

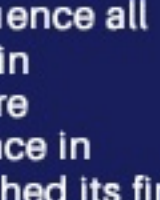


## Let's REFOCUS

Recovery Experience Forum of Carers & Users of the Services

### CAN REFOCUS HELP YOU?

## History



REFOCUS, although not bearing that name at the time, was conceived by the College of Psychiatrists of Ireland as a forum where the views and experiences of service users and family members/carers would inform and influence all aspects of the College's business and, in particular, the education of young future psychiatrists. The first meeting took place in December 2011. The committee published its first inaugural report encompassing its work and activity from 2011 to 2014 and its annual report 2015 outlining the work the committee has completed since its establishment 5 years ago.

*"Those who design and deliver mental health professionals' training should do so in systematic partnership with users and carers."*

WHO Regional Office for Europe (2010) - User Empowerment in Mental Health



*"What struck me about the group was the culture of 'mutuality of respect'."*

Psychiatrist

## Facilitating Mutual Understanding



The purpose of REFOCUS is to work with College psychiatrist members to gain mutual insight and understanding. REFOCUSING the conversation with the aim of improving the services for all. This has been and will be achieved by:

- Presentations from College members and specialities - experience of psychiatrists training and how they work.
- Joint presentations with psychiatrists at conferences.
- Involvement on trainee committee working groups such as 'Think Tank' eNewsletter.
- Papers written with trainees in mind but useful for all psychiatrists.
- Papers developed in partnership with psychiatrists.
- Attending and/or participating in College conferences and events such as Spike Milligan - both for insight and input.
- Regular focus groups with psychiatrists.

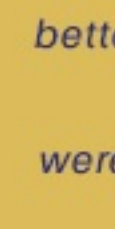
## Keeping the conversation going



More can be achieved by combined focus groups, discussion, idea generating and re-affirming of what works well.



Engage more psychiatrists to join us - we are currently recruiting



Induction and other platforms for trainees - nationally, regionally, locally



Meet with faculties, committees, work groups



Explore ways to improve communication

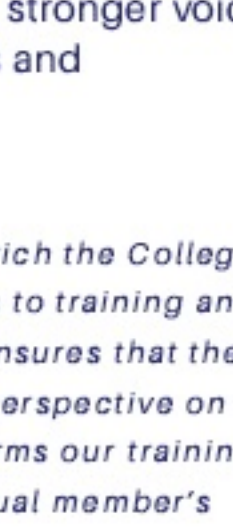


Join with psychiatrists in advocating for better resources



Have input into Clinical programmes & College papers

## Your learning, Our learning, Shared learning



Through shared learning much has been and can be achieved:

- Learning about psychiatry and psychiatrists through presentations from members.
- Invitations to participate in educational events for other stakeholder professional organisations.
- Contribution to research.
- Sharing lived experience.
- Papers developed through focus groups and extensive discussion with members:
  - Who Cares?
  - Understanding ECT
  - On the One Road to Recovery.
- Participation in postgraduate training and recruitment activities:
  - OSCE exams
  - Summer Schools
  - Med Fest Panel
  - NCHD Conference

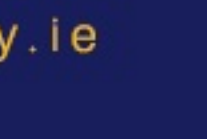
*"Working with REFOCUS members over the last 5 years, I have learned to listen more. REFOCUS members have all been through major personal crisis, and over time they have developed a resilience and understanding that offers invaluable insights for psychiatrists."*

Psychiatrist

*"Being a member of REFOCUS over the last 5 years has helped me understand psychiatrists so much better. I did not realize they had so much training in psychotherapy. It would be great if they were resourced enough to better use this training."*

REFOCUS member

## Why CPsychI needs REFOCUS



We are **unique as a committee** because we have service users, family members, and psychiatrists working together to influence training and advocate for better services.

Unlike other such groups REFOCUS is not embedded within any particular service; its membership comes from many services and sectors.

- **More reflective and open dialogue.**
- Bringing the **personal experience into policy** and procedures in a **non-clinical setting**.
- **Deeper insight** into how mental illness affects individuals and their families.
- **Reflect on Practice** - People with a mental health difficulty and their family/carers have unique reflections to aid psychiatrists; speaking to us and hearing our experience can help them reflect on their practice.
- **Reducing isolation** - isolation of members of the MDT, the service user, the family member.
- **Reduce stigma** for all through mutually beneficial engagement.
- Ensure **family members are not neglected** in the future - aim for an agreed objective and necessity.
- **Finding dignity for all again** - the MDT members, the service user, family members/carers.
- **Advocate for greater resources** - a stronger voice when service users, family members and psychiatrists work together.

*"REFOCUS continues to challenge and enrich the College and its activities through its contributions to training and policy. The dynamic input of REFOCUS ensures that the College continues to cultivate a broad perspective on mental health and mental illness that informs our training programmes, our advocacy and individual member's practice."*

*I welcome the Committee's continued evolution with increasing involvement of service users, carers and psychiatrists of all levels of training and experience and look forward to REFOCUS playing an enduring role in the College's development."*

Dr John Hillery, CPsychI Director of External Affairs and Policy

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