Chair's Monthly Activity Log

March 2019

Faculty and Committee Business:

1 March: SAS and Affiliates met in Clifton House chaired by Dr Liz Dawson. Among the items discussed was the Management Development Programme Startwell 2 day event which has now been moved to mid June.

1 March: Deaf Children and Adolescents Group met in Clifton House chaired by Dr Holly Greer. Among the items on the Agenda were proposed Terms of Reference, updates on work happening currently, links with the National Deaf CAMHS service and future plans.

6 March: Addictions Faculty met in Clifton House chaired by Dr Billy Gregg. A sad farewell was bid to Dr Michelle Gilmore (pictured below seated centre) who is emigrating to Australia later this year. Michelle was thanked for her contribution to the Faculty and she will be missed.
6 March: Academic Committee met in Clifton House chaired by Dr Tony O’Neill.

7 March: Forensic Faculty Chair Dr Adrian East, along with our members Drs Phil Anderson and Phil Campbell, jointly addressed the Faculty of Forensic Psychiatry Annual Conference in Hilton Vienna on the topic of ‘Fusion Legislation and Forensic Psychiatry: A Discussion on a Radical Change in Mental Health Legislation and the Merits of Adopting a Capacity Based Approach.’ Adrian reported: "This was a very well attended event attracting considerable international interest. Discussion centred around the reliability of adding the "appreciation” doctrine to the Capacity Test as well as the provisions of Part 10 of the Mental Capacity (Northern Ireland) Act 2016. The consensus was that this was no substitute for mental health legislation. Particular concerns were raised by Australian psychiatrists who have experienced recent difficulties with their Capacity Law. At the same time, the opportunities for the development of Forensic Psychiatry in Northern Ireland were welcomed.”
13 March: Dr Gerry Lynch chaired a meeting of the College Executive in Clifton House. A packed Agenda considered matters such as Devolved Nation Status, NI Judicial Appointments Commission request for members to become involved in Tribunal work, Law Society request for assistance with the compilation of a list of members willing to do medico legal work, proposed Poet in Residence 6 month trial,
DoH Mental Health 5 Year Plan, the awareness and treatment of Autism, as well as Social Media platform potential for Trainees. Throughout the afternoon, a photographer was on hand, commissioned by Central College, to take shots for the localisation of our Website.

**21 March:** Informatics Committee, chaired by Dr Stephen Moore met in Clifton House with Penny Hobson, Programme Manager with The Centre for Connected Health and Social Care (Public Health Agency) to discuss the possibilities for Mental Health Services offered by Telemedicine Solutions.

**29 March:** Giving practical effect to our aim of working together, Drs Richard Wilson (Chair of our Child and Adolescent Faculty), Hilary Boyd (Trainee Programme Director) and Catherine Gillanders (ST5 Trainee) travelled to Dublin to take part in a College of Psychiatrists of Ireland Child and Adolescent Faculty meeting at the invitation of their Faculty Chair Dr Gerry McCarney. Dr Richard Wilson afterwards said: “Ironically on the date originally planned for the departure of the UK from the European Union, we enjoyed an excellent morning discussing the state of Child Psychiatric practice on both sides of the border. There were many common themes including resources, professional opportunities/constraints and the challenge of influencing, what at times appear, unreceptive political and administrative bodies responsible for funding service improvement for our Patients. We plan to jointly support training and CPD opportunities this year, beginning with an invitation to RoI colleagues to attend our Joint UPS/RCPsych Conference on 7th June. The possibility of a joint contribution to this year’s all Ireland event in November was also suggested. We look forward to seeing more of one another in future and thanks to Dr Mc Carney and his colleagues for a stimulating discussion and such warm hospitality.”

**External Affairs:**

**4 March:** Policy Officer Thomas McKeever attended a meeting of the Law Society’s Elder Law Group in Law Society House, Victoria Street, Belfast which was discussing ‘Do not Resuscitate Orders’. The experience of these brought into sharp focus the Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016 changes whereby Advance Decisions will not even have to be in writing.

**5 March:** Perinatal Faculty Chair Dr Julie Anderson attended the Soroptimist International NI Showcase of Maternal Mental Health at Belfast City Hall (event pictured below).
6 March: Chair of Child and Adolescent Faculty Dr Richard Wilson met with Mairéad McCafferty, Chief Executive at the office of the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People - and emphasised the importance of rational needs led and scientifically evidence based Regional approach to CAMHS delivery. Richard also reinforced that such an approach is more likely to be successful in improving outcomes when it is led effectively by Clinicians and Service Managers in real partnership and paying careful attention to the views of Service Users, both parents and young people –simultaneously maximising the use of precious resources. Mairéad McCafferty was appalled to learn that the funding earmarked for the proposed CAMHS Managed Network had been suspended. Both she and Richard intend to obtain clarification from the DoH about this situation and what can be done to rectify it. Richard wished the Commissioner Koulla Yiasouma well on her reappointment as Commissioner - particularly in her task of influencing improvements in services, supports and structures to safeguard the rights of our young people to enjoy good mental health.

25 March: Dr Michael Doherty attended NICVA, Duncairn Gardens, Belfast for a follow up Budget Briefing from the Department of Finance Budget Director Julie Thompson. Earlier this year, Michael had attended the initial briefing provided by Sue Gray, Permanent Secretary at the Department of Finance. Departments are now finalising their budgets, so it was important for Michael to be in attendance at this briefing from the mental health perspective. The Budget for Northern Ireland is available here.

28 March: Dr Michael Doherty attended a Law Society of NI event in Law Society House, Victoria Street, Belfast entitled: 'NHS and Brexit: Implications for Health
Law and Policy in Northern Ireland’. Afterwards Michael commented: “This was a very interesting event and it is clear that there may be a Brexit impact on patients, healthcare professionals and clinical research which will all have to be planned for.”

28 March: Chair of General Adult Faculty Dr Rowan McClean was guest of the Family Bar Association at an event at the Bar Library, Royal Courts of Justice, Belfast to give a talk on mental health conditions. The Bar has paired up with Aware as its nominated charity for the year - and its members are keen for a better understanding of how to help their clients who experience mental health difficulties, particularly how they might direct, for appropriate support, very distressed and/or suicidal clients. Rowan was addressing this issue for them. Rowan later reflected: “There was great interest in this subject and welcome engagement from Family Law Barristers. The audience was keen to gain a better understanding of how mental illness can impact on their clients’ ability to instruct and follow their legal proceedings. There was discussion around how Barristers can help to support their clients both professionally and emotionally, as well as how to signpost them to appropriate professional supports where indicated. The audience also heard presentations from a Family Law Barrister and from a member of staff from Aware - and the event was a great success in terms of meaningful engagement for the ultimate benefit of the recipients of Legal Services.”

Department of Health:

4 March: Drs Paddy Moynihan, Billy Gregg, Daniel Gboloo-Teye, Janine Lynch and Jo Minay represented the College at the third of six Workshops organized by the DoH in connection with their proposed Five Year Plan for Mental Health. This Workshop was titled as ‘Unifying Mental Health Approaches and Delivery Across the Lifespan’ and was held at The Braid, Bridge Street, Ballymena. Our attendees were hoping to raise our agenda on Rehabilitation, Addictions, Child and Adolescent, Perinatal and Liaison respectively. The idea was to place our issues on the DoH agenda for action, if at all possible, given that there is no additional finance said to be available to fund any emerging Plan.

Afterwards, Billy (pictured below at the Workshop – along with Una Donnelly) reported: “The workshop provided an opportunity to highlight the importance of commissioning integrated services which can seamlessly address co-occurring mental health, physical health and substance misuse disorders.”

Dr Conor Barton was hoping to attend, but was unable to attend on the day and he would hope to send in an Old Age Faculty submission making the following points: The importance of Psychiatry of Old Age providing specialist care to older people and those with complex co-morbidity, functional illness in the elderly being a significantly under-recognised problem (with Psychiatry of Old Age not alone dealing with Dementia), Ageless Services not being seen as the way forward by
Central College and the need to workforce plan now in order to match the demographics now and in the future.

5 March: Drs Gerry Lynch, Michael Doherty, Adrian East and Billy Gregg represented the College at the fourth of six Workshops organized by the DoH in connection with their proposed Five Year Plan for Mental Health. This Workshop was titled as ‘Evidence Based Interventions in Mental Health’ and was held at The Braid, Bridge Street, Ballymena. Our attendees were hoping to raise various aspects of our agenda. The idea was to place our issues on the DoH agenda for action, if at all possible, given that there is no additional finance said to be available to fund any emerging Plan. Afterwards, Gerry reported: “There was much discussion about the precise meaning of evidence based interventions and an acknowledgement that, whilst it is vital to practice according to the best available evidence, there were often gaps in evidence, especially in terms of the best way to structure how we deliver our services.”

11 March: Drs Gerry Lynch, Michael Doherty, Marietta Cunningham and Jo Minay represented the College at the fifth of six Workshops organized by the DoH in connection with their proposed Five Year Plan for Mental Health. This Workshop was titled as ‘Mental Health Workforce Planning and Supporting the Mental Health Workforce’ and was held at The Lisburn Civic Centre, Lisburn. All our attendees
were hoping to raise various aspects of our agenda. The idea was to place our issues on the DoH agenda for action, if at all possible, given that there is no additional finance said to be available to fund any emerging Plan. Afterwards, Gerry reported: “The Workshop focused on how to grow and maintain a competent trained workforce - a happy workforce with high morale will provide a high quality service for patients and clients. There was plenty of discussion about initiatives such as reflective practice, but an acknowledgement that it is difficult to even provide regular supervision and training opportunities in the face of ever-increasing demand, high vacancy numbers and excessive caseloads. The need to streamline paperwork and minimise interfaces were also seen as critical. There was much discussion, but no clear answers as to what we should stop doing! There was also concern expressed about the number of new and worthwhile initiatives, but a lack of workforce to deliver these.”

12 March: Drs Maggie McGurgan, Annette Thampi, Julie Anderson, Ciaran Mulholland and Heather Mills represented the College at the final Workshop in a series of six which were organized by the DoH in connection with their proposed Five Year Plan for Mental Health. This Workshop was titled as ‘Early Interventions’ and was held at The Lisburn Civic Centre, Lisburn. All our attendees were hoping to raise various aspects of our agenda. The idea was to place our issues on the DoH agenda for action, if at all possible, given that there is no additional finance said to be available to fund any emerging Plan.

Afterwards, Julie reported: "There was a diverse group of individuals in attendance. The overall purpose of the day was ‘what actions will make Early Interventions more effective in Mental Health Services’. The day was spent in groups initially discussing ‘what Early Interventions mean to me’ and then ‘what Early Interventions mean to Mental Health Services’ - and then considering examples of where Early Interventions do or could make a difference. After further discussion, each Group was to consider one priority and then develop an Action Plan relating to this. DoH officials were then to take the information from the day away and compile a report.

Whilst the day was interesting and informative, the Department was very clear that there was no money or resources available for these Action Plans to be carried out. The main focus of all the discussions centred around how to ensure that those who needed input from Mental Health Services had ease of access and a timely high quality assessment which would set them on a path to effective intervention. Another strong theme was the need to improve links between the Community and Voluntary sector on the one hand and Statutory services on the other, in order to ensure that the most effective interventions occurred in a timely fashion for all those in our population. A further major area of discussion was on the need for preventative measures, as well as specific Early Interventions.

Unfortunately no Group identified the development of further services such as, for example, Specialist Community Perinatal Services or expansion of Early Intervention in Psychosis Services or the expansion of Early Intervention within
CAMHS - which the Consultant Psychiatrists present at the Workshop strongly felt should be the priorities for Government in a 5 year Mental Health Plan relating to Early Interventions.”

Heather reported: “The Group I was in at the event chose to focus on effective Early Intervention across the lifespan. This provoked a lot of debate. The need for robust care pathways was discussed, as was the need for consistency in services and accessibility across Northern Ireland, which we felt might be facilitated by a single Trust in Northern Ireland. Eating Disorder Services were discussed and the need for Early Intervention, with targeted evidence-based therapies delivered by a Specialist in Eating Disorders from first presentation, being acknowledged.”

Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016:

5 March: The third tranche of material arrived in for review from the Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016 Steering Group on Development of Educational Packages. Our Critical Reviewers, Drs Gerry Lynch and Catherine Taggart reviewed the material and met the third deadline which was 11 March.

21 March: Review work for the Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016 Steering Group on Development of Educational Packages concluded. Our Critical Reviewers, Drs Gerry Lynch and Catherine Taggart, having reviewed the fourth and final tranche of material, met the deadline which was 21 March.

22 March: Drs Gerry Lynch, Richard Wilson, Fransess Doherty and Roy McClelland met in Clifton House to discuss and consider positions on the exclusion of Under 16s from the remit of the Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016 and the operation of said Act for those aged 16 and 17, as suggested by the content of the most recent draft of the Code of Practice.

22 March: Dr Gerry Lynch attended the third and final Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016 Steering Group Meeting on Development of Educational Packages at HSC Clinical Education Centre, Clady Villa, Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Belfast and reported back as follows: “The CEC was tasked at very short notice to produce a training programme in the Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016 for all HSC staff. It will need considerable resources to deliver it. Myself and Dr Catherine Taggart have been involved in critically reviewing the material on behalf of the College.”

28 March: Forensic Faculty Chair Dr Adrian East held a very constructive meeting with DoJ officials Clare Irvine and Jill Trainor. Matters which were discussed included progress on the Forensic aspects of the Draft Code of Practice for the Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016, the need for College input into the competency and training requirements to be Part 10 approved under the new Act – as well as the ramifications of the November 2018 Supreme Court Judgment in Secretary of State for Justice v MM in relation to conditionally discharged patients.
Sharing Best Practice and Quality Improvement:

6 March: A well-attended Masterclass which was held in Clifton House on the topic of ‘Psychiatry and Philosophy Boundaries’ was addressed by Professor Matthew Broome, PhD FRCPsych, Chair in Psychiatry and Youth Mental Health & Director of the Institute for Mental Health, College of Life and Environmental Sciences, University of Birmingham. Dr Richard Wilson, who was one of those in attendance reflected: “It was refreshing to concentrate on some solid learning for a change in a time when so much is ephemeral. Matthew gave us much to reflect on to influence the teaching of the fundamentals of psychiatry.” Professor Matthew Broome reported: “Very good to meet colleagues. Had a great time in Belfast!”

7 March: General Adult Faculty convened in Clifton House and were addressed first by Dr Iain McDougall on the topic of Quality Improvement, before holding a short Business Meeting at which the Faculty discussed its priorities within the context of the new Devolved Nation status. It was agreed also that a half day event which would discuss both Quality Improvement and the concept of ‘Towards Zero Suicide’ would be held on 26 September.

13 March: A further planning meeting took place by telephone with the College of Psychiatrists Ireland, involving Drs Gerry Lynch and Tony O’Neill as well as Interim Manager Barry Flynn, with counterparts in Dublin, led by Chief Executive Miriam Silke - in relation to the forthcoming Joint Conference later this year being held in Titanic Belfast.

20 March: Dr Gerry Lynch availed of the further informal engagement opportunity offered by the NI Ambulance Service to reinforce by teleconference our messages in relation to their recent Consultation on the proposed Clinical Response Model - with Gerry again emphasising the need to take account of Diversity of Disability.
20 March: Drs Gerry Lynch, Michael Doherty and Uzma Huda attended the ‘Professional Behaviours and Communication Principles for working across Primary & Secondary Care Interfaces in Northern Ireland’ Launch Event in the Malone Lodge Hotel, Eglantine Avenue, Belfast. This is a document produced by the majority of Medical Royal Colleges in Northern Ireland, who have been working together to tackle issues at primary/secondary care interfaces. Together they have created a set of behaviours and communications principles. Dr Gerry Lynch has been involved for the College throughout the process from its inception and presented at the launch on one of the practical examples. The launch event was facilitated by the Royal College of GPs NI.

Gerry later advised: "The document outlines 10 key principles designed to ensure effective communication, principally across the Primary and Secondary care interface, but also within Secondary care. It is clear, given the increasing complexity of healthcare delivery, that good communication is vital to assure Patient safety and improve our working lives as well. There were many good ideas floated about how we can put these principles into practice. I commend the Principles document to you."

Dr Laurence Dorman, Deputy Chair Policy for RCGP NI later tweeted: "Thank you Gerry for your help and support in developing the document and presenting on the day. It was a real collaborative effort and I’m sure will have huge benefits for our patients and colleagues."
21 and 22 March: Our Perinatal Faculty organised and jointly hosted with the Public Health Agency the third and final in a series of 3 important 2 day Regional Multidisciplinary Perinatal Mental Health Training events – this time in Hilton Hotel, Templepatrick, Co Antrim - which was chaired by Drs Janine Lynch and Julie Anderson. Day 1 heard from Drs Julie Anderson, Carolyn O’Connor, Michael McMorran (pictured on right below) and Janine Lynch – as well as Clinical Psychologist Dr Andrew Lok (pictured on left below), Health Visitor Mary Duggan and Lindsay Robinson from the Patient and Carer perspective. Day 2 heard from Drs Janine Lynch, Julie Anderson, Billy Gregg and Mary Short, as well as Leila Fitzsimons Social Worker, Shona Hamilton Consultant Midwife and Ciara McCloskey Health Visitor. Feedback, as before, was extremely positive such as: “Excellent training – fabulous content and good relevance for clinical practice. Great to update with knowledge/understanding. Will recommend for my team to attend.”
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, January 2019 and now in March 2019 by experts in the field - along with vital input from individuals who have direct experience of perinatal mental illness in their own lives. Some 200 approximately multidisciplinary staff from across many professions in each of the 5 health and social care trusts have now 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.”
25 March: Barry Flynn and Thomas McKeever took part in a Lunch and Learn session with Central College Library and Archives via Skype. The session was led by Fiona Watson, College Library Manager and Francis Maunze, College Archivist and Records Manager.

29 March: Our UK Brain Injury Conference at Assembly Buildings, Fisherwick Place, Belfast, which was jointly held along with the Central College Faculty of Neuropsychiatry and the NI Branch of the British Psychological Society Division of Clinical Psychology, attracted 120 delegates. Dr Peter Trimble (pictured below left),
who is our NI Representative on Central College Faculty of Neuropsychiatry, led on this event. Speakers included Dr JP McCann -Former Past President of the British Society of Rehabilitation Medicine, Dr Michael Webb – Medical Director Ulster Rugby, Dr Stuart Currie (pictured below right) – Consultant Neuroradiologist Leeds, Dr Tracey Ryan-Morgan – Consultant Clinical Neuropsychologist, Dr Brian Herron – Consultant Neuropathologist Belfast and Professor Alan Carson – Consultant Neuropsychiatrist Edinburgh – as well as our own Members Drs Rick Bunn and Joy Watson who addressed delegates on Brain Injury in the Forensic Service and Alcohol Related Brain Damage respectively. Among the delegates was College of Psychiatrists of Ireland President Dr John Hillery (Right pictured below with our Vice Chair Dr Michael Doherty), who welcomed him to Belfast on behalf of both Dr Gerry Lynch (who was abroad) and our Members. Very positive feedback included: “Fabulous Day - many thanks.” – and – “Overall was a very interesting day and as my first time at something like this, it was a great day for me to learn and experience at the beginning of my career. Thank you.” Exhibition space at the Conference was taken by the Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission, among others, following on from our recent discussions with the Lord Chief Justice and NIJAC personnel about the need to encourage Psychiatrists to get involved in Tribunal work.

29 March: Dr Stephanie Campbell, who is one of this year’s 5 Adept Fellows, attended the Graduate School at Queen’s University, Belfast for the first of four meetings of an advisory group for a suicide prevention research project being undertaken by PhD research student Colette Ramsey, Dr Karen Galway and Professor Gavin Davidson, Centre for Innovation and Excellence at Queen’s University Belfast. The advisory group’s purpose is to provide advice and comments on the research design, findings,
report and dissemination. The research project itself is entitled: *A qualitative analysis of how learning from Serious Adverse Incident reviews can contribute to reducing deaths by suicide of people in the care of Mental Health Services.* The advisory group is regional, multi-disciplinary and includes stakeholders and experts who are interested in suicide prevention and service improvement within mental health services in Northern Ireland. A brief summary of the research project is set out below:

**Summary of Research Project**

**Aims**

This study will apply a novel and innovative approach to examining and challenging the learning process applied to suicide prevention within mental health services, through examination of the recommendations from SAI reports completed following patient suicides across Northern Ireland from January 2015 to December 2016. It will evaluate how effectively these recommendations are implemented and incorporated into suicide prevention initiatives within mental health services. In an international landscape of change in mental health service provision, this work addresses a gap in our understanding of how to successfully turn the learning from reviews into positive action for change.

**Research Questions**

1. What are the processes for implementing recommendations and sharing learning from SAI report recommendations, following a suicide, across the 5 HSCT areas?

2. How effective are the current processes in translating learning into practice and sharing best practice regionally?

3. How could this process be improved to streamline effective implementation of learning from suicides within mental health services, across Northern Ireland?

☐ To assist in developing regional recommendations to inform policy on suicide prevention for patients in the care of mental health services.

**Methodology**

Phase I: A systematic review will be carried out to examine the process of learning and implementing change based on serious adverse incidents including an overview of Implementation Science in mental health.

Phase II: A qualitative approach to data collection and analysis will be employed, to provide an in-depth understanding consistent with the aims of this study. Secondary data will be extracted from anonymized, SAI reports for the period 1st
January 2015\textsuperscript{31}st December 2016 (n=160) Theories of Implementation Science will inform a process of thematic analysis (Blacklock, 2012)).

Phase III: Primary data will be collected through carrying out 10 focus groups (2 per HSC Trust) with employees from mental health teams. Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) in the form of an Advisory Committee will focus on ethical considerations and validation of findings.

**Expected outcomes**

Findings will enrich the national and international evidence base for multidisciplinary professionals working with this vulnerable group. It will complement the National Confidential Inquiry and the existing field of critical incident management with indepth qualitative insights to enhance suicide prevention within mental health services.

**NI Assembly:**

There is nothing to report this month.

**Media:**

7 March: A major cash investment was announced to support Student Mental Health Services in Northern Ireland. The pilot project backed by Belfast Trust and both Queen’s and Ulster University, is the first of its kind here. £150,000 will be used to help enhance Mental Health Services for students living in Belfast. The initiative was announced on University Mental Health Day, with the aim to improve the link between local Healthcare provision and on-campus support. Through the project, better working systems will be developed between the Belfast Trust Mental Health Services and Support and Wellbeing Services delivered in each of the two universities. The Belfast Trust, Queen’s University Belfast and Ulster University have each committed to investing £50,000 annually to develop and run the initiative, which will establish projects including clinics on campus, as well as agreed pathways to mental health support. This pilot service will provide help for the small but significant group of students who need more specialist mental health services. There are currently no specific mental health services for the university student population in Northern Ireland and students are treated under the Adult Mental Health Service. Vice Chair Dr Michael Doherty, who has worked tirelessly on this issue over many years commented: "This is very welcome news! It will be a great addition to the already excellent support and counselling services provided by the Universities, enabling Mental Health services to be more responsive to the distinct needs of our student population.”
7 March: Addictions Chair Dr Billy Gregg spoke on UTV Live about the drugs problem in Northern Ireland amidst a suggestion by the Chief Medical Officer of consumption rooms being opened in Belfast City Centre.

15 March: Interim Manager Barry Flynn and Policy Officer Thomas McKeever held a tele conference with College Media Manager Nick Hodgson in relation to preparatory planning for working with the Devolved Nations Press Officer Laura Varney, who will be commencing work with the College at the end of this month.

19 March: We issued a joint Press Release along with the British Psychological Society NI pointing out that it was completely normal for those present at the recent Greenvale Hotel tragedy in Cookstown, Co Tyrone to experience distress – with difficulty sleeping and bad dreams, thoughts and memories of what happened popping into one’s head, irritability, feeling sad and worried. We said: “People all react in different ways. It is helpful to be with family and friends and for those who were there to talk about what happened if they want to. (Around 70 local publications covered this, including Dudley News)

Statement – Greenvale Hotel Incident

The British Psychological Society (BPS) and the Royal College of Psychiatrists (RCPsych) offer their condolences to the families and friends of the 3 young people who lost their lives following the incident at the Greenvale Hotel on St Patrick’s Day.

We recognise that this is a very difficult time for the whole community and in particular for those young people who were there, for their families, for the hotel staff and for the early responders and emergency services.

Following a traumatic incident of this nature, it is completely normal to experience distress – difficulty sleeping and bad dreams, thoughts and memories of what happened popping into your head, irritability, feeling sad and worried. People all react in different ways. It is helpful to be with family and friends and for those who were there to talk about what happened if they want to. For some people quiet time can be important.

Many people find it helpful to return to the normal routines such as returning to school, normal mealtimes, and times for getting up and going to bed. While there is no particular treatment that is recommended at this stage, support of family, friends and community will be most helpful in aiding recovery from this tragic event.

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working with the Devolved Nations Press Officer Laura Varney, who will be commencing work with the College at the end of this month.

21 March: BBC News NI covered College advice on our Website in relation to how best to help traumatised teenagers in the aftermath of the Cookstown Hotel Crush tragedy (BBC News).

Membership and Trainees:

15 March: The Spring edition of RCPsych Insight went online and included an interview with our Chair, Dr Gerry Lynch at Page 17 highlighting the work we have been doing in the local College on the Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016 and its Code of Practice in particular. Dr Catherine Taggart and her extensive involvement with this issue was also featured in the piece.
27 March: Regional Assessor Training to assess Job Descriptions took place at Central College in London and was attended by Vice Chair of Old Age Faculty Dr Kevina Nix who commented: "It was a very informative session, with the programme including explanation of the roles of Regional Advisors and Specialty Representatives. There was opportunity for group discussion on sample job descriptions which encouraged healthy debate from members on varied issues such as office accommodation and workload descriptions. We were also reminded that the College continues to support a 7.5/2.5 split for Direct Clinical Care/Supporting Professional Activities for full-time Consultant posts."