



# RCPsych International

The International eNewsletter

## Welcome



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Dear member

As I write this, just after the RCPsych International Congress in Edinburgh, I'm reflecting on a superb and enriching experience. It was wonderful to interact with colleagues, at our first face to face Congress since 2019. I am grateful to all who made the long journey to Scotland from all parts of the world, it was great to put faces to emails, WhatsApp messages and MS Teams call profiles. Look out for a full review of Congress in our next issue in autumn.

In this edition, we are very pleased to include an introduction from our College Registrar, Dr Trudi Seneviratne OBE, who many of you will already know through her valuable work in the role since 2020, including the launch of a [Public Mental Health Implementation Centre](#), which will aim to support improved implementation of evidence-based interventions to treat mental disorders. She's also greatly contributed to our team's work by presenting a keynote at our collaborative World Maternal Mental Health Day event in Qatar as well as speaking at the American Psychiatric Association annual meeting in New Orleans last month.

As always, you can read updates from across the globe through our International Division news and featured projects. It has been a busy year so far; Prof Steve Kisely, Western Pacific Division Chair, and Dr Ishrat Husain, Pan-American Division Vice Chair, report on the annual conferences of the Royal Australia and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) and the American Psychiatry Association (APA), respectively.

This issue also includes reports on our work to provide support for those affected by the war in Ukraine, our collaborative projects delivering subspecialty education in both Ghana and Palestine, and a World Maternal Mental Health Day conference in Qatar.

It is a pleasure to share Dr Shizu Singh's experience of her Medical Training Initiative (MTI) post so far, since travelling from Nepal with her family last year to join the scheme. As a former Specialist Advisor for our MTI scheme, it is particularly heart-warming to hear the progress of these exceptional trainees. You may be interested to look through the College's new [Guide to Living and Working in the UK for International Medical Graduates](#), which provides useful and practical guidance for international graduates planning to train in the UK.

For further reading, you can access the latest issue of RCPsych Insight magazine on page 2 and [via the College website](#). It includes articles on collaboration between the RCPsych, East London Foundation Trust, and Ugandan mental health services as well as a Ukrainian psychiatrist's work with traumatised people in a time of war.

Thank you to all those who contributed to the brilliant articles in this issue of the newsletter. Please email [Sarah Eldridge](#) if you have any upcoming events, news or activities that you'd like to share.

Kind regards  
**Professor Mohammed Al-Uzri**  
 Presidential Lead for International Affairs



Professor Mohammed Al-Uzri  
 RCPsych, Presidential Lead for  
 International Affairs



## College Officers

### A warm welcome from your Registrar, Dr Trudi Seneviratne

It is with great pleasure that we continue to spread our wings by expanding the global work of the College – it is of course already a global College. We would like our international membership to feel fully wrapped into the community as well as reach new parts of the world. The [International Strategy](#) was developed with the aim of exactly this- to better cater to our international members as well as strongly support them caring for their patients and families.

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of society looking after people's mental health. It has also highlighted the disparities in the social determinants of mental health - these existed before the pandemic but were nevertheless exacerbated by Covid. We know that people with serious mental illness die decades before those without, and in some parts of the world, this statistic is getting worse. Prevention and evidence-based care must be prioritised by psychiatrists to quickly put people back onto a decent path in life, so they are able to live a fulfilled and happy life.

The College has set up a new Public [Mental Health Implementation Centre \(PMHIC\)](#) in the last year. The PMHIC is led by two Clinical and Strategic Directors, Dr Peter Byrne and Dr Jonathan Campion. It is hosted by the National Collaborating Centre for Mental Health (NCCMH) as well as the College and is overseen by an Advisory Board.

The PMHIC aims to improve the implementation of evidence-based interventions, to prevent mental disorders, their associated impacts (with improved treatment coverage) and promote mental wellbeing and resilience. It will do this through seeking to influence local and national governments across the UK and internationally. The goal will be to further knowledge of public mental health approaches and their implementation. It will also provide

educational resources and opportunities for psychiatrists and other professionals.. The Centre has identified three priority areas for action: 1) early years, children and young people (from conception to 25), 2) marginalised communities, and 3) reducing the healthy life years gap.

The College held a parliamentary launch for the Centre in March 2022. The launch event coincided with the publication of the Centre's first official briefing paper: [Public mental health implementation – a new centre and new opportunities](#), which provides information about the aims of the Centre and its areas of work. Additionally, the Centre has recently produced an [evidence table and a summary of public mental health interventions](#), which they are discussing national government bodies across the UK.

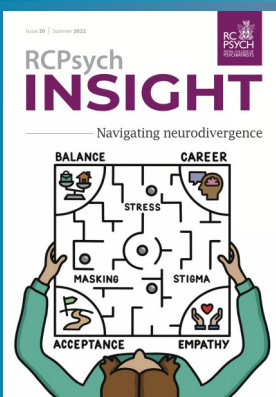
The Centre will be undertaking a range of activity over the next year and if you are interested in finding out more or collaborating with them, please contact at [public.MH@rcpsych.ac.uk](mailto:public.MH@rcpsych.ac.uk)

I encourage our international colleagues to take part in collaborations with the new Centre, so that we can continue to improve the lives of those with mental illness.



Dr Trudi Seneviratne,  
Registrar , RCPsych

## RCPsych Insight magazine



The latest issue of Insight magazine is now available (accessible via the cover image to the left). It features many excellent articles, including the following:

- How and why the College is leading the way in demonstrating the value of a visibly neurodiverse workforce.
- How a long-standing collaboration between a London Trust and Ugandan mental health services is creating positive changes in both countries.
- An overview of the Board of Trustees and how it helps run the College, with insights from Lay Board Member Karen Turner.
- Ukrainian psychiatrist Dr Natalia Pidkalyuk talks about her work with traumatised people in a time of war.



## International Divisions

### Updates from RCPsych International Divisions

#### Middle Eastern Division

Dr Ovais Wadoo, Chair

We congratulate all new Members and Fellows in the middle eastern region inducted to the College this year and encourage eligible members to apply for Fellowship of the College later this year.

Qatar played a crucial role in the repatriation of Afghan refugee children, young people, adults and their families. The mental health service at Hamad Medical Corporation spearheaded the response in collaboration with the ministries of foreign affairs and public health to support the mental health needs of this unique population. This initiative was led by Dr. Yasser Saeed Khan FRCPsych, Vice Chair Elect, and Dr. Abdul Waheed Khan MRCPsych (Specialist Psychiatrist).

RCPsych in collaboration with the Perinatal faculties at Hamad Medical Corporation and Sidra Medicine in Qatar organised a hybrid symposium, in celebration of World Maternal Mental Health Day, in May 2022. It was attended by over 1200 delegates (in-person and virtual). We congratulate all the stakeholders for making this event a great success.

We thank the outgoing Vice Chair (Dr. Samer Makhoul) for the services rendered to the college and welcome Dr. Yasser Saeed Khan as his replacement. We would also like to welcome Dr. Javed Latoo FRCPsych for taking up the interim position of Financial Officer.

#### Western Pacific Division

Prof Steve Kisely, Chair

The West Pacific Division held a successful reception at the RANZCP Congress, which was attended by the both the President and CEO of the UK College. This gave the opportunity for Division members to highlight their concerns such as the hurdles faced by college members in relocating to Australia and New Zealand. It is planned to have similar events at other relevant conferences in the West Pacific.

The first three weeks of June have seen several important announcements in Australia's three biggest states. Firstly, the Victorian Government announced a Mental Health and Wellbeing Bill to replace the existing Mental Health Act of 2014. This is in response to a recent Royal Commission on mental health services and includes a new Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission, Regional Mental Health and Wellbeing Boards, and a new Chief Officer for the area. There will also be a \$200 million expansion of mental health counsellors in primary schools. In Queensland, \$1.64 billion will be spent over five years to address mental health, substance abuse and suicide. This is especially welcome given that the State has the lowest per capita spending on specialised mental health services in Australia. In the same week, the NSW Government promised an additional \$2.9 billion for mental health services and support for people across the State as part of the 2022-23 NSW Budget.

There are many exciting events taking place in the region this year, including several [RANZCP events listed on their website](#).

#### European Division

In an effort to support those affected by the conflict in Ukraine, senior College officers meet weekly to ensure a comprehensive response. We were grateful to receive overwhelming offers of help from the RCPsych volunteering community.

The College produced [two webinars: one on psychological first aid and one on humanitarian interventions](#) as well as highlighted a list of [useful resources](#) on its webpage. The webinars were presented by Dr Peter Hughes FRCPsych and Vitalii Klymchuk, Community Mental Health Services Coordinator at MH4U. These webinars

are freely available on the College website and the principles can be applied to other crisis situations. Amongst the resources, you will find podcasts, guidelines, publications, leaflets and more. For example, an eLearning podcast focusing on the mental health needs of refugees by Dr Ruth Wells who speaks about her experiences working with Syrian refugees in Jordan.







# International Divisions

## Updates from RCPsych International Divisions

### Pan-American Division

Prof Ken Kaufman, Chair

The Pan American International Division is actively working on options to create a sustainable annual virtual conference with the first conference planned for 2023. Potential topics of interest include 1) Refugees; 2) Emergent Trends in Treatments; 3) Non-suicidal Self-harm in Adolescence (NSSI). Our efforts are greatly assisted by Agnes Raboczki and Professor Mohammed Al-Uzri FRCPsych. This summer, a topic survey will be sent to Pan American Division members. We look forward to your responses and engagement.

During the 2022 RCPsych International Congress, I had the pleasure of chairing the following three sessions:

- *Refugees and what to do* - Clinical practice session concerning challenges faced by refugee children and adults, with a focus on refugees from Ukraine
- *Refugee and asylum-seeker mental health* - Clinical practice session concerning refugee and asylum seeker mental health challenges and interventions
- *Working towards better research integrity for you, me and everybody* - Fringe session concerning publication ethics

International division sessions held at the Congress are important to establish our presence within the College, as are collaborative efforts between international divisions and/or College faculties. The requests for 2023 proposals should be sent out in July of this year. I recommend your considering submitting to the 2023 International Congress.

Our Vice Chair, Professor Ishrat Hussain, represented our Division at the RCPsych/APA Reception in New Orleans, Louisiana.

### American Psychiatric Association Annual meeting

Prof Ishrat Hussain, Vice Chair

It was a pleasure to connect with RCPsych President Dr Adrian James, Dean Dr Subodh Dave, and Registrar Dr Trudi Seneviratne at the APA Annual Meeting in New Orleans. During the RCPsych reception Dr James highlighted some of the challenges faced by members during

the pandemic as well as the urgent need to continue to provide care to those most in need of our services in the face of ongoing psychosocial sequelae of COVID-19.

Dr James also spoke about the College’s strategic aims of equality and diversity, parity of esteem, workforce wellbeing, and sustainability. As Vice Chair of Pan-American Division of the College I was able to raise some issues specific to members in this part of the world and Drs James and Dave expressed a keen interest to engage with colleagues practicing within the Division to address some of these issues. I emphasised the close affiliation that Pan-American members maintain with the College and the appreciation they have for the world-class training that they had received, which has set them up for success in their careers. I also discussed plans that Prof Kaufman and I have for a future Pan-American Division congress to promote further engagement with members and fellows. Overall it was a highly productive and enjoyable few days and I look forward to the next time.



L-R, Paul Rees, CEO RCPsych, Saul Levin, CEO & Clinical Director APA, Dr Adrian James,



Dr Trudi Seneviratne, Registrar RCPsych, speaking at the RCPsych session on public mental health at the APA



## Featured International Projects

### Ghana subspecialty project

In 2021 the College was approached by the Ghana College of Physicians & Surgeons (GCPS), via the Tropical Health and Educations Trust (THET), to support the Ghana Future International Workforce Programme. The aim of this project was to provide subspecialty exposure to 50 psychiatric trainees at the GCPS, in Old Age, Forensic, Addictions and Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

Via the RCPsych Volunteer Scheme, a group of highly experienced and skilled psychiatrists have worked closely with the Ghana College, to create the online subspecialty modules delivered via Zoom.

To compliment the modules, the THET funding allowed us to provide RCPsych Pre-Membership Psychiatric Trainees registration to the trainees and RCPsych International Associate membership to their supervisors, for 12 months. In addition, 12 month eLearning registration licences have been funded for all.

The trainees have received introductory sessions in all subspecialties via Zoom and the full 5 session Child and Adolescent programme has now begun, with the remaining three subspecialties to follow. All sessions are recorded and are then accessible to the trainees through on an online repository, along with additional resources. The sessions have been well received, with plenty of interaction and questions. Initial evaluations have been very positive, with 100% of the trainees reporting to have found the sessions useful and 93% interested in pursuing a subspecialty training pathway.

There is strong partnership between the College and GCPS and we have committed to continue working together beyond this funding cycle. The priorities will be to generate enough demand amongst psychiatric trainees for a subspecialty pathway, so that the GCPS has a strong and well-supported business case to put forward to the Ministry of Health, in terms of supported pathway development.

### Palestine training project

The RCPsych had the pleasure of sending a delegation to the West Bank for a special mission in partnership with Medical Aid for Palestine (MAP) and the Bethlehem Psychiatric Hospital.

Professor Mohammed Al-Uzri was joined by Dr Richard Braithwaite, RCPsych Electro-convulsive Therapy and Related Treatments Committee representative. The delegation focused on training doctors and nurses in the safe administration of ECT as well as contributed to the drafting of patient safety guidelines in conjunction with the Palestinian Ministry of Health.

The mission will be continued at the end of July and expanded with the drafting of guidelines for Child and Adolescent mental health.

Professor Mohammed Al-Uzri and Dr Richard Braithwaite with colleagues at Bethlehem Psychiatric Hospital.





## Featured event

### World Maternal Mental Health Day Conference review

On 11 May, Sidra Medicine, Hamad Medical Corporation and the Royal College of Psychiatrists delivered a World Maternal Mental Health Day (WMMHD) event in Doha, Qatar in support of the WMMHD campaign. The theme of this year's campaign was *'Stronger Together'; Supporting Women Worldwide on our Journey through Maternal Mental Health Care*, inspired by the disparities that came to light during the COVID-19 pandemic and the need for services to develop alongside complex and evolving patient needs.

The Chair, and force behind the conference, was Dr Zainab Imam, a perinatal consultant psychiatrist at Sidra who is also a member of the RCPsych Perinatal Faculty and the WMMHD taskforce. The taskforce launched their global campaign 5 years ago, which advocates for WMMHD to be internationally recognised as a 'UN awareness day'. Dr Imam has been organising conferences and workshops in Qatar since 2019 to highlight perinatal mental health issues.

The hybrid conference held on 11 May had 1236 registrations and over 550 attendees joining live online. There were 50 attendees in person, which was limited due to Covid restrictions at the time. The impressive line-up of speakers included representatives from Sidra Medicine, Hamad Medical Corporation, RCPsych, the National Lead for Mental Health in Qatar, representatives from the WMMHD Taskforce and The Maternal Mental Health Alliance and a patient representative from Young Mothers Qatar. The speakers and an expert panel, contributed to discussions on training needs, gender sensitive service provisions and public health and developments specific to the region.

RCPsych representatives Dr Trudi Seneviratne (Registrar), Prof Mohammed Al-Uzri (Presidential Lead for International Affairs), Dr Aman Durrani (Chair of the Faculty of Perinatal Psychiatry in Scotland) and Dr Jo Black (Chair, Perinatal Faculty) spoke virtually. While Dr Ovais Wadoo (Chair, RCPsych Middle Eastern Division) and Agnes Raboczki (International Liaison Manager) spoke in person at Sidra Medicine. RCPsych Director of Business Development Adam Pryce also joined the event in Qatar.

The conference was a great success and created further opportunity for open discussion about maternal mental health and a focus on the patient and service development needs in the region.



*Speaker photos:*  
Top left, Dr Trudi Seneviratne. And Dr Ovais Wadoo.  
Right, Prof Mohammed Al-Uzri.  
Bottom left, Agnes Raboczki .





## Medical Training Initiative (MTI) scheme

### Dr Shizu Singh's MTI experience so far

As a psychiatrist, being a part of the RCPsych had always been a dream. I was thus determined to apply for the RCPsych 2021 MTI Scheme. The entire application process began with sitting the OET and collecting and submitting the required documents. I was then shortlisted for an interview and was notified a few weeks later, that I had been selected. Based on my preferred locations, I was offered a post in BHFT, Reading. Finally, after my visa was approved, I arrived in the UK with my family in October 2021.

The first few weeks at work was quite overwhelming. My initial placement was in a general acute ward and despite having worked in psychiatry for six years back home, everything seemed new (even the English language!) and I felt lost. I was fascinated by the multidisciplinary approach to patient management and bewildered with the amount of documentation that was required. I was convinced I would never catch up! Fortunately, I had colleagues and an HR team, who always helped me through small or the bigger matters. Additionally, I received a lot of guidance from the initial Induction Programmes, my Educational Supervisor and my IMG tutor.

Meanwhile, at home, I was also learning how to use google maps, finding nearby groceries; trying to get a sim card, national insurance number, getting registered with the GP and much more. Some of these did take months to be sorted out.

Slowly, things started easing up and I began feeling like a part of the team and moreover, the NHS. As a trainee, I have been actively participating in teaching/learning activities, patient management and mandatory trainings. My current placement is in Geriatric CMHT and it is an entirely different experience to working on the wards.

With each posting and with every passing day, I believe I am becoming more confident in terms of my own abilities, time management, prioritising tasks, voicing my opinions, following protocols and most importantly communication, and there is still so much more to learn and understand.

My decision to apply for the MTI scheme is one I will always be proud of as it is helping me become a psychiatrist with a newer vision towards psychiatry, psychiatric disorders and care of psychiatric patients. This experience will definitely be a huge step in my career and without doubt, prove advantageous for patients under my care in the years to come.



Dr Shizu Singh, MTI Fellow



## BJPsych International journal

An international perspective on education in psychiatry is the theme of the [May issue of BJPsych International](#). Max Pemberton, Sam Nishanth Gnanapragasam and Dinesh Bhugra highlight some of the issues faced by international medical graduates and some potential solutions. Gaia Sampogna and colleagues discuss the need to improve the quality of undergraduate training courses in psychiatry and suggest novel teaching strategies.

[New! Muses – the arts blog from BJPsych International](#). The journal welcomes submissions for consideration, such as, comments on artwork, visual arts, literature, drama, films, podcasts, and videos. Read the [instructions for blog authors](#) for details on how to submit.

Latest video interviews: Fiona Crombie of [Freedom from Torture](#) talk about therapy and other support available for refugees and torture survivors.

The journal Editor-in-Chief, David Skuse talks to John Cox about the work of Paul Tournier ([médecine de la personne](#)).

All the journal articles and [podcasts and videos](#) are entirely open access and free to access.



## Overseas bursaries

### [Old Age Faculty: Bursary for psychiatrists from LAMI countries](#)

**Deadline:** 31 October 2022

A [bursary](#) to enable a psychiatrist from a low- and middle-income (LAMI) country to attend our annual residential meeting (usually held in March) to give an oral or poster presentation, or deliver a workshop. The bursary is designed to cover the cost of economy class travel, accommodation, free registration and attendance at our conference dinner, up to a maximum of £1,500.

### [Neuropsychiatry Faculty: Bursary for psychiatrists from LAMI countries](#)

**Deadline:** 30 April 2023

The Neuropsychiatry Faculty has established an [annual bursary](#) to enable a psychiatrist from a low- and middle-income (LAMI) country ([defined as World Bank classification C and D](#)) to attend the Faculty Annual Residential Meeting (usually held in September) in order to give an oral or poster presentation or deliver a workshop.





## Events

Upcoming events you may be interested in:

### RCPsych Free Members' Webinar: Inequalities – through different lenses

**Date:** 14 July 2022

**Description:** Online webinar, chaired by RCPsych Dean, Prof Subodh Dave.

The webinar will consider inequalities in the NHS through the lens of British Empire; how reducing stigma in South Asian communities can address health inequalities and the impact of gender inequality on mental health in Sri Lanka.

[Find out more >](#)

### RCPsych Philosophy Special Interest Group Conference: biopsychosocial model revisited; myth and reality

**Date:** 12 September 2022

**Description:** Online and 21 Prescot Street, London

The conference aims to create a space for reflection and dialogue that will generate insights on the developing scientific discourse about the nature of mental illness, and proposals on the developing role of the psychiatric profession in delivering care.

[Find out more >](#)

## Keep in contact



## Submissions for autumn 2022 issue

Please contact Sarah Eldridge at [sarah.eldridge@rcpsych.ac.uk](mailto:sarah.eldridge@rcpsych.ac.uk) with any questions about future submissions, or the newsletter in general.

The deadline for submissions for the autumn 2022 edition is 28 August 2022.

*The Royal College of Psychiatrists is the professional body responsible for education and training, and setting and raising standards in psychiatry.*

*Our International members are represented by six International Divisions; African, European, Middle Eastern, Pan-American, South Asian and Western Pacific.*

*Any opinions expressed by individuals in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of the Royal College of Psychiatrists*