



## EAP HIGHLIGHTS

- A survey of College Specialist Members has been carried out in order to assess the impact COVID-19 and related restrictions have had on mental health service delivery, particularly if members have seen an increase in referrals or a change in the complexity of presentations. Dr Eric Kelleher has compiled a [summary report](#) on the findings which will form the basis of several communications to Oireachtas members & Government officials, national media and key stakeholders.
- The EAP department have proposed terms of reference for a new **Covid College 'taskforce'**. The group will collate learnings from service adaptations during the pandemic to identify policies and guidance for mental health services going forward and will focus on informing government, stakeholders and members.
- A letter from Dr William Flannery, College President, was sent to all major political parties outlining concern around the impact of COVID-19 on an already underfunded, under-resourced Mental Health Services and the priority mental illness and services must take in the next Programme of Government. A press statement highlighting same was issued.
- The virtual issue of the **"COVID-19 and Mental Health" special edition of the IJPM** was launched to national media, with a media briefing held via Zoom on 8th June. Editor Dr John Lyne and guest editor Prof Fiona McNicholas provided a summary of the topics covered in the edition and answered questions from journalists from a number of national media outlets including the Irish Times, The Irish Examiner and The Journal.ie. The Special Edition was subsequently covered in a number of online and print publications.
- In tandem with the launch of the COVID-19 edition, the College is co-hosting a series of webinars organised by UCD Academic Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Dr Blánaid Gavin and Prof Fiona McNicholas. The webinars take place every Friday up until September. Many of the topics chosen have been based on themes and subjects of articles in the special issue.
- The College released a statement condemning racism in the wake of the killing of George Floyd and the protests against systemic racism that have erupted in America and across the world.
- The **"Supporting Families of Young People with Mental Illness during Covid-19" video series** is now featured on the ["In This Together"](#) covid-specific website on gov.ie. and HSE [YourMentalHealth.ie](#)

### PRESS STATEMENT: SURVEY OF CONSULTANT PSYCHIATRISTS SHOWS INCREASE OF MENTAL HEALTH REFERRALS AND RELAPSE AMONGST THOSE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS FOLLOWING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

June 17, 2020 Category: Blog Press Statements



## SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE ACTIVITY

\*btwn 1st May & 17th June 2020

- ## Total Website Visitors: 15, 073
- ## Total Pageviews: 41,940
- ## Visits to Covid-19 Section: 2,098

### Top Search Bar Terms:

1. Dr John Hillery
2. Poster Criteria
3. Irish Journal
4. Moodle
5. Vacancies

### Covid-19 Video Series: Total Views on YT

2,115



College of Psychiatrists of Ireland  
@IrishPsychiatry

## Top Tweet

Thank you Minister. Professional bodies & stakeholders such as ourselves and @PsychSocIreland, @AOTNews, @ICGPnews, @PNA\_IRL will be included in update we hope. We advocate for the best possible standards too as you are aware. It is vital Covid19 impacts are included in the plan.

Simon Harris TD @SimonHarrisTD · Jun 5

I have secured Government approval to publish Ireland's new mental health policy - an update on Vision for Change. An important moment & roadmap on what we need to get done. Well done to @jimdalyclon for leading this. Advocacy groups will now be briefed & plan published next week



4,720 Impressions  
206 Engagements



## MEDIA ROUND-UP

EAP Media Activities: The College and the press

May - June 2020

### "We must consider the negative health consequences of the lockdown" - Irish Times, 2nd June 2020

Dr M Doyle quoted: "It is essential that people with mental illness continue to connect with their mental health service and practitioners . . . particularly when the Covid-19 situation is causing exacerbation of their symptoms and worsening of their condition."

### "Mental Health Funds must Double in the face of post-covid 'tsunami'" - Irish Examiner, 8th June 2020

Full coverage of IJPM press briefing, with Dr J Lyne and Prof F McNicholas as well as Dr M Doyle as Director of Comms, quoted re. acute needs of cohorts such as those with eating disorders and autism, new and complex presentations/relapse and need for increased funding.



### "Ireland Facing a Tsunami of Mental Health Problems" - Irish Times, 9th June 2020

EAP Dept Manager, Andrea Ryder, quoted re. results of survey due to be published: "A large proportion of consultants are reporting that they are now seeing an increase in people experiencing both new-onset and relapse of mental illness compared to the early stages of the lockdown but also to before the lockdown came into place".

### "Post-covid mental health fears as Gardai warn of 'significant' rise of incidents" - Extra.ie, 16th June 2020

Dr William Flannery interviewed and a number of quotes included re. predicted rise in mental illness as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and related social stressors such as social isolation, job loss and alcohol/drug use, as well as focus on need for increase funding the MHS.

### Press Statements

- (i) College Launches Special Edition of IJPM Dedicated to the Mental Health Impact of COVID-19 both in Ireland and Internationally;
- (ii) College Statement on Racism and toll of inequality on mental health;
- (iii) Survey of Consultant Psychiatrists shows increase of HM referrals and relapse amongst those with mental illness following the Covid-19 Pandemic

# EAP COMMITTEE REPORTS

## HUMAN RIGHTS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE [Chair: Dr Pauline Twomey, Vice-Chair: Dr Ciaran Clarke](#)

### AIMS:

To provide support and advice to the College and its members on the ethical dimension of patient care.

To ensure there is an ethical input into College submissions, policy and position papers.

To ensure members have an awareness and expertise in Human Rights Legislation and its impact on mental health care.

- Dr Ciaran Clarke will shortly take on the role of Chair of the group.
- The Committee are planning to look at human rights aspects of healthcare during a pandemic, associated issues for vulnerable groups, as well as how tribunals were handled, telepsychiatry practices, etc. Also TBD will be associated ethical decision making during a pandemic and related HSE guidance on same.
- Also on the agenda for discussion is racism and affects of same on mental health.
- The Committee have also been asked by the College Postgraduate Training dept. to present the Professional Ethics for Psychiatrists document at Foundation Year Induction once again. This will be recorded/delivered live via videoconference.

[Next Meeting: 2nd July 2020](#)

## LAW COMMITTEE [Chair: Dr Mike Scully, Vice-Chair: Dr Valerie Murphy](#)

### AIM:

To provide expert psychiatric opinion based on mental health and law and to contribute to development of better mental health law.

### OBJECTIVES:

To respond to requests for submissions on legal issues related to mental health.

To inform and educate members on matters related to law and mental health.

To assist the College in informing the general public on matters related to law and mental health.

[Next Meeting: TBC](#)

## REFOCUS – RECOVERY EXPERIENCE FORUM OF CARERS AND USERS OF SERVICES [Joint Chairs: Dr Mia McLoughlin and Ms Christine McCabe](#)

### AIMS:

To engage actively in genuine partnership with the College so that training, ongoing competence and day to day practice of Psychiatry is informed and guided by those who have had experience of mental illness, or who have cared for those with mental illness. The forum comprises 23 members which includes service users/patients (8), family members/carers (8) & psychiatrists (8)

- A meeting of the committee was held via Zoom videoconference on Friday, 22nd May 2020.
- Diarmaid Ring will take up his newly appointed role of joint chair from September meeting.
- The relevant working groups will begin work on pilot videos in proposed series on “Psychiatric Diagnosis” and “Family Dynamics”. Sub-group meetings will be planned via Zoom in June.
- A number of group members continue work on a proposed online resource for families alongside Mental Health Ireland and HSE Department of Mental Health Engagement and Recovery.
- The format of meetings and group membership will be discussed at September meeting.

[Next Meetings: 18th September 2020](#)

# EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

## ***Mental Health Ireland and HSE Mental Health Recovery and Engagement***

REFOCUS members are currently meeting with Mental Health Ireland and HSE Mental Health Engagement and Recovery to co-produce an online resource (which will be housed on the HSE website) listing available supports and services for family members. The working group has met twice using Zoom Videoconferencing and is in the process of researching and collating resources.

## ***Engagement with Relevant Awareness Days on Twitter***

Carers Week 2020 and World Eating Disorders Day 2020 were highlighted on the College Blog and Twitter.