St Patrick's
Mental Health Services

Learning Outcomes from Founder's Day 2020

About Founder's Day 2020 - Shaping the Future of Irish Mental Healthcare

Every year, St Patrick's Mental Health Services (SPMHS) hold our Founder's Day conference to recognise and contribute to the continued legacy of our pioneering founder, Jonathan Swift. Taking place on Friday, 27 November, the 2020 event explored the future of mental health in Ireland, looking at the key features of an excellent mental health service, within the context of a new government and national mental health policy, in addition to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Prof Paul Fearon, Medical Director of SPMHS welcomed attendees and invited Mary Butler TD, Minister for Mental Health and Older People to give the opening address. We were joined by a panel of speakers representing different viewpoints, who shared their own perspectives on the future of mental healthcare.

- Paul Gilligan, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), St Patrick's Mental Health Services

- John Farrelly, CEO of the Mental Health Commission

- Fiona Coyle, CEO of Mental Health Reform

- Mary Favier, Immediate Past President of the Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP)

- Mark Smyth, Senior Clinical Psychologist with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and President of the Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI)

- Joseph Duffy, CEO of Jigsaw

- William Flannery, President of the College of Psychiatrists of Ireland

- Dr Amir Niazi, National Clinical Advisor and Group Lead for Mental Health in the Health Service Executive

- Martha Griffin, Chair of the Peer Support in Mental Health Programme in Dublin City University and a peer educator with the Recovery College

- Kevin Jones, carer representative, Board member and former Secretary General of EUFAMI

- Dr Damien Brennan, Associate Professor and Director of Undergraduate Teaching and Learning at the School of Nursing and Midwifery in Trinity College Dublin.

The keynote presentation was provided by Dainius Puras, former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health.

Key learning points

Speakers were asked to consider the question -

'What key features make an excellent mental health service?'

We outline the key themes below which were discussed over the course of the day, and highlight the main points made.

Key themes

1 Human rights	**2** Adequate funding and staffing	**3** A focus on recovery and person-centred care
4 An integrated and systemic approach	**5** Service user voice and experience	**6** Implementation of national policy and outcomes
7 Equitable access to services	**8** Understanding of mental health	**9** Impacts of the pandemic

1 Human rights

Key issues and recommendations:

- A human rights-based approach should be a cornerstone of mental health services - upholding and promoting human rights, rather than solely ensuring that violations do not occur.

- The right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of mental health is a fundamental human right which services should be guided by.

- The Mental Health Act should be reformed to protect the rights of people using mental health services

- Power imbalances within the mental health system should be addressed

- Health inequalities and the social determinants of mental health should be recognised.

- Services must align with the rights contained within the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, including informed consent, assumed capacity and decision-making supports where needed, and removal of all use of restraints, seclusion or enforced treatment

" Full implementation of a human rights-based approach is an obligatory pre-condition of effectively investing in mental health"

Dainius Puras,
former Special Rapporteur
on the Right to Health

" There's no doubt that there's a requirement for a coherent legal and policy framework to ensure the effective implementation of the principles of human rights, autonomy and self-determination"

Fiona Coyle,
CEO, Mental Health Reform

2 Adequate funding and staffing

Key issues and recommendations:

- Mental health services require adequate funding. A budget allocation of 10-12% has been recommended by Sláintecare and the World Health Organisation (WHO)

- Parity of esteem with the physical health system must be established

- Properly resourced community mental health teams

- Staffing strategy and workforce planning essential

"While more investment is needed, we also need to make wise investment. We need clear accountability and transparency in funding that's clearly linked to better outcomes for people."

Fiona Coyle,
CEO, Mental Health Reform

"Funding for mental health services must be increased and ring-fenced. All the evidence points to the need for parity of esteem with the physical health care system."

John Farrelly,
CEO, Mental Health Commission

3 A focus on recovery and person-centred care

Key issues and recommendations:

- Services must be recovery-oriented and person-centred

- Recovery approach serves to breakdown previous power dynamics, making service users agents of change, rather than passive recipients of care

- Diverse needs, including cultural competence, should be responded to by mental health services

- Range and choice of treatments should be available - open dialogue, hearing voices groups, recovery colleges

"A service should be driven by the goals of the person who's actually using that service, what it is that they are looking for help and support with."

Mark Smyth,
President of the Psychological Society of Ireland

"Sharing the Vision seeks to enhance mental health services across a continuum of supports; from mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention, to acute and specialist services, aiming to place the needs of the individual at the centre of service delivery"

Mary Butler,
Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People

4 An integrated and systemic approach

Key issues and recommendations:

- Greater integration between mental health and other services is needed, such as the judicial system

- An integrated and fully resourced community mental health care system is key

- General Practice assumes a key role in the mental health community

- Additional supports for, and greater involvement of families is needed

- A common electronic health record which would help remove the burden on service users repeatedly retelling their story

"Creating a proper, evidence-based, integrated community mental health care system must be the primary goal of our generation"

John Farrelly,
CEO, Mental Health Commission

"Electronic records would mean that a person's narrative and their story doesn't have to be retold over and over again. Its accessible, it's there."

Mark Smyth,
President of the Psychological Society of Ireland

"There is a need for more investment in the area of respite and focussed support services for families and family carers. Also it is important that we have to improve the evidence base of the value of caring by implementing longitudinal studies of family carers"

Kevin Jones,
EUFAMI

5 Service user voice and experience

Key issues and recommendations:

- Partnership with service users in governance, planning, and delivery of services

- Lived experience is a resource and the role of peer support should be expanded

- Lived experience should be at the centre of mental health reform. Recognising self-expertise of service users alongside the expertise of health professionals

- Goals and experiences of persons accessing services should be key service outcomes

- An independent robust complaints system will be necessary

" An excellent mental health service works in partnership with service users to plan, manage and evaluate the services it provides, and it affords service user participation because it understands that full involvement has been associated with positive clinical outcomes, improved self-empowerment and enhanced recovery."

Paul Gilligan,
CEO, St Patrick's Mental Health Services

" We should work to give power and decision-making back to people. Yes, clinicians are experts, but we are experts on ourselves."

Martha Griffin,
Chair of the Peer Support in Mental Health Programme in Dublin City University

" We need to be asking the question, what was your experience? Did you feel respected? Did you feel supported? And I think hearing the person's voice is the way that we do that. Was your voice heard during that journey through mental health services?"

Mark Smyth,
President of the Psychological Society of Ireland Programme in Dublin City University

6 Implementation of national policy and outcomes

Key issues and recommendations:

- Sharing the Vision is welcomed and its aspirations supported, and the commitment of the Minister to its implementation recognised

- Services need to be high quality and evidence-based

- A shift to a focus on outcomes achieved by the people using the services, and their experiences of the journey within the mental health system

- Learning from our history as regards policy implementation, and influence of our historical institutional legacy

- Re-establishment of a dedicated lead for mental health that reports directly to CEO of the HSE.

- Importance of progressing the national clinical programmes and establishment of a national forensic service, and addressing gaps in service provision such as dual diagnosis services and mental health intellectual disability services

"We must commit to implementing Sharing the Vision within the lifetime of the next two governments, we must deliver it".

John Farrelly,
CEO, Mental Health Commission

"Sharing the Vision opens a new chapter for Ireland's mental health system. The policy sets out a progressive framework for delivering better mental heath services. If properly resourced and delivered, this policy can have a transformative impact on our mental health system. This means people can get the support they need in their community to achieve their best possible mental health."

Fiona Coyle,
CEO, Mental Health Reform

"Over the 10-year lifespan of Sharing the Vision, the National Implementation and Monitoring Committee will be integral to maintaining the momentum necessary to translating the policy into reality, and to holding those responsible to account".

Mary Butler,
Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People

"The overarching aim of the national clinical programmes is to standardise quality evidence-based practice across mental health services".

Dr Amir Niazi,
National Clinical Advisor and Group Lead for Mental Health with the Health Service Executive

7 Equitable access to services

Key issues and recommendations:

- Ensuring equity of access to mental health services is needed

- Importance of early intervention, especially for young people
  - Frontloading early intervention services.

- Access should be community-based

- 'No wrong door' for young people who are on the autism spectrum and experiencing mental health needs

- People with mental health difficulties must have equal access and attention to their physical health needs, especially given increased morbidity and mortality rates amongst people with severe mental health difficulties

> "An excellent mental health service would ensure equitable access for all citizens. The right to good mental health care would be enshrined in legislation".
>
> *Paul Gilligan,*
> *CEO, St Patrick's Mental Health Services*

> "Those with severe mental illness should have good and appropriate access to physical healthcare as well."
>
> *William Flannery,*
> *President of the College of Psychiatrists of Ireland*

8 Understanding of mental health

Key issues and recommendations:

- A whole of society approach to promote and protect mental health

- Increased demand for services in response to social and emotional crises within the last thirty years and the commitment to provide responses to different levels of needs.

- Severe mental health difficulties such as schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder and major depression must not be marginalised within mental health services

- Mental health not solely the concern of the health sector, but requires action across a range of social and economic domains to recognise the significance of social determinants.

- Need to broaden our understanding of mental health difficulties, looking beyond symptoms to experiences, and seeing if people's basic rights are being met and working to address them. Multidisciplinary inputs such as occupational therapy and social work at earlier stages will help with this.

- Applying a trauma-informed lens. Need to recognise the high incidence of experience of trauma amongst people using mental health services and to embed an understanding of trauma and its impacts on people.

"Obstacles are outside of individuals who are diagnosed, these obstacles need to be removed through empowerment, inclusion, participation and non-discrimination"

Dainius Puras,
former Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health

"Nothing can be said about mental health in Ireland without an absolute understanding of the role of health inequalities and the social determinants of health."

Mary Favier,
Immediate Past President, Irish College of General Practitioners

9 Equitable access to services

Key issues and recommendations:

- Role of technology as an enabler to accessing services, while also recognising the digital divide that may act as a barrier for some. Importance of blended digital health approaches, acting to complement rather than replace face-to-face therapies. Needs to be evidence-based, safe and effective, and limitations need to be considered.

- Societal mental health impacts noted, in particular on younger and older age groups

- Impacts on healthcare, and mental healthcare workforce, and need for an adequately resourced occupational health service for the healthcare system

- Impacts on families and carers wellbeing, especially loneliness

- Opportunity provided by the pandemic to rethink our approach and drive necessary structural changes to ensure adequate service provision

" This is a crisis but it also brings an opportunity, a once-in-a-generation opportunity to really address the current shortcomings in our system. The future of our mental health services in Ireland will be shaped in the actions that we take in the coming years. Let's not let down our future generations."

Fiona Coyle,
CEO, Mental Health Reform

" We need to ensure that e-mental health is evidence-based, safe and effective, avoiding services that are not clinically validated, regulated or provided by appropriately qualified mental health professionals"

John Farrelly,
CEO, Mental Health Commission

" The mental health impact of COVID-19 is going to live long after the physical health curve has been flattened, and essentially, we have to care for the carers too by making sure there's enough of them available to support the people that we work with, but also each other."

Mark Smyth,
President of the Psychological Society of Ireland
Programme in Dublin City University

" We have a strong, growing evidence base in terms of the complementary nature of e-health and of technology, but we need to develop a much stronger base around that and how we can further support the work that we do"

Joseph Duffy,
CEO, Jigsaw

Resources and links to organisations represented at Founder's Day 2021

- Caring4Carers survey

- College of Psychiatrists in Ireland

- National Clinical Programmes

- Irish College of General Practitioners

- Jigsaw

- Mental Health Reform

- My World Survey 2

- My Voice Matters Service Users Report

- Psychological Society of Ireland

- Recovery College

- Sharing the Vision: A mental health policy for everyone

- St Patrick's Mental Health Services

- The Cost of Caring study

- The role of the Special Rapporteur on the right to health

- YourMentalHealth.ie

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