Chair's Monthly Activity Log

January 2019

Sharing Best Practice and Quality Improvement:

8 & 9 January: Chair Dr Gerry Lynch attended a ‘Towards Zero Suicide’ event at Merseyside Foundation Trust on behalf of the College, as part of the ‘Towards Zero Suicide’ Collaborative. Afterwards, Gerry said: “The gains they have made have been to do with a relentless focus on staff engagement, collaborative working with service users and carers, as well as patient safety. Despite the ‘zero suicide’ title, it was clear that this is not a top down target driven initiative. Dr Rowan McClean and I sit on the Collaborative’s Project Board and we will keep members informed about the work of the Collaborative. This will also be a topic presented on by Claire Kerr (of Grangewood Acute Mental Health Inpatient Unit, Western Trust) and I at the College joint meeting with RQIA on 18 January at Assembly Buildings, Fisherwick Place, Belfast.”

15 January: Our Carer representative Noel McKenna attended and presented in Central College as a Carer of someone with Autism - at the Championing Autism Campaign training day for Psychiatrists in Central College. Noel’s contribution was part of the Neurodevelopmental Special Interest Group slot – at the invitation of Dr. Ian Davidson, who is the College Champion for Autism. Noel later said: “It was one of the very best training days about Autism I have ever attended; it was
18 January: RCPsych NI annual joint workshop event with the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority was held at Assembly Buildings, Fisherwick, Belfast. The event was addressed, among others, by Dr Gerry Lynch on Towards Zero Suicide. Other topics included ECT, Inspections’ Methodology, Mental Health (NI) Order 1986, Quality Improvement, Physical Healthcare for those with severe mental illness and Suicide Safety Plans. Changes in the Part 2 Appointment Process were introduced by Lourda Geoghegan. Feedback and attendance level overall was excellent.

23 January: RCPsych NI held the inaugural meeting of the new ADHD Working Group, which is chaired by Dr Ryan O’Neill and will work under the auspices of our General Adult Faculty. The hope is to chart a consensus regional approach to what a service for adult ADHD should look like – and so we had representatives of the 5 Trusts, CAMHS and Neurodevelopmental Psychiatry in attendance. Topics considered included the relative responsibilities of a specialist ADHD service and
generic services, policies for graduates from CAMHS and Paediatrics, prescribing responsibilities, an agreed view to take to the Commissioners in due course, service development and NICE Guidelines. It is hoped to hold a further meeting on 27 March.

30 January: Dr Gerry Lynch held his regular meeting with the Trust Medical Managers in Clifton House. Attending for the first time was Dr Peter Sloan, who was congratulated on his recent promotion to this role on behalf of Belfast Trust. Thanks were sent to his predecessor Dr Maria O’Kane for all her assistance over the years, as well as congratulations on her promotion to a new role in the Southern Trust. The College’s Head of Operations, Julian Ryder, phoned in to the meeting to discuss training NI Assessors to sit on Consultant Appointment Panels. As a result, it is hoped to run a half day course for this purpose on 4 April 2019. The majority of the meeting was spent on the topic of the increasing prevalence of requests for Financial Capacity Assessments - and Drs Barbara English, Conor Barton and Rowan McClean kindly attended to input the main concerns of members in this regard. It is hoped that, following some further work on this by Gerry, a collective consensus position on this can be agreed, which in turn would be clarified for members in due course. In the meantime, it was agreed that a word to take care and check first that you have Indemnity cover in place to do this work if asked, should be noted by all members.

31 January & 1 February: Our Perinatal Faculty organised and jointly hosted with the Public Health Agency the second in a series of 3 important 2 day Regional
Multidisciplinary Perinatal Mental Health Training events – this time in Lough Neagh Conference Centre, Oxford Island, Craigavon, Co Armagh - which was chaired by Drs Janine Lynch and Julie Anderson. Day 1 heard first the local perspectives of Psychiatry (Drs Peter Sloan and Julie Anderson), then from Dr Roch Cantwell (NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde) on risk and Dr Angelika Wieck (Greater Manchester and Eastern Cheshire) on Medication, followed by the perspectives of Clinical Psychology (Geraldine Scott-Heyes), Patient/Carer (Lindsay Robinson) and Health Visitor (Mary Duggan). Day 2 looked at the Midwifery perspective (Shona Hamilton), followed by the Social Work/Safeguarding aspect (Lelia Fitzsimons and Dr Janine Lynch) and Addiction Services’ (Dr Billy Gregg, our Chair of Addictions Faculty – pictured below) interfaces, as well as hearing finally from Dr Mary Short on Enhancing Mother Infant interactions. Feedback, as before, was extremely positive and a typical example would have been: “Great two day training session – best information event I have ever been to.” It is hoped to hold the third similar training session on 21 and 22 March. Afterwards, Perinatal Faculty Chair Dr Julie Anderson said: "In 2018, money was secured, through transformational funding, to provide regional perinatal mental health training. This was organised jointly by the Public Health Agency and the Royal College of Psychiatrists NI. This training has been targeted towards staff already working in the health service with women in the perinatal period, both to upskill staff in their current roles and also to begin to train a workforce to work in our future specialist perinatal mental health services when funding becomes available for this. The 2 day training package was delivered in Oct 2018 and also now in January 2019 (further dates planned for March 2019) by local experts in the field and by experts from across the water - along with vital input from individuals who have direct experience of perinatal mental illness in their own lives. So far around 120 multidisciplinary staff from across many professions in each of the 5 health and social care trusts have availed of the training. The feedback so far has been excellent and this is a further significant step forward in the development of specialist perinatal mental health services which our population in Northern Ireland require and deserve.”
Faculty and Committee Business:

9 January: Policy Lead Dr Peter Trimble attended (via Skype from Clifton House) the Central College Policy and Public Affairs Committee and reported in on local matters during the Devolved Nations’ agenda item. Other agenda items included Zero Suicide, Sodium Valproate and the Mental Health Act Review.

9 January: Academic Faculty met in Clifton House chaired by Dr Tony O’Neill.

17 January: Interim Manager Barry Flynn participated in the Central College Policy and Campaigns Liaison Group meeting by teleconference from Clifton House.

25 January: Our Psychiatry of Old Age Faculty jointly hosted with British Geriatrics Society NI a meeting looking at Dementia and Parkinsons at Riddel Hall, Stranmillis, Belfast. The event was very well supported with 76 delegates in attendance. Presentations were heard from Dr Joe Kane, Advanced Trainee (pictured below) and Dr Chris Southwell, Consultant Psychiatrist on the topics of Lewy Body Dementia and the Management of Parkinson’s Disease Disorder respectively. This was followed by Dr Seamus Kearney, Consultant Neurologist on Complications in Treating Parkinson’s Disease and Anne Agnew of HSCB in relation to the Patient Portal for those with Dementia.
**External Affairs:**

**10 January:** Child and Adolescent Faculty Chair Dr Richard Wilson attended, on behalf of the College, the ‘Taking the Initiative’ event organised by Action Mental Health at The Linen Suite, Mossley Mill, Newtownabbey. The purpose of the event was to showcase the impact, milestones and legacy of the Northern Area Mental Health initiative. Richard reflected; "The breadth of interest in this event from the many attendees including the NI Commissioner for Children and Young People, Schools, Mental Health Providers, Academics and Young People was striking and is to be welcomed – as it offers hope for an integrated approach to mental health improvement. This was an enjoyable event enlivened by great presentations from Young People and their workers from across Northern Ireland, who showcased their projects using a variety of media methods, including drama, film and artistic endeavour. There was good audience participation, including a thought provoking Quiz allowing each delegate to assess his or her own knowledge regarding youth mental health issues. (I only scored 9 out of 10, which shows room for improvement!)."

**24 January:** Child and Adolescent Faculty Chair Dr Richard Wilson attended the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health NI (RCPCH NI) event entitled ‘The State of Child Health Report 2017 – 2 Years On – Reception to examine progress made on its recommendations’ - at The Long Gallery, Parliament Buildings, Stormont, Belfast. Richard later reflected: "At this meeting, RCPCH NI presented a scorecard of progress revealing a somewhat stalled position for NI Child Health Policy, largely due to the continuing absence of our elected Executive, leading in turn to the non-development of policy centrally, leading in turn again to a lack of investment or funding for improvements. Despite this disappointing situation, the commitment to working together between statutory and voluntary sector agencies remains strong, evidenced by the wide range of attendees, including a large cohort of young people. ‘The Elephant in the Room’ project was especially interesting in its level of engagement, energy and realism. Lamentably few MLAs attended. The NI Commissioner for Children and Young People kept mental health at the forefront of her speech and it is clear that she sees the breadth of approach which is needed to advance improvements in thinking and action. Also clear is that she will take care to add the necessary depth to forward planning via wide consultation and integrated working, which is all most welcome. Most sad of all for me, unfortunately, was the total lack of progress in research capacity, which continues to be underinvested, when in fact it is central to service development and outcome evaluation. Let’s hope that the 2021 report will see more tangible progress towards better health and more rational approaches to providing services in a kinder, more human way.”

**25 January:** Dr Gerry Lynch attended the RCPsych Scotland Winter event in the Radisson Blu Hotel, Argyle Street, Glasgow at the invitation of RCPsych Scotland Chair Dr John Crichton. Afterwards, Gerry reflected: "I was delighted to be invited
to attend the Royal College of Psychiatrists Scotland Winter meeting. There were many fascinating presentations; especially interesting was the account (‘Caring for Doctors caring for Patients’) from Dame Denise Coia, GMC Wellbeing Review Chair, of her work in that role. The importance of a healthy working environment appears from her presentation to be a major feature of the work of the Review, which is to be welcomed. On a more clinical note, University of Glasgow’s Professor Daniel Smith's joint presentation with Dr Nagore Penades (‘Prescribing for Bipolar Disorder in Scotland: National Data Linkage Study’), of the strong evidence for the efficacy of Lithium, sparked a lively discussion as to why its use is decreasing in Scotland. I wonder if the same is happening here? There were also yoga taster sessions throughout the day, but I felt a bit overdressed to try them out!”

30 January: Vice Chair, Dr Michael Doherty attended an event which was entitled 'Equipping GPs with Mental Health Expertise': Report and Social Media Campaign Launch in the Long Gallery, Parliament Buildings, Belfast - at the invitation of #123GP Campaign. The overall aim of the #123GP campaign is to ensure that GPs are equipped with mental health expertise. The changes they are calling for are for all GP practices to be equipped with counsellors and mental health workers - and for all GPs to be trained in mental health and suicide prevention. Ms Orlaithi Flynn MLA, Chair of the All Party Group on Suicide Prevention acted as host for the event. Afterwards, Michael commented: “The campaign is supported by many organisations, including the RCGPNI. There was a very strong endorsement read out by their Chair, Dr Grainne Doran - and all political parties were represented.”

Membership and Trainees:

11 January: Dr Gerry Lynch and Interim Manager Barry Flynn attended the Meeting of Devolved Councils at Central College, London and Policy Officer Thomas McKeever phoned in from Clifton House. Terms of Reference and the new Press Officer role for the Devolved Nations were discussed, as well as feedback from the priorities for the 3 Nations. Gerry also attended the Council meeting in Central College.

11 January: Senior Trainee Focus Group met in Clifton House, with Dr Conor Barton deputizing for Dr Julie Anderson. The group was addressed by Dr Gerry Loughrey in relation to the development of Psychiatric Services in Northern Ireland over the last 30 years.

16 January: Class restarted in Clifton House for CT1s with Dr Conor Barton addressing Neuroanatomy.

22 January: Barry Flynn and Thomas McKeever took part in a Devolved Nations Staff Catch up with College Chief Executive Paul Rees, by tele conference from Clifton House.
**23 January:** Chair Dr Gerry Lynch met in Clifton House with Poet, Bill McKnight to discuss his work and how he might contribute to our forthcoming events and workplan.

**23 January:** Gerry took part from Clifton House in a tele conference meeting for Devolved Nation Chairs with College Chief Executive Paul Rees.

**30 January:** Dr Gerry Lynch was pleased to welcome Fionnuala Fitzsimons on her first day in the College Office as Interim Administrator.

**31 January:** Policy Officer Thomas McKeever took part in a Lunch and Learn presentation with Central College via Skype on the topic of the English Divisions (presented by Vivine Muckian, Head of Divisions and Devolved Councils) and also the new data on the Finances of Faculties, Divisions, Devolved Councils and Special Interest Groups put together by Calum Mercer, Director of Finance and Operations (presented by Kim Catcheside, Director of Strategic Communications.) Interesting statistics emerged showing RCPsych NI with the smallest number of members, the third largest overall funding and the largest funding per member (which in turn becomes inevitable given the range of service here and our small numbers)......Child and Adolescent with the smallest funding and Academic with the largest funding in terms of Central Faculties......Neurodevelopmental with the smallest funding and Philosophy with the largest in terms of Special Interest Groups.

**Media:**

**27 December:** An interview with Dr Gerry Lynch was featured in the Derry News in relation to the consequences of waiting for Mental Health Patients and the picture overall in Northern Ireland re mental health services.
January 2019: Agenda NI featured an Interview with Dr Gerry Lynch in relation to Mental Health services in Northern Ireland and the local College role.

18 January: An interview with Professor Roy McClelland in relation to Muckamore Abbey Hospital was broadcast by BBC NI all day on its Radio Ulster and BBC NI Television News platforms and on its website.

Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016:

15 January: Dr Dearbhail Lewis deputized for Dr Gerry Lynch at the first Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016 (MCA) Training Project Meeting at CEC Clady Villas, Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Belfast and reported back as follows:

"I attended the first meeting of the Steering Group for the Development of Educational Packages for the MCA today, on behalf of Dr Lynch. The main purpose of the Steering Group will be to offer insight and opinion into the training package and to help facilitate as wide engagement as possible. I noted that a number of Trade Unions had been invited to participate and suggested that the British Medical Association should be invited to participate in the Steering Group, as this is legislation with which all doctors need to be familiar."
At present, it is thought that the Act will be actioned in 2020.

The meeting was quite well attended, with representation from most of the organisations invited. The Core Project Team has been tasked with developing a complete programme of training by the end of March 2019. The training package will effectively be Broad Awareness or ‘legislation training’, essentially ‘translating’ the Code of Practice for all Health and Social Care staff, with extension to Primary Care and the independent sector. Further training will be required at Trust/Professional Body/Employer level for those who will be practising clinically in line with the new Act and staff will be expected to use existing competencies in line with the legislation.

There will be 5 levels of training developed, as follows:

**Level 1** Basic eLearning – appropriate for administrative/clerical staff (likely to last 1-2 hours);

**Level 2** Extended eLearning – for those who have limited interaction with patients and not involved in intrusive acts:

2A Managers (will not cover intrusive acts);

2B Administration staff involved in processing forms;

2C Health and Social care staff;

**Level 3** ‘Classroom based’, for those with patient contact, but no decision making powers (likely to last a full day);

**Level 4** Decision making training, will last 2 days, will be appropriate to the majority of clinical staff (including medical staff, nursing staff, AHPs and psychologists);

**Level 5** For those involved in Trust Panels, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards and Community Residence Requirements - will involve 3 half day modules.

Due to time constraints, there will be no opportunity to test the packages before the end of March.

Whilst the huge task of providing training to all the above named clinical groups is beyond the remit of this group, the meeting brought home to me just how many staff will require training, and how tight the timeframe is for facilitating this. The Clinical medical staff who were present were all (Liaison) Psychiatrists (Drs Catherine Taggart and Jo Minay) - and all reiterated to the Steering Group that is was hugely important for the training to make clear that the MCA and its Code of Practice is relevant to all staff involved in decision making with patients. I would be keen to see representation from other medical specialties in this group, in particular from our surgical colleagues, given that ‘major surgery’ will be a serious intervention under the terms of the Act.”
23 January: Our Mental Capacity Act Working Group met at Groundwork, Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, chaired by Dr Lynch, to consider Draft 3 of the Code of Practice just in from DoH. In attendance were Drs Dearbhail Lewis, Chris Southwell and Catherine Taggart. Good progress was made working through the Code, with a follow up meeting planned for 13 February in the same venue.

29 January: Drs Gerry Lynch and Catherine Taggart took part in a photoshoot at Clifton House for an upcoming article on the Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016 in the College’s Insight magazine. (This was followed by an interview which Gerry gave to the Journalist putting this piece together for the magazine.)

NI Assembly:

There is nothing to report this month.

Department of Health:

30 January: Dr Gerry Lynch attended a further briefing from DoH at D2 Conference Room, Castle Buildings, Stormont, Belfast arising from the process of implementing the recommendations flowing from the Inquiry into Hyponatremia-Related Deaths by Mr Justice O’Hara. Afterwards, Gerry said: “There is much complex and wide-ranging work being done in response to the many recommendations of the O’Hara report. Details of the progress of the workstreams are available on the Department of Health’s website; of particular interest to Psychiatrists, I think, is the work being done on duty of candour and on the Serious Adverse Incident process”.