

**St Patrick's**  
Mental Health Services



# Founder's Day

## The Mental Health of Migrants and Refugees

1 December 2023



# Founder's Day programme



## Schedule

### Welcomes and introductions

- 9.15am **Jan Ní Fhlanagáin**  
*Moderator*
- 9.25am **Professor Paul Fearon**  
*Medical Director, St Patrick's Mental Health Services*
- 9.30am **Opening address (via video message)**  
**Mary Butler, TD**  
*Minister for Mental Health and Older People*

## Keynote address

- 9.40am **Migration, ethnicity and mental health:  
A social perspective**  
**Professor Craig Morgan**  
*Professor of Social Epidemiology,  
King's College, London*

In the keynote address, Professor Craig Morgan explores the prevalence of mental health difficulties among migrant populations, highlighting key research in relation to mental health presentations among migrants.

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- 10.20am **Break (15 minutes)**
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## Session one

10.35am **Journey of resilience**

**Safa Kharita**

*Expert by experience*

Safa Kharita shares her journey as a refugee, from the reasons she left Syria, to going to Lebanon and then coming to Ireland. Safa will discuss the challenges, feelings and thoughts through each stage and how they affected her, as well as discussing where she started, where she is now and where she wants to be in the future.

10.50am **Mental health of refugees: Lessons learned from low resource settings**

**Dr Pieter Ventevogel**

*Senior Mental Health Expert with UNHCR, the refugee agency of the United Nations*

In his talk, Dr Ventevogel will discuss what has been learned from implementing psychosocial support interventions with refugees in low resource settings, highlighting the importance of strengthening family and community support, setting up scalable psychological interventions and integrating mental health into refugee primary healthcare.

11.05am **Panel discussion**

*Professor Craig Moran, Safa Kharita,  
Dr Pieter Ventevogel*

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11.35am **Break (15 minutes)**

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## Session two

11.50am

### Theory and practice: Mental health, people seeking protection and the experience of the Irish Refugee Council

**Nick Henderson**

*CEO, Irish Refugee Council*

Nick Henderson will explore the health framework, in theory and practice, that is available to people seeking protection, as well as discussing the challenges people face and the experience of support organisations like the Irish Refugee Council from a day-to-day casework perspective and more advocacy for change.

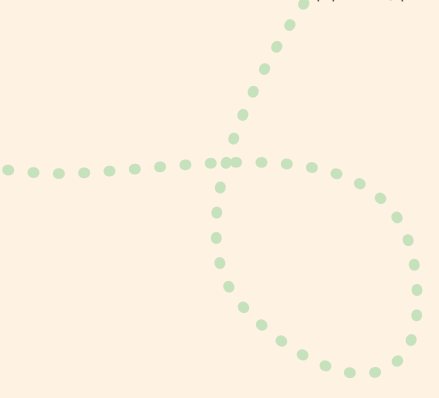
12.05pm

### Mental health among migrant women

**Dr Caroline Munyi**

*Women's Health Coordinator, AkiDWA*

Dr Caroline Munyi will explore mental health among migrant women, outlining the approach of AkiDWA, an organisation committed to creating a just society where all women waiting approval have equal opportunities and access to resources in every aspect of life. This talk will also explore research related to women and mental health and stigma, as well as discussing next steps such as targeted interventions, wrap-around supports, policy level and cultural competence.





12.20pm **Practise resilience**

**Jennifer Chipa**

*Expert by experience and mental health peer advocate*

In her talk, Jennifer will explore resilience and what she has learned about different stress and types of resilience, as well as ways to manage stress. Practising resilience has helped Jennifer change her life and her talk reinforces the power of resilience.

12.35pm **Panel discussion**

*Nick Henderson, Dr Caroline Munyi,  
Jennifer Chipa*

1.00pm **Closing remarks**



## Speakers 2023



### Welcome and introduction

#### Jan Ní Fhlanagáin

*Moderator*



A broadcaster at RTÉ, Jan has a keen interest in the role of media in reducing stigma around mental health difficulties as well as its duty to report

sensitively and responsibly on mental health-related stories. These are values which consistently inform her work, including the mental health podcast series *You OK?* which ran throughout the first 18 months of the COVID-19 pandemic, *Out & Proud*, on RTÉ Radio 1 which shared stories of love and acceptance from the LGBTQIA+ community and *What's For Dinner?* for RTÉ Jnr, which champions the importance of fun and community when it comes to food. She is currently working on a series about neurodiversity.

Jan has worked with St Patrick's Mental Health Services for a number of years on a range of projects including pop-up radio station Walk In My Shoes FM, podcasts for WIMS Live as well as moderating panel events both in person and online.

### Welcome and introduction

#### Professor Paul Fearon

*Medical Director, St Patrick's Mental Health Services*



Paul Fearon is Medical Director at St Patrick's Mental Health Services and Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Trinity College Dublin (TCD). He is the current chair

of the Academic Faculty of the College of Psychiatrists of Ireland. Professor Fearon worked as a consultant general adult psychiatrist in the Maudsley Hospital, London for seven years.

As a senior lecturer at the Institute of Psychiatry in London, he headed the Section of Social Psychiatry and Epidemiology. He returned to Dublin to take up his post as Clinical Professor in Psychiatry and General Adult Consultant Psychiatrist in St Patrick's University Hospital and TCD in 2008.

Professor Fearon has published over 100 peer-reviewed papers, largely in the areas of the epidemiology and the role of socioenvironmental factors in schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, and in quality of care in mental health services.

## Opening address (via video message)

### Mary Butler, TD

*Minister for Mental Health and Older People*



Mary is a lifelong community activist and member of Fianna Fáil. She has a strong grounding in the retail sector and successfully run the family business, a grocery shop in Portlawn, for 17 years.

In 2014 she contested the Local elections in the Comeragh area and won a seat. Mary then secured a nomination in 2016 to contest the General Election. Mary was elected to the Dáil on the first count, receiving 10,603 votes and topping the poll.

From 2016 to July 2020, Mary was appointed Fianna Fáil Spokesperson for Older People and Health Promotion, also chairing the All Party Oireachtas Group on Dementia. Mary produced several pieces of legislation including Bills on Fair Deal and Mandatory Sentencing for Crimes against Older People.

Following her re-election to the Dáil in February's General Election, she was appointed to the Special Dáil Committee with responsibility for COVID-19 response.

In July, Mary had the honour of being appointed Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People, speaking of her delight and honour to be first female Waterford TD to have been appointed Minister.

Mary is married to Mick, has three children and relies on a great family support network.

## Keynote address

### Migration, ethnicity and mental health: A social perspective

#### Professor Craig Morgan

*Professor of Social Epidemiology, King's College London*



Craig Morgan is Professor of Social Epidemiology, Head of the Health Service and Population Research

Department at the Institute of Psychiatry, King's College London, and Co-Director of the ESRC Centre for Society and Mental Health at King's College London.

He has previously held a MRC Special Training Fellowship in Health Services Research, and completed his PhD in Social Psychiatry at the Institute of Psychiatry. His research is focused on social and cultural influences on the onset, course and outcome of mental disorders, particularly during adolescence, and he has led multi-country programmes on these topics.

## Session one



### Journey of resilience

#### Safa Kharita

*Expert by experience*



Safa Kharita is from Syria. Safa fled Syria with her parents and family in 2013. She graduated and worked as a nurse in the intensive care unit at a hospital in Lebanon. Safa is currently studying BSc Science, specialising in pharmacology at UCD.

### Mental health of refugees: Lessons learned from low resource settings

#### Dr Pieter Ventevogel

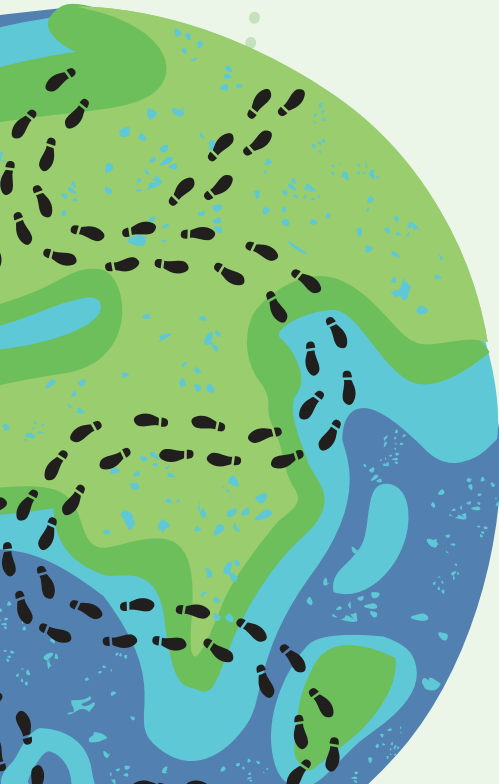
*Senior Mental Health Expert with UNHCR, the refugee agency of the United Nations*



Peter Ventevogel, MD, PhD, is a psychiatrist and a medical anthropologist with over 22 years of experience in humanitarian and development

programming for non-governmental organisations and the United Nations around mental health and psychosocial support for populations affected by violence and displacement. Since 2013, he has served as Senior Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Officer with the UNHCR, the refugee agency of the United Nations in Geneva.

In this role he supports country operations of the UNHCR with technical guidance around mental health and psychosocial support for refugees and other forcibly displaced populations. He has done more than 75 field missions to 35 countries and has been a key contributor to clinical tools in global mental health.





## Session two

### Theory and practice: Mental health, people seeking protection and the experience of the Irish Refugee Council

#### Nick Henderson

*CEO, Irish Refugee Council*



Nick Henderson is the CEO of the Irish Refugee Council and is responsible for operational management, fundraising, advocacy and policy development, media and day-to-day governance of the Council. Prior to his appointment as CEO in October 2016, Nick managed 'Integrity at Work', an initiative of Transparency International Ireland promoting supportive working environments for whistle-blowers.

Nick has also managed Amnesty International Ireland's work on economic, social and cultural rights, was Legal Officer with the IRC Independent Law Centre from 2011-2014 and also worked with the Migrant Rights Centre Ireland on the criminalisation of forced labour. Prior to coming to Ireland, Nick was a legal representative for people seeking asylum with the Refugee Legal Centre in London from 2004-2010, during which he took a sabbatical and was Legal Officer with Jesuit Refugee Service in Cambodia.

### Mental health among migrant women

#### Dr Caroline Munyi

*Women's Health Coordinator, AkiDwa*



Dr Caroline Munyi, Women's Health Coordinator with AkiDwa, is a gender, peace and development professional with extensive experience

in gender-based violence behaviour change mechanisms, gender mainstreaming and equality, HIV/AIDS care and management, project design and development, monitoring and evaluation, project cycle management, capacity building of staff and community, proposal and grant writing.

Dr Munyi did her MPhil and PhD at the University of Dublin, Trinity, in the field of International Peace Studies. She has been living in Dublin, Ireland for the last nine years.



## Practise resilience

### Jennifer Chipa

*Expert by experience and mental health peer advocate*



Jennifer Haru Chipa is originally from Zimbabwe and currently resides in Ireland, which she considers as her home. Jennifer is a Mental Health and Wellbeing Coach and Peer Support Worker for individuals living in direct provision or facing challenging

circumstances.

To enhance her knowledge and skills in supporting immigrants and ethnic minorities, Jennifer completed specialised training with Cairde Pathways to WellBeing, where she gained insights into migrants' mental health. Additionally, Jennifer joined a training programme as a mental Health Peer Advocate with Cairde.

Jennifer is a certified Mental Health Coach and holds a certificate in 'Train the Trainer', a QQI Level 6 Training Delivery and Evaluation course. With a focus on mental health and wellbeing, she now provides life coaching and peer support.

As a volunteer, Jennifer is actively involved with Mental Health Ireland on their various coproduction teams including the Creativity for Wellbeing project. She is also a member of the Migrant Mental Health Task Force for Ireland at Mental Health Europe and sits on the Advisory Board for Cultural Humility for Mental Health Care Project with Dublin City University.

Jennifer is currently volunteering with Cairde as a Mental Health Wellbeing Peer Support Worker.



## St Patrick's Mental Health Services

St Patrick's Mental Health Services is Ireland's largest independent, not-for-profit mental health service. Our vision is for a society where all citizens are empowered and given the opportunity to live mentally healthy lives.

We provide community and outpatient care through our Dean Clinics and day patient services, inpatient care and Homecare through our three approved centres; St Patrick's University Hospital, St Patrick's, Lucan (St Edmundsbury) and Willow Grove Adolescent Unit. We provide a range of mental health services that cater for addictions and dual diagnosis, anxiety disorders, bipolar disorder, depression, eating disorders, psychosis, and mental health difficulties in older adults as well as young adults.

Health professionals can contact us with any queries regarding referrals to our services by contacting our Referral and Assessment Service on 01 249 3635.

**St Patrick's**  
Mental Health Services



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