Chair's Monthly Activity Log

September 2019

Membership and Trainees:

3 September: RCPsych NI Manager Emma Allen attended a Leadership and Coaching Away Day held in London, delivered by Values Based Leadership, together with other RCPsych Division and Devolved Nation Managers.

5 September: RCPsych NI staff took part via Skype in a Staff Briefing led by College Chief Executive Paul Rees in relation to the Staff Benefits Review.

5 & 6 September: Drs Laura Somerville, Amy Grimason and Fiona Martin headed the local attendance at the Annual Psychiatric Trainees’ Committee (PTC) meeting which came to Belfast and was held in the City’s Hilton Hotel. Over 30 Committee members from across the UK were welcomed to Belfast and discussed ongoing PTC led projects and set an agenda for the year ahead. They were also addressed by both the College’s Dean Dr Kate Lovett (pictured below) and Treasurer Dr Jan Falkowski, who gave an update on examination costs. Chief Examiner Dr Ian Hall
spoke about proposed changes to the MRCPsych exams, including introduction of very short answer questions and role player marking in the CASC - which generated a lot of discussion and will continue to be developed centrally. Laura commented: "There are a number of exciting projects being undertaken this year, including the pilot of ‘Workplace’, an app to improve Trainee engagement, with Northern Ireland being one of two regions leading on this.”

5 September: RCPsych NI Manager Emma Allen represented us locally via teleconference at a Central College Wellbeing at Work Forum.

8 September: Dr Séamus Mac Suibhne (Sweeney) (October 21st, 1978 – September 8th, 2019), died in a fall on the Comeragh Mountains. He was a widely admired psychiatrist, writer and scholar whose contributions ranged from psychiatric care to Greek philosophy - and from medical education to new technology in clinical care. He gained membership of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in 2006 (winning the Standish-Barry Prize). A Tribute was published in The Irish Times.

11 September: The new Academic Year saw the CT1 Class resume in Clifton House – and first Tutors in attendance were Drs Stephen Moore and Dearbhail Lewis. The new year group were welcomed to the College.

12 September: Emma Allen and Thomas McKeever took part in a Matrix Management Meeting by tele-conference with College Director of Strategic Communications Kim Catcheside, College Head of Policy and Campaigns George
Roycroft and College Head of Devolved Nations & Divisions Elen Cook - which focused on the upcoming RCPsych NI Strategy internal meeting and the joint Policy work partnership with the British Psychological Society NI Branch, Action Mental Health and Inspire Wellbeing.

18 September: Dr Julie Anderson spent the morning in Clifton House meeting individually the new ST4s in General Adult Psychiatry.

18 September: Dr Julie Anderson was back in Clifton House this afternoon teaching the CT1s who we host each Wednesday for their MRCPsych Course. The topic was Psychopathology.

18 September: RCPsych NI Manager Emma Allen (pictured right below) attended Queen’s University Belfast Medical Freshers Fair to promote our Choose Psychiatry campaign, assisted at our stand by Patricia Vinchenzo (pictured left below) of QUB Mind Matters. Afterwards Patricia said: "I feel I have lost my voice following my loud declarations of Choose Psychiatry at this important recruitment event! I am delighted that there will be a local College Choose Psychiatry event in January."

26 September: The College published Guidance for Medical Schools as part of its Choose Psychiatry campaign. Dr Damien Hughes, Head of School of Psychiatry,
NIMDTA, said: “This guidance is most welcome and will undoubtedly provide a framework for us as we continue with our efforts to further embed Psychiatry in the Undergraduate Medical Curriculum at Queen’s University Belfast.”

**External Affairs**

**4 September:** RCPsych NI Manager Emma Allen met with School Principals from West Belfast in St Clare’s Primary School, Cupar Street, Belfast to discuss the potential roll out of CRASH mental health for teachers. CRASH is an innovative awareness training programme developed and delivered by our Chair of Public Engagement Committee Dr Maggie McGurgan.

**5 September:** Dr Vivian Sing (*pictured below speaking and below left on the Panel*) represented the College as Guest Speaker at a joint event organised by local Charity Aware and the Recovery College, which was held at St Mark’s Parish Centre, Newtownards this evening and entitled “Let’s Talk about Depression and Recovery.” Tom McEneaney, Aware’s Head of Business Development afterwards said: “We would like to say a big thank you to Vivian for delivering a very interesting and comprehensive talk on Depression at our event in Newtownards. It is very much appreciated.” Vivian reflected: “It was my honour to represent the College at this event as part of the effort to reduce the stigma of mental illness. It was both very enjoyable and insightful.”
25 September: Dr Laura Somerville (pictured below right), one of our Trainee representatives, represented the College by speaking at the Aware and Kilcooley Women’s Centre jointly run ‘Let’s Talk Depression and Mental Health’ event, which was held in Bangor Aurora Aquatic and Leisure complex - as part of Bangor Cares week. RCPsych NI Manager Emma Allen also attended. Laura afterwards reflected: “I was delighted to be invited to speak at this event jointly run by Aware and Kilcooley Womens Centre, which was well attended by a very engaged audience including service users, carers and other professionals. It was great to hear from organisations in the voluntary sector who are providing an excellent service and support to those in need. The presentations were followed by a panel Q&A, which led to lively discussion on key issues such as barriers to accessing services, links between physical and mental health, and how the current political situation has impacted health service provision and the wider public.”
26 September: Dr Chris Sharkey (pictured below) spoke on Depression and Cancer at the annual Regional Cancer CNS Conference in Dunsilly Hotel Antrim at the request of MacMillan Partnership (working in association with the Northern Ireland Cancer Network and the Public Health Agency), who had heard Chris speak at a previous Aware event. Afterwards Chris reflected: "I was honoured to receive the chance to present a talk on mental health and cancer, with a focus on depression, at this event. I was joined by two very courageous survivors (Gary and Leanne) who have each suffered from both cancer and depression. Both delivered very touching inspirational talks highlighting the personal journey each had travelled – and it was having this lived experience in the room which very much made what I had to say more personable and relatable. I hope to continue to raise awareness of mental health issues and look forward to working further with our colleagues within Cancer services and other medical areas of expertise. I hope in a small way this can help reduce the stigma which works against people openly talking about mental illness, an issue that affects us all in healthcare."

Media:

4 September: RCPsych NI Manager Emma Allen and RCPsych NI Co-ordinator Barry Flynn met with our Chair of Perinatal Faculty Dr Julie Anderson in Clifton
House to discuss developments regarding a potential Perinatal Campaign event and documentary with UTV.

**Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016:**

**5 September:** Policy Officer Thomas McKeever attended the Law Society’s Elder Law Group’s Seminar in Law Society House, Victoria Street, Belfast on the Phase 1 commencement of the Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016 – ie the Deprivation of Liberty sections and their implications for the Mental Health Review Tribunal (to be soon renamed the Review Tribunal) – which was addressed by Tomas Adell (DoH) and Clare Irvine (DoJ). Afterwards Thomas commented: "This was a very useful and timely walk (from DoH) through the incoming Deprivation of Liberty sections of the 2016 Act in terms of definition, safeguards, additional safeguards, criteria, principles, protection from liability, capacity test, authorisation, extension, short term detention, longer term detention, Trust Panel authorisation/workings/responsibilities – as well as (from DoJ) through the Tribunal’s renaming and its jurisdiction being extended to hearing appeals for Deprivation of Liberty under the 2016 Act - in addition to the continuation of its role dealing with applications under the Mental Health (NI) Order 1986. The urgent need for our Members to take up positions on the Review Tribunal, especially given the anticipated growth in the number of Tribunal cases resulting from these developments, was expressed by a representative in attendance from the NI Judicial Appointments Commission - and the recent competition aimed at our Members has unfortunately been undersubscribed again in this regard. The workload and Contract situation for Consultants was pointed to as a probable cause leading to this effect.”

**6 September:** Chair of Old Age Psychiatry Faculty Dr Conor Barton, as College representative, attended the HSC Clinical Education Centre, Clady Villa, Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Belfast to advise on Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Scenarios.

**9 September:** Dr Conor Barton, as College representative, reviewed the notes made pertaining to a ‘Train the Trainer’ session held in late August by the HSC Clinical Education Centre, Clady Villa, Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Belfast - to advise on the formal assessment of capacity aspect of their Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards training.

**17 September:** A Members’ Briefing Session was held in Clifton House on the imminent (at that stage) commencement on 1 October 2019 (since changed to 2 December 2019) of the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards under the Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016 (MCA). Presentations were delivered by Tomas Adell (DoH) on those MCA provisions which are going live and from Clare Irvine (DoJ) on the implications of that development for the newly named (from 1 October) Review
Tribunal (formerly known as the Mental Health Review Tribunal). These were followed by informal inputs from Andy Millar from Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission (NIJAC) to reinforce the need for our Members to apply to sit on the Tribunal and from Rosaline Kelly (pictured below) from Clinical Education Centre (CEC) to explain the Training on offer initially from CEC - and how it will work in 2020 within the Trusts themselves. The event was oversubscribed and was organised in response to current anxieties among Members about the issues surrounding the commencement. Afterwards Dr Gerry Lynch said: "My sincere thanks goes to Tomas, Clare, Andy and Rosaline for generously giving of their time and energy to address Members here at Clifton House in relation to the introduction of DoLS and also its implications in terms of the Review Tribunal, Tribunal recruitment and overall training. I know it was arranged at very short notice and went on quite late, so their commitment to us is really appreciated, especially given the multiple pressures on their time as implementation date fast approaches. The meeting demonstrated some anxieties across the profession and I think that the different Speaker contributions were of great assistance in that regard and hopefully the feedback from Members was useful as well. We as a College are committed to strive to ensure that this long-awaited legislation works in patients’ and clients’ interests. We look forward to other meetings as the implementation process continues."

Department of Health:

6 September: General Adult Faculty Chair Dr Rowan McClean represented the College and Dr Gerry Lynch at the next in a series of DoH Briefings on the
Implementation of the Hyponatraemia Inquiry Recommendations, held at Castle Buildings, Stormont. Rowan afterwards confirmed that among the matters explained were the several workstreams and sub-groups taking forward the individual recommendations of the Inquiry Report, with particular focus on the Duty of Candour workstream and the Workshops on that topic which have been convened through this group involving the 5 Trusts. All the workstreams will generate proposed recommendations for future practice. It was highlighted that notes from workstream meetings and some of the proposed recommendations are included on the Department of Health website.

**10 September:** On this Year’s World Suicide Prevention Day, the DoH published the long awaited Protect Life 2 Strategy – which includes reference to the Towards Zero Suicide initiative, to which Chair Dr Gerry Lynch has extensively contributed, representing the College.

**17 September:** Drs Gerry Lynch and Michael Doherty, along with Thomas McKeever, attended the All-Party Group on Suicide Prevention meeting at Ulster University, York Street, Belfast - which linked up by Skype to the main meeting held at Ulster University, Magee, chaired by Orlaithi Flynn MLA. The meeting comprised a presentation from Department of Health officials Bryan Dooley and Sholto Carnew on ‘Protect Life 2 Suicide Prevention Strategy’, which had been published by DoH on 10 September - and also a presentation from Professor Siobhan O’Neill on ‘Research & Suicide Prevention’. Afterwards, Thomas McKeever contacted DoH to seek a College seat on the Project Board which will seek to implement the Protect Life 2 Strategy and their response has been positive.
NI Assembly:
There is nothing to report this month, with Devolution not yet restored.

Faculty and Committee Business:

11 September: Addictions Faculty met in Clifton House, chaired by Dr Billy Gregg. Matters discussed included Guidance re Tier 3 - Tier 4 interfaces, College response to Pre-Consultation to seek views on a Successor Strategy to The New Strategic Direction for Alcohol & Drugs Phase 2, Service Drivers towards integrating Primary and Secondary Care Services, concerns about the unmet needs of young people under 18 years old with complex substance use disorder and often complex comorbidities – as well as practical implications for Addiction Services relating to the prescribing of Buvidal®, an injectable opioid substitute treatment.

13 September: SAS and Affiliates met in Clifton House, chaired by Dr Liz Dawson. Among the Agenda items discussed were feedback on the June SAS Conference, future events, SAS Tutors, StartWell, PLAB, Pay Review, Mentoring, Awards and MCA Training -as well as issues to be raised from Northern Ireland at the National SAS Group meeting on 23 September.

16 September: Our Chair of Perinatal Faculty Dr Julie Anderson attended the Executive Committee of the Central Perinatal Faculty meeting in Central College, London. Afterwards Julie reflected: “This was an opportunity to hear about ongoing developments in Specialist Perinatal Services in GB. In addition, I was able to feedback from Northern Ireland about the recent business case for ringfenced money for the development of local specialist services, the ongoing lobbying and media interest in this, along with the ongoing training for staff.”

18 September: General Adult Faculty Chair Dr Rowan McClean and Chair of the General Adult Faculty’s recently formed Adult ADHD Forum Dr Ryan O’Neill met with Manager Emma Allen to plan our focus on the Adult ADHD issue. Afterwards Emma reflected: “The need for data on transition from CAMHS and on new referrals was discussed. Also discussed was the sobering reality that it is believed that currently there are rising numbers of ADHD child patients, who in due course will become adults - all of which emphasises the need for appropriate succession planning for transition from Child/Adolescent services into Adult services. Finally, the hope was expressed that with data secured, a business case might follow to seek a dedicated service for Adult ADHD. A further meeting on this is planned for November.”

20 September: Child and Adolescent Faculty Chair Dr Richard Wilson chaired a Faculty meeting in Clifton House. Afterwards Richard reflected: "We had a good turnout at our Faculty Meeting. We were delighted to meet Emma Allen, our new RCPsych NI Manager....Emma’s background in Education and her interest in Young
People’s Mental Health will be a great resource for our Faculty! Business is certainly booming with our once in a generation hosting of the UK College Annual Scientific Conference planned for the ICC Waterfront on Thursday 26th & Friday 27th September….we are looking forward to welcoming our English, Scottish and Welsh colleagues to Belfast for a high quality academic experience. We also continued to refine the Programme for our CAP/RCPsych collaboration …‘Growing Pains’ is next year’s theme and Professor Mike Shooter, past President of the College, has kindly agreed to deliver the keynote address. Other essential business included discussion on the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards’ implementation in October, the Regional Managed Network, the Review of Acute Services, Manpower and training issues. It always impresses me that we can get through so much in a morning with such positive and measurable results.”

25 September: Chair Dr Gerry Lynch held his Quarterly meeting with the Medical Managers. The main agenda items were separate presentations both from Vice Chair Dr Michael Doherty and also from Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission’s (NIJAC) Chief Executive Tonya McCormac along with their Assistant Director of Judicial Appointments Andrew Millar. Michael explained a draft Guideline document as regards blood tests and interventions carried out by Mental Health services - which was initially developed (but not progressed at the time) by Dr David Ross GP, Michael and Stephen Bergin – which it is now hoped will be worked on by the College along with RCGP NI – and then proceed to a pilot of same involving 4 Belfast Federations and Belfast Trust. The NIJAC representatives discussed the crisis in recruitment of Psychiatrists to the Review Tribunal and what might be impacting on this from within Trust services.

Sharing Best Practice and Quality Improvement:

13 September: We provided comments to the College Policy and Public Affairs Editorial Board in relation to their draft College Position Statement on the role of Liaison Psychiatry in integrated physical and mental healthcare, prior to its final sign off and publication. The feedback was provided by Dr Jo Minay with her analysis shared by Dr Catherine Taggart.

16 September: Chair Dr Gerry Lynch was in Antrim representing the College at the Towards Zero Suicide Regional Collaborative meeting - who as a group are trying to instigate a regional and consistent approach to safety planning. Gerry later commented: “Geraldine McDonnell (pictured below) led a very engaged audience on how we incorporate meaningful safety planning into our services.”
18-21 September: Dr Gerry Lynch attended the 30th World Congress of the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP 2019) which was being held in Derry-Londonderry from 17th-21st September 2019. The theme for IASP 2019 was “Breaking Down Walls and Building Bridges”, a theme that not only resonates with the landmarks in the host City, but also reflects the work done in suicide prevention and building hope for those in crisis. Gerry later commented: “This was a very successful event which featured much research from all over the world. Professor Siobhan O’Neill from Ulster University (pictured below) gave a keynote presentation addressing the issues of the high suicide rate here in Northern Ireland and of the high levels of trauma. There was much discussion of the zero suicide movement; even its strongest proponents were clear that it is an aspiration rather than a target. Much of the research focused on suicide and suicide attempts as a specific behaviour which is independent of particular diagnoses.”
23 September: We submitted today our response to the HSCB Consultation on the Regional Trauma Network Service Delivery Model and Equality Impact Assessment. The author of this response was Chair, Dr Gerry Lynch, who said: "This was a targeted Consultation with chosen stakeholders, so we were pleased to have been asked to contribute to same."

24 September: Our new Mental Health Policy Group (NI) (pictured below), which comprises the College, British Psychological Society NI Branch (BPS NI), Action Mental Health (AMH) and Inspire Wellbeing - met at Clifton House with representatives of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) – specifically with their Director of Analysis Dr Tracy Power and her colleague Eugene Mooney who is based with a team in DoH. Present were College Chair and Vice Chair respectively Drs Gerry Lynch and Michael Doherty, Policy Officer Thomas McKeever and Manager Emma Allen, as well as College Data Analysis and Research Manager Sam Hunt – Professor Nichola Rooney as BPS NI Chair, David Babington as Chief Executive of AMH – and Lisa McElherron Group Director of Insight and Engagement for Inspire Wellbeing. Afterwards Gerry commented: "The intention was to ascertain if anything can be done by NISRA regarding mental health data. Currently, the absence of reliable data hinders analysis of performance and hence Quality Improvement targets and priorities here. The meeting was really useful as it appears that there may be data of major interest to us which, whilst difficult to access, is there – so NISRA will meet with us again and present a bespoke workshop to our Group – and Sam will in advance of that interrogate what may be available to inform the workshop. We also decided on the above name for the Group - and at our next meeting will sign off on our strapline and our 4 asks – one for each Group member to lead on. The College will lead on Data."
25 September: College Chief Executive Paul Rees visited RCPsych NI where he met with both officers and staff. During the day, he was given a tour of the peaceline by Co-ordinator Barry Flynn and of St Patrick’s Chapel by Vice Chair Dr Michael Doherty. His busy day of Belfast engagements was rounded off by him giving an insightful presentation on current College achievements, developments and plans - to the members of the Devolved Council who met (pictured below right) in the afternoon in Clifton House - chaired and also addressed by Chair Dr Gerry Lynch and Manager Emma Allen (all pictured below left). The busy Executive agenda itself included the 2020 CPD, Events and Conference Programme, the 2020 Business Plan, budget and strategy, the new arrangements for Patient and Carer engagement, Devolved Nation status update, the new Mental Health Policy Group (NI), Mental Health and Deafness and the Towards Zero Suicide initiative.

25 September: There was a strong attendance at our Masterclass held in Clifton House led by our Forensic Faculty Chair Dr Adrian East on the topic: ‘Patients Concerned in Criminal Proceedings or Under Sentence’. Adrian delivered a comprehensive overview - dealing with Part III of the Mental Health (NI) Order 1986 and Part 10 of the Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016, Guidance for Expert Witnesses issued by the College, BMA and also GMC, Unfitness to Stand Trial and Insanity Defences, Disposals in terms of Absolute Discharge, Hospital Order (or Guardianship), Supervision and Treatment Order – as well as Prisoners in terms of Hospital Remands, Transfer of Remand Prisoners and of Sentenced Prisoners.

26-27 September: Central CAMHS annual scientific meeting was held in the ICC Belfast Waterfront Hall. Among those attending locally were our Chair of Child and Adolescent Faculty Dr Richard Wilson who afterwards reflected: “The Conference was fantastic and surpassed all our expectations. It offered high academic quality, reflective space for professional recharging, an inspirational Keynote Lecture from Dr Tony Macaulay on the challenges to recovery and repair from conflict and division in Northern Ireland and the wider world…..I could go on. Thanks to all who planned, delivered and supported this event and especially to Professor Helen Minnis, Dr Bernadka Dubicka, Catherine Ayres and Emma Allen who were a delight and joy to work with. My further thanks for a nearly full Faculty turnout and to our Colleagues from GB and Ireland who were our honoured guests. Finally great praise and gratitude is owing to our Young People representatives who took part in the
Harkness Debate and in the Youth Services Seminar....their enthusiasm and wisdom hold out a beacon of optimism for the future.” RCPsych NI Chair Dr Gerry Lynch added: “At the subsequent College Council meeting which I attended, the Chair of the Central Child and Adolescent Faculty Dr Bernadka Dubicka specifically discussed the excellence and success of this meeting and the suitability of Belfast as a Conference venue; this augurs well for the General Adult Faculty Conference to be held here next year.”