the world.

We have established MRCPsych exam centres in Ireland, Oman, Singapore, Malta, Hong Kong and India and our exam continues to be regarded as a particularly high standard of postgraduate qualification in psychiatry.

We deliver CPD Online in Australia, New Zealand, Netherlands, Estonia and Malta.

We sell our learned books and journals in various nations. The latest impact factor for our publication, the British Journal of Psychiatry (BJPsych) is 7.233, which is a 23% increase on the previous year. This means that out of 142 learned psychiatric journals it is ranked seventh in the world.

Our Faculties play a key role in shaping policy for psychiatric sub specialties in Europe and beyond.

Our public health leaflets, which have been translated into 25 languages, are accessed, via the College website, by communities in the UK and worldwide.

MindEd, the free online educational resource on mental health issues for children, young people, families and older people, which is hosted by the College, is accessed by patients and practitioners globally.

Our College Centre for Quality Improvement (CCQI) has 27 member services outside the UK, with:

- 20 services in Ireland
- Two in New Zealand
- One in India
- One in Hungary
- One in Greece
- One in Norway, and
- One in the United Arab Emirates.

The College runs a volunteer scheme, in close collaboration with our Volunteering and International Psychiatry Special Interest Group (VIPSIG), which links around 15 RCPsych members a year, who want to donate their time,

to services in low-and-middle income countries that need specialist training. We have run programmes in highly challenging contexts such as Iraq and Myanmar.

The College also runs its Medical Training Initiative (MTI), which is designed to enable a small number of international psychiatry graduates to enter the UK to experience training in the NHS for up to two years, before returning to their home country. During 2019, 50 people came to the UK under this scheme. This was up from 40 in 2018, and 15 in 2017.

The RCPsych continues to build relationships with equivalent international psychiatric associations, such as the American Psychiatric Association (APA), the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP), the Indian Psychiatric Society (IPS), the South African Society of Psychiatrists (SASOP), as well as the World Psychiatric Association (WPA) and the European Psychiatric Association (EPA).

The College also hosts a small number of international delegations visiting the UK on study visits – most recently delegations from China and Russia.

The RCPsych is involved in setting standards for training in Europe through its membership of the European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS) Psychiatry Section. The College aspires to maintain its links to European psychiatry regardless of the implications of Brexit.

We have also arranged education seminars with psychiatric associations from the USA, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Hong Kong and South Africa, in order to share examples of good practice in the training of psychiatrists.

While the RCPsych has a rich history of working across the globe, to help promote standards and quality in psychiatry and improve mental health care, this is our first comprehensive international strategy, encompassing the whole organisation.

The objectives set out in the strategy acknowledge that there is sometimes a focus on specific regions where the College has existing collaborations, a large membership and/or which allow for potential growth of the College's support and membership.

The purpose of this strategy is to set the values and principles that will underpin our international work and the operational model. The international strategy will also ensure that we carry out is led by the UN Sustainable Goals.

## 2. Values

The RCPsych has six values:

- Courage
- Innovation
- Respect
- Collaboration
- Learning, and
- Excellence.

Our new international strategy will be based on our values in the following way:

### **Courage**

We will have the courage to engage with nations in which social policies may have different standard to our own as long as we can improve patient care. Our work will advocate for the needs of people with mental illness, intellectual difficulties and developmental disorders, regardless of the level of stigma that can be found around mental illness, in different nations.

### **Innovation**

Our international strategy will lead to new ways of working, new evidence bases and new partnerships which will lead to mutually beneficial innovation to improve patient care.

### **Respect**

We will work in ways that are respectful of the peoples and culture of regions and nations in which we are working. We will also be respectful of the context of their healthcare settings. Our work will respect the needs of patients and always be person-centred. We will ensure that our work does not inadvertently contribute to a 'brain drain' from any nation. We will work to reduce discrimination against those with mental illness in all its forms.

### **Collaboration**

We will build mutual partnerships with appropriate stakeholders, such as health ministries, national psychiatric associations, international psychiatric associations, universities, third sector mental health organisations and NGOs that create shared goals and a common vision.

### **Learning**

All our work will foster two-way learning. Whilst sharing the best of our skills and knowledge we will embrace learning from other parts of the world to improve the quality of care for people with mental illness in ways which are sustainable.

### **Excellence**

Our work will promote excellence in mental health services and the training of outstanding psychiatrists. We will aim to deliver optimum member experience to psychiatrists globally drawing on the strength and diversity of our membership. We will encourage our members to be ambassadors for the RCPsych and the specialty of psychiatry and mental health and wider healthcare.

### **3. Operating model for the RCPsych international strategy**

The RCPsych wants to make a bigger impact on the delivery of psychiatry and wider mental health services across the world.

It wishes to do this by:

- Delivering increased services to psychiatrists and other mental health staff, through a sustainable model, and
- Utilising surpluses on these services to support an expanded volunteering programme.

The new strategy will only achieve its aims of delivering more services and delivering more base line funded volunteering placements if it is clear and focused.

This means being clear about:

- What services it will prioritise
- Which nations and regions it will focus its attention on.

To be a success, the College needs to be clear about what it can and cannot do.

Otherwise it runs the risk of trying to be all things to all people.

The new strategy focuses on specific regions where the College has existing collaborations and/or allows for potential growth of the College's services and membership, as well highlighting the need to increase our volunteering work in low-and-middle income nations. Where appropriate we will consider delivering the strategy alongside other UK providers.

We will prioritise securing a sustainable model in emerging economies in order to support volunteering work, in low-and-middle income countries.

This means being clear that we will prioritise:

- Nations and regions where the College has strong and existing collaborations – such as India, sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East and North Africa
- Nations and regions where there will be a strong appetite for charitable services that can be delivered on a sustainable basis – such as India, China and the Middle East and North Africa
- Nations and regions that have resource limitations where the College can add value through volunteer work - such as sub-Saharan Africa.

Under the new model, we will:

- Strive to be carbon neutral
- Ensure that our international strategy is properly resourced, including having a dedicated staff lead and Member lead responsible for its delivery.
- Ensure that the staff lead and Member lead will report to the Board of Trustees on an annual basis as to the efficacy of the international strategy and include a summary of the success of the roll out of the international strategy in each annual report.

- Ensure new services offered under the international strategy are evidence led
- Ensure all international workstreams are run according to sound project management principles, in general, and the College's project management methodology, in particular
- Ensure that all international workstreams, including visits by Senior Officers, are in line with the overall international strategy
- Only adopt new workstreams where a business case has been presented to the RCPsych International Advisory Committee and signed off by the Senior Management Team and Finance Management Committee
- Manage expectations (internally and externally) around our capacity to deliver international projects
- Prioritise the need to build sustainable models in emerging economies in order to support volunteering work, in low-and-middle income nations
- De-commission activity which has little or no focus, or does not meet our strategic aims  
Resist the temptation to scale-up activities or initiatives prematurely before they have been properly piloted and assessed
- Resist 'scope creep' – the temptation to take on projects and pursue initiatives which are not specifically linked to achieving our strategy
- Ensure that we can add value in a sustainable way.
- Seek out partnerships with suitable appropriate stakeholders, such as health ministries, national psychiatric associations, international psychiatric associations, universities, third sector mental health organisations and NGOs
- Ensure that all new international work is evaluated, and key learning is shared with all stakeholders

Under the new model, we will not:

- Take on projects that are not specifically linked to achieving our strategy or expose us or our members to undue risk
- Knowingly place the people we support in significant personal danger, or
- Breach the Foreign and Commonwealth Office policies and recommendations.

#### **4. Principles for volunteering**

Many RCPsych members are already involved in international volunteer work and have an interest in and passion for the sharing of knowledge and skills at a global level. Existing links with NHS Trusts, NGOs and national psychiatric associations and Ministries of Health result in our members spending time supporting and training personnel in many different countries.

The RCPsych Volunteer Scheme captures some of this work but is not sufficiently resourced to effectively capitalise on the energy and expertise of our members – with the result that only around 15 members take part in the scheme every year.

By aligning the work of our existing Volunteer Scheme with an overarching international strategy, we can utilise the skills, knowledge and expertise of our members and partners to best effect and use income generating projects mostly delivered in emerging economies, to subsidise the work delivered by volunteers.

A code of conduct will be created to ensure the work of volunteers is delivered to internationally recognised standards and the College will advocate the benefits of volunteering both for individuals and their employers.

All new project ideas will need to be presented, through a clear business case, to the RCPsych International Advisory Committee, as well as receiving sign off from the Senior Management Team and the Board of Trustees.

The business cases will need to show that the projects:

- Are respectful of the peoples, laws and cultures in the relevant regions and nations
- Are accepted by local health ministries and health professionals
- Have sufficient 'buy-in' from local partners to be sustainable
- Have considered and identified training needs and gaps in services
- Are aligned with our international strategy and are carried out within the priority regions and/or countries
- Have clear deliverables that are measurable and realistic and manage the expectations of all parties
- Are human rights based
- Will include a formal evaluation
- Demonstrate that they meet the values of the international strategy
- Do not expose our members to unacceptable risk.

Where volunteer projects do not meet these criteria, the College will not provide resources.

To guard against mission creep, existing projects will be evaluated on an annual basis, by the RCPsych Senior Management Team and International Advisory Committee, to ensure that they continue to meet the criteria and have not grown or changed from the initial purpose of the project

## 5. Priority regions and nations for our services

<b>What</b>	<b>Where</b>	<b>Why</b>
Expand our volunteer scheme, from around 15 to 100 members a year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sub-Saharan Africa</li> <li>• India</li> <li>• Myanmar</li> <li>• (Other territories to be considered using existing principles and to be signed off by IAC, SMT and Trustees)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To share best practice in low-and-middle income countries</li> <li>• To provide opportunities for members, who want to donate their time to services in low-and-middle income countries</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To upskill mental health provision in low-and-middle income countries.</li> <li>• To share learning from those working in low resource settings</li> <li>• To roll out base line funded College support to low-and-middle income countries.</li> </ul>
Continue to run our existing MRCPsych Exam Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ireland</li> <li>• Oman</li> <li>• Malta</li> <li>• Hong Kong</li> <li>• Singapore</li> <li>• India</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building on existing success of international exam development</li> <li>• Strong partnerships already in place</li> <li>• Postgraduate training follows a similar model to UK training, making the MRCPsych appropriate and practical for trainees</li> <li>• Allows service delivery through sustainable financial model.</li> </ul>
Expanded CASC capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India</li> <li>• A Nation (TBC) accessible to Middle Eastern and African trainees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support the next generation of members</li> <li>• Build on existing success of international exam</li> <li>• Strong partnerships already in place</li> <li>• Postgraduate training follows a similar model to UK training, making the MRCPsych appropriate and practical for trainees</li> <li>• Allows service delivery through sustainable financial model.</li> </ul>
Explore opportunities to develop tiered qualifications for mental health workers, including an RCPsych International Certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India</li> <li>• China</li> <li>• Sub-Saharan Africa</li> <li>• Middle East and North Africa</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support professional development of the frontline mental health workforce in under-resourced setting</li> <li>• Share evidence-based knowledge and skills</li> <li>• Already have interest from potential partners</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows service delivery through sustainable financial model.</li> </ul>
Expansion of Train the Trainer Courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Middle East and North Africa</li> <li>• Sub-Saharan Africa</li> <li>• India</li> <li>• China</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build on success of existing volunteer projects</li> <li>• Sustainable model for improving skills and knowledge</li> <li>• Already have interest from potential partners</li> <li>• Allows service delivery through sustainable or base line funded financial model, depending on the nation.</li> </ul>
Clinical skills training courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• China</li> <li>• Middle East and North Africa</li> <li>• Sub-Saharan Africa</li> <li>• China</li> <li>• India</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share evidence based best practice</li> <li>• Already have interest from potential partners</li> <li>• Allows service delivery through sustainable financial model.</li> </ul>
Expansion of training courses for trainees (e.g. CASC training)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India</li> <li>• Oman</li> <li>• Malta</li> <li>• Hong Kong</li> <li>• Singapore</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the next generation of Members</li> <li>• Share evidence based best practice</li> <li>• Training is already being requested by trainees</li> <li>• Allows service delivery through sustainable financial model.</li> </ul>
Roll out International events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India</li> <li>• Middle East and North Africa</li> <li>• Far East</li> <li>• Sub-Saharan Africa</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support international members with their professional development</li> <li>• Share evidence based best practice</li> <li>• Large membership base or,</li> <li>• Strong links with potential partners</li> <li>• Allows service delivery through sustainable financial model.</li> </ul>
Further develop the MTI Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UK</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support international trainees to further their</li> </ul>

		<p>medical education in the UK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support UK NHS services</li> <li>• Facilitate learning within UK services from ideas generated in other nations</li> <li>• Engage with international psychiatrists and develop a network of ambassadors</li> <li>• Allows for generation of sustainable funding.</li> </ul>
Increase promotion of quality networks, offering standards-based quality assurance and review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worldwide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help drive up standards and quality in mental health services around the world</li> <li>• To generate sustainable funding.</li> </ul>
Develop evidence-based mental health clinical guidelines and mental health care pathways in country-specific context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worldwide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help drive up standards and quality in mental health services around the world</li> <li>• To generate sustainable funding.</li> </ul>
Continue to give guidance to patients on various conditions via our mental health information materials (many translated in other languages) which are promoted via our website.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worldwide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To give patients, carers, psychiatrists and other mental health staff access to high-quality evidence-based information</li> <li>• To maintain the reputation of the RCPsych as a world leader in mental health information and advocacy</li> <li>• To deliver base line funded evidence-based mental health information</li> </ul>
Consider translating RCPsych books and journals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• China</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To share mental health research as widely as possible</li> </ul>

Improve the joining process for international members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worldwide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To create a better membership experience</li> </ul>
Expand our international membership to include medical students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worldwide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To encourage medical students to choose psychiatry</li> <li>To improve all medical student's knowledge of psychiatry</li> </ul>
Continue to support the advocacy of parity of esteem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worldwide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To maintain the reputation of the RCPsych as a world leader in mental health information and advocacy</li> <li></li> </ul>
Continue to support our International Divisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worldwide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To engage with psychiatrists locally</li> </ul>
We will closely track the roll out of our expanded international strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure that the income generated by the sustainably-funded workstreams generate enough income to fund an expanded</li> <li></li> </ul>

## 6. Key performance indicators for our international strategy – mapped against the College strategic objectives 2019-20

### Strategic Objective 1: *Delivering education and training, and promoting research in psychiatry*

#### MRCPsych exam

- We will continue to run the MRCPsych exam centres in Ireland, Oman, Singapore, Malta, Hong Kong and India. (Sustainably-funded)
- We will explore the possibility of delivering the Clinical Assessment of Skills and Competencies (CASC), at an exam centre in India, as well as Paper A and Paper B. (Sustainably-funded)
- We will explore the possibility of delivering the CASC at an exam centre, in a country accessible to Middle Eastern and African trainee psychiatrists. (Sustainably-funded)

### **RCPsych International Certificate**

- We will explore opportunities to develop tiered qualifications for mental health workers, including an RCPsych International Certificate for mental health professionals, including psychiatric nurses, with an emphasis on India, China and sub-Saharan African and Middle East and North African countries. (Sustainably-funded)

### **Train the Trainer**

- We will use internationally recognised quality materials – for example the World Health Organisation Mental Health Gap Action Programme (mhGAP) curriculum – locally to train those delivering mental health care on the ground, who – in turn – will be able to train their teams, with an emphasis on China, the Middle East and North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, China and India. (Sustainably-funded or base line funded as appropriate).

### **Training courses**

- We will deliver, overseas, local skills-based training – such as in research skills or Dementia Care – tailored to the needs of the local health workforce and utilising the expertise of our Faculties, with an emphasis on China, the Middle East and North Africa, India and Sub Saharan Africa (Sustainably-funded)
- We will deliver training courses to support international trainees, including those who are working towards taking the MRCPsych, in all countries where our exam is delivered; India, Oman, Malta, Hong Kong and Singapore (Sustainably-funded).

### **Events**

- We will develop a series of overseas conferences and events for psychiatrists and other members of the mental health team – particularly in India, the Middle East and North Africa, the Far East and sub-Saharan Africa – to meet the needs of local mental health services (Sustainably-funded).

## **Strategic Objective 2: *Promoting recruitment and retention in psychiatry***

### **MTI Scheme**

- We will develop the RCPsych Medical Training Initiative (MTI) to Support international trainees to further their medical education in the UK Whilst also supporting UK NHS services. The scheme will Facilitate learning within UK services from ideas generated in other nations and will engage with international psychiatrists and develop a network of ambassadors (Sustainably-funded).

### **International Medical Students**

- We will consider establishing a membership grade for international medical students to encourage recruitment into psychiatry and to increase knowledge of the specialty for all medical students

## **Strategic Objective 3: *Improving standards and quality across psychiatry and wider mental health services, and support the prevention of mental ill health***

### **Quality Networks**

- We will proactively promote our quality networks that set standards and review services using self and peer-review to help drive up standards and quality in mental health services around the world (Sustainably-funded)

### **Clinical Guidelines and Pathways**

- We will proactively promote the uptake of evidence-based mental health clinical guidelines and mental health care pathways around the world (Sustainably-funded)

### **Volunteering**

- We will expand our volunteer scheme, in close collaboration with our Volunteering and International Psychiatry Special Interest Group (VIPSIG), with a target of linking 100 members, a year, who want to donate their time to services in low-and-middle income countries, that need specialist training with a particular focus on Sub-Saharan Africa, India, Myanmar (and other territories as appropriate ) (base line funded).

### **Books and Journals**

- We will explore the possibility of translating RCPsych books and journals for territories where medical education is not delivered in English with a particular focus on China (sustainably funded)

## **Strategic Objective 4: *Being the voice of psychiatry***

### **Advocacy**

- We will continue to support the advocacy of parity of esteem worldwide, through our membership of the World Psychiatric Association (WPA); the European Psychiatric Association/National Psychiatric Associations Committee (EPA); and the European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS) – Psychiatry section and Child and Adolescent Psychiatry section (base line funded)

### **Mental Health Information**

- We will continue to give guidance to patients on various conditions via our mental health information materials, which are promoted via our website (base line funded).

**Strategic Objective 5: *Supporting psychiatrists to achieve their professional potential, by providing an excellent member experience***

**International Divisions**

- We will continue to support our International Divisions to engage with psychiatrists locally (Sustainably-funded)
- We will improve the joining process, so that new members can join the College through a single, continuous online journey (sustainably funded)

**Strategic Objective 6: *Ensuring the effective management of resources, and delivering excellent employee experience, to deliver agreed priorities***

- We will will closely track the roll out of our expanded international strategy, to ensure that the income generated by the sustainably-funded workstreams generate enough income to fund an expanded volunteer scheme. Reports on how effectively we are using our resources will be shared and discussed at the RCPsych International Advisory Committee and at the Trustee Board at appropriate intervals. .

## **7. Conclusion**

Our international strategy is means of focussing the RCPsych’s attention and resources on the geographical and thematic areas in which our expertise and voice can be most effective in improving global mental health outcomes, and ensuring sustainability for an expanding volunteer scheme.

Our ability to achieve this ambition relies on the collaboration of our members, staff and partners.

Together we can be part of the solution.

**March 2020**