



## Spirituality and Psychiatry Special Interest Group (SPSIG)

### Annual Report to Council 2017

#### Activities

During 2017 the SPSIG has held the following meetings/events:

Date	Venue/Location	Subject/purpose of meeting/nos of attendees
8/12/17	RCPsych London	Day conference. Bringing Compassion into mental health care. 121 attendees
28/6/17	RCPsych international congress session	The intersection of spirituality and mental health among diverse and disadvantaged populations.
21/4/17	RCPsych London	Day conference. Silent Prejudice: Stigma, spirituality and mental health. 100 attendees.

#### Background

We have 3431 members and have been running for 18 years. The SPSIG was set up to provide a forum for psychiatrists to explore the influence of the major religions that shape the cultural values and aspirations of psychiatrist and patient alike. The SIG is a disparate group. Whilst we can all agree that there is more to life than just what we can taste, touch and measure, and that spiritual practices are important in our own lives, our worldviews differ; the executive committee (exec) has members of all the major religions and of none. Hence the SIG rarely takes a position on specific issues, we agree to disagree and use our conferences to explore our different approaches and our common ground, stimulating discussion and promoting an integrative approach to mental health care. Now more than ever people need to rediscover the resources that the great spiritual traditions offer to sustain and nurture the spirit of the caregiver under the tremendous pressure of the modern NHS.

## Executive Committee

The SPSIG Executive Committee comprises:

Name	Role
Alison Gray	Chair
Chris Findlay	Financial Officer
Lucy Grimwade	Secretary
Jo Barber	Service user rep
Andrew Clark	
Chris Cook	
Simon Dein	
Sarah Eagger	
Paramabandhu Groves	
Sophie Thomson	
Chetna Kang	
Andrew Powell	
Russell Razzaque	
Nick Hallett	Trainee rep
Hashim Reza	
Glória Durá Vilá	

## Commentary

Our objectives for 2017 were to run two day conferences. This we achieved with more than 100 attending each day, and positive feedback from both events. The SIG helped develop a session for the international congress, which was well attended.

The 2017 essay prize was won by Calum Miller for his essay "A case for informing patients of the mental health benefits of religion."

Sebastian Turner has sadly left the SPSIG executive committee to focus on research work. We have welcomed Hashim Reza and Glória Durá Vilá to the exec.

Exec member and past SIG chair Chris Cook played a significant role in developing the World Psychiatric Association Position statement on Spirituality and Religion in Psychiatry.

[http://www.wpanet.org/detail.php?section\\_id=8&content\\_id=1821](http://www.wpanet.org/detail.php?section_id=8&content_id=1821)

We produced two newsletters (published on the College website), and more details of the events over the last year together with book reviews can be found there.

## **Objectives for 2018.**

We plan to organise two day conferences in 2018. In March we shall discuss spiritual assessments and boundary issues (this will deliberately be a small, practical conference, capped at 50 college members/fellows, to enable deeper sharing). In November we shall consider the medicalization of unhappiness.

We acknowledge that our conferences are London centred; we are trying to identify local groups around the country to work with to develop regional day-programs that the SIG exec can endorse and support, in order to widen access to our discussions and teaching.

**Alison Gray, FRCPsych**

**Spirituality and Psychiatry SIG Chair**

**Date 14/12/17**