

## Press Statement

7<sup>th</sup> October 2011

### A Relationship Gone Wrong - Alcohol and Your Mental Health

College of Psychiatry of Ireland host FREE educational events

for World Mental Health Day 2011

Research shows that people who consume high amounts of alcohol are vulnerable to higher levels of mental ill health. According to the WHO (World Health Organisation) “*Sufficient evidence now exists to assume alcohol’s contributory role in depression*”.

To mark World Mental Health Day this year the College of Psychiatry are hosting two free events for the public, one in Dublin and one in Galway focussing on the relationship of alcohol to our mental health. Both events will comprise presentations followed by question & answer sessions providing the audience with an opportunity to ask questions on the topics to the presenting psychiatrists.

The Dublin event will take place at 7.45pm Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October in the Royal Irish Academy, Dawson St, Dublin 2 and includes four talks: ***Teenage Drinking - Choosing the Wrong Shoulder to Cry On*** by Dr Bobby Smyth, Consultant Psychiatrist, Addictions Psychiatry (Drug Addictions Services, Cherry Orchard Hospital, Dublin); ***Young Women & Alcohol*** by Dr Gerardine O’Keeffe, Consultant Psychiatrist, Addictions Psychiatry (St Patrick’s University Hospital, Dublin); ***Alcohol, Severe Mood Problems & Suicide*** by Dr Conor Farren, Consultant Psychiatrist, Addiction Psychiatrist (St Patrick’s University Hospital, Dublin); ***Alcohol Use Disorders in Older People*** by Dr Henry O’Connell, Consultant Psychiatrist, Psychiatry of Later Life (An Triú Aois Day Hospital, Portlaoise); chair Dr Anthony McCarthy, President of the College

The Galway event will take place at 7.15pm, Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> October in Jigsaw, Fairgreen Road, Galway City and includes talks on: ***Teenage Drinking - Choosing the Wrong Shoulder to Cry On*** by Dr William Flannery, Consultant Psychiatrist, Addictions Psychiatry (Community Alcohol & Drugs Services, Co. Westmeath) and ***Alcohol, Severe Mood Problems & Suicide*** by Dr Conor Farren, Consultant Psychiatrist, Addiction Psychiatrist (St Patrick’s University Hospital, Dublin). Chair: Dr Anne Jeffers, Consultant Psychiatrist, East Galway Mental Health Services and Director of the College External Affairs & Policy.

#### Some facts:

- Alcohol is the second most widely consumed psychoactive<sup>[1]</sup> drug in the world. Some of the most frequently cited reasons for drinking involve bringing about a change of mood in order to feel better- drinking ‘to relieve stress’, cheer oneself up etc.
- Alcohol was consumed in four out of ten episodes of self harm in Ireland in 2010,
- The average Irish adult drank 11.3 litres of alcohol in 2009; In 2010, the average Irish person aged 15+ drank 11.9 litres of pure alcohol, according to provisional data. That’s the equivalent of about 44 bottles of vodka, 470 pints or 124 bottles of wine.
- 19% of Irish population abstain from drinking alcohol

- Alcohol is a depressant, and about 50% of problematic drinkers experience alcohol induced depression at some time in their drinking career
- Alcohol related illnesses cost the health care system €1.2 billion in 2007
- Alcohol induced cost to society is in the order of €2 billion per annum, (ref the HRB). It consists of things like lost employment days, costs of insurance, costs of morbidity and mortality, indirect health costs, and direct costs of treatment of alcohol related disorders.
- The cost of lost economic output due to alcohol was estimated to be €427 million 2007
- In Ireland if you complete suicide and are under 30, you have a 93% chance of having alcohol in your bloodstream.
- Alcohol is associated WITH
  - 2,000 beds being occupied every night in Irish acute hospitals
  - 25 % of injuries presenting emergency departments
  - Over 50% of attendances to specialised addiction treatment services

Ends

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