Announcement from Scottish Training & Recruitment Group Chair, Dr Ihsan Kader

The College in Scotland is delighted to announce success in obtaining substantial new funding for our 2020 recruitment and retention work.

As you may be aware, the Scottish Training & Recruitment Group (STaRG) was set up many years ago by Dr Tom Brown and later led by Dr Rhiannon Pugh. This was an informal group of like-minded people doing incredible work towards improving recruitment and retention into the profession. In 2020, this group will become formally recognised as the Choose Psychiatry in Scotland (CPS) Committee.

The CPS committee will carry on the work of STaRG as well as oversee the recruitment, retention and wellbeing agenda of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Scotland (RCPsychiS). It will work closely with a number of stakeholders, such as NHS Education for Scotland (NES), the Specialty Training Board, University undergraduate leads, medical student psychiatric societies (PsychSocs), Psychiatric Trainees Committee and the RCPsychiS Medical Managers Group, as well as related committees at RCPsych in London (Education & Training, Workforce, and Wellbeing).

Following on from the Minister for Mental Health’s speech at the 2019 Mental Health Forum, in which the Scottish Government recognised the importance of the psychiatric workforce within mental health services, RCPsychiS has secured financial support from NES to continue its work in promoting the profession of psychiatry around the country in 2020. This follows on from the successful Choose Psychiatry in Scotland campaign assisted by a Scottish Government grant awarded in late 2018.

The STaRG/CPS committee have earmarked this new funding for a number of activities related to recruitment into the profession, for example:

- We are putting together programmes for four psychiatry schools for medical students in 2020 in Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow
- Every medical student in Scotland will receive a welcome pack from RCPsychiS at the commencement of their psychiatry placement
- We will be able to offer bursaries to medical students and foundation doctors to attend RCPsychiS conferences year-round, as well as for local networking events (please see attached flyers and share these with your student and trainee contacts)

We will soon be advertising posts of Regional Advisors and Deputy Regional Advisors. The job descriptions are currently being amended to better reflect their roles in Scotland. These appointments will also be Choose Psychiatry Champions across Scotland. Given the concerning workforce vacancies and training fill rates, we would encourage Members to come forward, apply for these roles and support the important work of this campaign in their region.

The College in Scotland will also continue to support the MyPsych app, developed by colleagues in Glasgow and now being rolled out nationally. It is a valuable resource for medical students that also has a lot of information for trainees and non-trainees alike.

If Members wish to become involved or have ideas on how to promote recruitment into psychiatry, retention of existing staff, and the wellbeing of the profession, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Finally please encourage your medical students or foundation doctors to become Associates of the College, with all the benefits that it brings.

Dr Ihsan Kader
Chair, Scottish Training & Recruitment Group