

## EHPS Annual National Delegate Report 2016/2017

---

**Country:** Ireland

**National Delegate:** Jenny Mc Sharry

---

### **i) Health Psychology in the country**

#### Psychological Society of Ireland Division of Health Psychology (PSI DHP)

The PSI DHP has 61 members (49 Full and 12 Affiliate).

The 2016/2017 DHP Committee was elected at the Division's 2016 Annual General Meeting held on 3rd March 2016 at the Psychology Health and Medicine Conference, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. Frank Doyle (Chair), Gerry Molly (Past Chair), Marie Pertl (Hon. Secretary), Patrick Murphy (Hon. Treasurer), Jenny Mc Sharry (Membership Secretary), Eimear Morrissey (Public Relations Officer), Emma Carr, Claire Donnellan, Caroline Kelleher, Lisa Mellon, Ailish O'Brien were elected to the committee. Committee members attend four ordinary Committee meetings and one Annual General Meeting each year.

#### Work Related to Professional Recognition in Health Psychology

The employment of Health Psychologists in the Irish Public Health Service was considered as part of a Health Service Executive (HSE) Psychology Eligibility Review Group tasked with reviewing the eligibility criteria required for the recruitment and appointment of Psychologists at entry and promotional grades. This review group reported to the Director of Human Resources in the HSE and the report was made public in June 2016. The below recommendation was made in relation to Health Psychology:

"The review group recommended that a working group be established to further identify possible roles within the Health & Wellbeing and Acute Hospitals Divisions where the competencies of health psychologists can bring added value to the service provision in these areas".

PSI Council has advised that the HSE have formed an Implementation Group relating to the recommendations outlined in the report. The DHP are liaising with PSI Council as to how to contribute to the work of this Implementation Group.

#### Legislation

CORU, Ireland's Health & Social Care Professionals Council and multi-profession health regulator, is unlikely to open the Psychologist Registration Board this year. The DHP continues to operate its own Specialist Directory of Health Psychologists that been ratified by PSI Council.

## II) Education, training & professionalization

### 1. PROMOTION OF HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY

The DHP publicises Health Psychology through events, the DHP page on the PSI website (<http://www.psihq.ie/psi-division-health-psychology>) Social Media accounts (Twitter: @PSI\_DHP and Facebook: [www.facebook.com/PSIDHP/](http://www.facebook.com/PSIDHP/)) and contributions to the Irish Psychology, the official PSI publication for discussion of issues and topics relevant to psychologists in Ireland.

DHP contributions to the Irish Psychologist this year include:

- July-August 2016 edition: Two page special feature on the 13th PHM conference.
- September 2016 edition: Special feature in the "Society News" section on the DHP awards, including photos of the 2016 recipients and call for applications.
- November 2016 edition: Save the date announcement for PHM 2017.
- Dec/Jan 2017 edition: Announcement of pre-conference workshops at PHM.

The DHP also has a twice-yearly newsletter that is circulated to all members. In future, the DHP newsletter will be submitted for publication to the 'The Irish Psychologist', the official PSI publication for discussion of issues and topics relevant to psychologists in Ireland.

### 2. EDUCATION AND TRAINING INITIATIVES/PROGRAMS

On-going health psychology courses available in Ireland are: a PSI accredited MSc in Health Psychology at NUI Galway; a British Psychological Society accredited MSc at University of Ulster; and a 4-year structured PhD in Psychology and Health at NUI Galway.

The MSc in Health Psychology at NUI Galway underwent re-accreditation in 2016; a re-accreditation visit took place on 21st July 2016. Course documentation was reviewed in advance of visit, and a report was submitted to PSI on 25th July. PSI accepted the recommendation of the re-accreditation panel and the MSc is reaccredited up to and including the 2020-21 intake.

There is a new professional qualification, the PhD in Health Psychology Practice (UK Stage 2 equivalent) led by Dr Molly Byrne and Dr Jenny McSharry that has been approved by NUI Galway with a first intake in September 2017. This programme will aim to seek professional accreditation in 2018.

## III) Activities

### 1. CONFERENCES & MEETINGS

PSI DHP Annual Psychology Health and Medicine Conference: 3 March 2017

The Psychology, Health and Medicine conference is an annual joint venture between the PSI and Northern Ireland British Psychological Society Division of Health Psychology. The conference aims to promote high quality research at the interface of psychology, health and medicine, and to facilitate social and professional networks among people working in this area.

The 14th Annual Psychology, Health and Medicine conference of the PSI DHP was hosted by the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (<http://www.rcsi.ie/phm2017>). The conference was organised by conference chair Dr Frank Doyle and included 40 Oral presentations and 82 posters. Keynote speakers were Professor Pamela Gallagher (Dublin City University), Professor Liam Delaney (University College Dublin and University of Stirling) and Professor Susan Michie (University College London).

There were two pre-conference workshops on: 'Introduction to Bayesian analysis in Stata' by Dr Garrett Greene, RCSI and 'The tyranny of participation? Benefits and guidance on how to get key stakeholders involved in your research' by Dr Elaine Byrne, RCSI.

Next year's conference will be hosted by the University of Ulster, and will be organised by conference chair Professor Dr Tony Cassidy.

## 2. PUBLICATIONS

The DHP Annual Report 2016-2017 was presented at the DHP Annual General Meeting on 3rd March 2017 in Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland and circulated to all DHP members.

## 3. AWARDS, RECOGNITIONS ETC

### PSI DHP Early Career Awards

The PSI DHP Hannah McGee Excellence in Research/Practice Award was awarded to Dr Jenny Mc Sharry from the National University of Ireland, Galway. The PSI DHP Ruth Curtis Postgraduate Excellence in Research/Practice Award was awarded to PhD student Eimear Morrissey from NUI Galway. The applications were independently reviewed by three external international reviewers (Profs Falko Sniehotta, Paul Norman and Ronan O'Carroll).

### Conference Bursaries:

The DHP Committee awarded one conference travel bursary to contribute towards attendance to a Health Psychology conference to Patrick Murphy (Trinity College Dublin). Patrick attended the European Health Psychology Society conference in Aberdeen and gave an oral presentation on: "The HIV revelation model: predicting the disclosure of HIV seropositivity during casual sex between men."

## 4. PLANNED/FUTURE ACTIVITIES AND INITIATIVES

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference of the European Health Psychology Society will be hosted by the National University of Ireland from 21-25 August. The conference theme is "Health Psychology Across the Lifespan: Innovations in Research, Practice and Policy" and Dr Gerry Molly is the conference chair.