College of Psychiatrists President warns Offaly event that urgent solutions are needed for Traveller mental health crisis

- **Offaly Traveller Mental Health Education and Awareness Event takes place today (Wednesday) in Tullamore Court Hotel**

- **'Men account for roughly 80% of completed suicides in Ireland, but the Traveller suicide rate is seven times' that of the general population – this is unacceptable in the 21st century**

Wednesday October 28, 2026. The President of the College of Psychiatrists of Ireland (CPsychI) has said that urgent solutions are needed to address the mental health crisis among Travellers, which is having a hugely disproportionate effect on men.

Dr Lorcan Martin voiced his concerns ahead of the **Traveller Mental Health Education and Awareness Event**, which will be co-hosted today (Wednesday) by the College of Psychiatrists of Ireland and the Offaly Traveller Movement in Tullamore.

The event aims to support the Traveller community to recognise and discuss mental health difficulties, as well as relevant supports, resources and services that are available. It also aims to educate College members and health professionals about Traveller culture and history, as well as identify the barriers facing Travellers when accessing the healthcare services.

Dr Martin said that while the Government's focus on Traveller mental health in budgets and Oireachtas committees was welcome, there was a need for greater urgency by every regional and local service provider to offer the community culturally appropriate and inclusive services.

Dr Martin, who is also a consultant in general adult psychiatry, said: "The ongoing Traveller mental health crisis demands rapid solutions, as it is devastating that a single community can be experiencing such difficulties in Ireland today. This event in Tullamore is hugely important as it shines a light on that crisis, as well as offering solutions. Events like this one have led to a College position paper that offers practical and achievable actions to address this major issue, and I want to thank the Offaly Traveller Movement for their help in making this event happen.

"Men account for roughly 80% of completed suicides in Ireland, but the Traveller suicide rate is seven times' that of the general population – this is unacceptable in the 21st century. It is important that effective community supports be put in place to address this awful trend."

Sandra McDonagh, CEO of Offaly Traveller Movement, said: "Our collaboration with the College of Psychiatrists of Ireland represents an important opportunity to bring Traveller lived experience and clinical expertise together, challenge inequalities and influence how mental health services are delivered.

"Traveller mental health matters and we have developed a model that works to improve it. Now we need the recognition, investment, and commitment to make culturally appropriate mental health support accessible to Travellers nationally."

Editors' notes

*The **College of Psychiatrists of Ireland** is the professional and training body for psychiatrists in Ireland and represents 1,400 professional psychiatrists (both specialists and trainees) across the country. To become a specialist doctor in psychiatry (specialist consultant psychiatrist) a doctor must complete between six to seven years of the College training programme.*

***Travelling to Wellbeing** is Offaly Traveller Movement's community-led, culturally responsive mental health service, providing accessible counselling, social work, peer-led mental health programmes, suicide bereavement support and family and community interventions. Since its beginnings as a pilot in 2013, it has developed into a comprehensive model of mental health support, shaped by the needs and experiences of the Traveller community.*

ENDS

Issued on behalf of the College of Psychiatrists of Ireland by Gordon MRM

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