

2011/ 2012 Division of Health Psychology Annual Report presented on 4th April, 2012 in Queen's University Belfast at the DHP's 9th annual 'Psychology, Health & Medicine' conference

Committee Membership

The 2011/ 2012 DHP Committee was elected at the 2011 AGM held on the 4th April, 2011 at NUI Galway. Members of the 2011/2012 Committee were Anne Hickey (Chair), Catherine Darker (Treasurer), Philippa Coughlan (Secretary), Frank Doyle (Membership Secretary), Laura Coffey (PR), Karen Keogh, Andrea Gibbons and Lisa Mellon.

Number of meetings in the year

Committee members attended four ordinary meetings, as well as today's Annual General Meeting of the Division at QUB (4th April 2012). Members of the Committee also represented the Division on additional committees, as follows: Anne Hickey was co-opted onto PSI Council in December 2010 and has taken over Chair of the Scientific Affairs Board (SAB); Catherine Darker was elected to Council in November 2011 and is Chair of the PSI Standing Committee on Psychometric Evaluation (ScoPE); Philippa Coughlan represented DHP at the joint PSI/NIBPS Careers event held in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick on 3rd March 2012; and Karen Keogh is representing the DHP on the PSI Steering Group addressing the issue of supervision across the specialisms of psychology with a view to drawing up a set of guidelines and a policy applicable to all roles and all specialisms. Committee members also had involvement on the scientific committee for this year's Psychology, Health and Medicine Conference, and had input to the 'Irish Psychologist'.

Activities of the Division

Professional Development: NUI Galway applied to PSI Council for accreditation of the MSc programme in Health Psychology last April. The accreditation panel was formed in May, chaired by David Hevey (TCD) and included Anne Hickey (RCSI), Deirdre Desmond (NUI Maynooth) and Pamela Gallagher (DCU). The panel conducted a site visit on July 1st 2011. The outcome of this accreditation process was a recommendation to PSI Council that the MSc course be accredited. Council sanctioned accreditation in September 2011, prior to the 2011-2012 course intake. In effect, this provides a Stage 1 qualification in Health Psychology in the Republic of Ireland.

Criteria for a Stage 2 qualification in Health Psychology currently do not exist in PSI. A panel is being formed to address this and to devise the criteria for accrediting a Stage 2 qualification in Health Psychology. It is anticipated that this panel will form in May-June 2012, with a view to developing criteria by the end of the year. These will then form the basis for development of further professional training in Health Psychology in Ireland.

Employment of health psychologists: The DHP Committee wrote to PSI Council following the PSI AGM in November 2011 about the advertisement of psychology posts by the HSE that identify health and forensic psychologists as ineligible to apply. The Division of Counselling and Psychotherapy had raised this issue at the PSI AGM following correspondence prior to the conference. This has been discussed at Council, with an agreement that there is a need for equity of access to employment for all qualified and competent psychologists. Following the most recent Council meeting, the PSI President (Dr. Michael Drumm) and the newly appointed Director of Professional Development (Dr. Gerry

Mulhern) wrote to all Heads of Psychological Services nationally highlighting the need to consider all applicants based on competencies for the available post, rather than the specific qualification of the applicant. This is a significant positive development in relation to equity of access to employment for Irish health psychologists. However, there is much work yet to be done, not least of which is to establish Doctoral level training in health psychology in Ireland.

Statutory Registration: Statutory registration of psychologists was to take place in April 2012. This has now been put back to approximately the same time in 2013. Based on the survey of DHP membership conducted in 2010 and the subsequent request agreed at PSI Council all full members of the DHP who are also Registered Psychologist members of PSI will be eligible for specialist registration as Health Psychologists when specialist registration commences in 2013.

Health Insurance: The Division has worked with the Division of Counselling Psychology and PSI to arrange a facility to allow the public to apply for reimbursements from their health insurers for the cost of attending private sessions with professionally qualified practitioner health psychologists in Ireland. There are legal issues to be clarified in this regard, which is delaying progress on this issue currently.

PSI Annual Conference 2011: A DHP sponsored Health Psychology symposium entitled "Psychological issues in chronic illness" was convened at the PSI conference in November. Convened by Anne Hickey, it consisted of five presentations, as follows:

1. Anne Hickey Emer Shelly, Ronan Conroy, Hannah McGee. Knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of the Irish general public in response to a national stroke awareness campaign;
2. Claire Donnellan, Ronan Collins, Des O' Neill. Mapping patients' experiences after stroke onto a person-centred intervention framework;
3. Sally Doherty, Molly Byrne, Andrew Murphy, Hannah McGee. The CHARMS Study: Patients' views about discussing sexual issues following coronary heart disease;
4. Aisling Sheehan & Hannah McGee. Psychological and service- related factors as one-year predictors of persistent non-cardiac chest discomfort;
5. Patricia White, B. Korn, Liam O' Siorain, R. O' Donnell. Integrating palliative care into non-malignant chronic disease management.

Members of the DHP Committee also attended the PSI conference to make available promotional material in relation to Health Psychology and the Division.

The DHP issues a call annually for a sponsored symposium from its members. We are issuing a call at this AGM for proposals for a symposium for this year's PSI conference, to be held in the Rochestown Park Hotel, Cork from 8th-11th November.

BPS DHP and EHPS Annual Conferences: Applications are invited for sponsorship to attend the BPS DHP conference or the EHPS conference. One application was submitted in the past year for attendance at the EHPS and this sponsorship was provided. DHP Annual Conference 2012: The Department of Psychology, QUB is hosting the 9th annual 'Psychology, Health and Medicine' conference on the 4th of April 2012. This conference is a joint venture between the PSI DHP and the NIBPS DHP. It showcases important research in health psychology in Ireland and the UK, and is a key event for people working in the areas of psychology and health in Ireland. The keynote speakers at the conference are Professor David Marks, Editor, Journal of Health Psychology; Professor Ronan

O'Carroll, School of Psychology, University of Stirling; and Dr. AnnMarie Groarke, Head of the School of Psychology, NUI Galway. PSI has awarded 4 CPD credits for attending the conference.

Workshops: Building on the success of previous workshops, the DHP held a one-day experiential workshop at NUI Galway on Tuesday 5th April 2011, the day after the Psychology, Health & Medicine Conference. The workshop was entitled 'Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for Health and Psychological Well-being'. It was organised by Philippa Coughlan, DHP Committee Secretary and was delivered by Aisling Curtin, a Counselling Psychologist and qualified ACT trainer. The workshop was very popular, and those who participated rated it highly. Participants learned and experienced the 6 core processes of ACT, how to apply these in clinical practice, and how to integrate mindfulness and values exercises into existing protocols. The workshop was of interest to a wide range of psychologists, particularly health, clinical and counselling psychologists and participants were awarded 4 PSI CPD credits.

PR: The Division continues to work on publicising Health Psychology in the PSI through contributions to the IP, developing the DHP webpage on the PSI website, provision of Health Psychology information at the annual PSI conference and other events. Anne Hickey (Chair) gave the Health Psychology presentation for the Open Day last November which marked the launch of the new PSI premises at Grantham Street (podcast available on PSI website). The Division hopes to expand its contribution in the future and extend its activities to create greater awareness of health psychology in the public. Establishing a Stage 2 qualification in Ireland will significantly help in promoting this awareness.

Conference bursaries: The DHP Committee approve each year a number of conference travel bursaries to contribute towards conference registration fees, accommodation, and travel expenses for UK or European health psychology conferences. In order to be eligible, the applicant must:

- be a current member of the PSI Division of Health Psychology
- have confirmation of acceptance of an abstract for either oral or poster presentation at the conference.

Applicants must email the Division Treasurer with the application form and confirmation of acceptance to present at the conference. If the bursary is awarded, applicants must pay the costs at the outset and claim reimbursement from the DHP. It is proposed that a maximum of €1000 per annum is made available towards bursaries, on condition that the financial status of the Division is satisfactory.

Links with other organisations

In the past year, these links included:

1. There was liaison with members of the Northern Ireland Branch of the BPS in organising Psychology, Health and Medicine 2012;
2. The DHP nominate a National Delegate to the European Health Psychology Society, who acts as a liaison between EHPS and the local DHP. Dr. Molly Byrne, NUI Galway, is the current National Delegate (2011+).

3. Dr David Hevey (TCD) is representing health psychology in Ireland on the Advisory Committee to the Congress on Psychology for Health in the European Federation of Psychological Associations (EFPA).

Membership of the Division

The Division currently has 59 members in total, 14 are affiliate and 45 are full members. There are two new members in the past year. Membership is updated regularly, but promotion of membership of the Division is an ongoing priority and we would urge all members to encourage their colleagues and students to join.

Work in progress/plans for the coming year

Employment of health psychologists: While there have been recent positive developments on this issue, the DHP will continue to work with PSI Council in this regard.

Professional Development: Significant effort in developing a comprehensive set of competencies of health psychologists was led by Catherine Darker in 2010-2011. This work will now be subsumed into the sub-committee that will work in the coming months on the development of Stage 2 accreditation criteria for PSI, to enable development and subsequent accreditation of developments in education and training of health psychologists in Ireland in the future. This work is key to future recognition of health psychology as a practitioner discipline within the Irish health services.

DHP Annual Conference 2013: The 10th Annual Psychology, Health and Medicine Conference will be hosted by the Department of Psychology in Dublin City University in mid to late May (date to be confirmed). The Division's next AGM will be held during this conference.