

# Annual Report - Ireland

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Psychological Society  
of Ireland Division of  
Health Psychology

(PSI DHP) Committee

The 2015/2016 DHP Committee was elected at the Division's 2015 AGM held on 1st April 2015 at Queens University Belfast. Gerry Molloy (Chair), Frank Doyle (Past Chair), Lisa Hynes (Hon. Treasurer), Lisa Mellon (Hon. Secretary), Teresa Corbett (Public Relations), Mary Ivers (Membership Secretary), Jenny McSharry, Stephen Gallagher, Catherine Darker, Molly Byrne and Sally Doherty were elected. Samantha Dockray and Vincent McDarby were subsequently co-opted.

The PSI DHP currently has 56 members (9 Affiliate, 47 Full).

## Continuing Education

On-going health psychology courses available in Ireland are: a fully 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.

There is a new Stage 2 PhD in Health Psychology Practice led by Dr Molly Byrne and Dr Jenny McSharry that has been approved by NUI Galway with a first intake in September 2016. This is the first professional health psychology training programme available in the Republic of Ireland. Trainees, through supervised practice in applied settings, will develop core health psychology practice skills to work as Health Psychology Practitioners. This programme will aim to seek professional accreditation in 2017.

## Work Related to Professional Recognition in Health Psychology

The employment of Health Psychologists in the Irish Public Health Service is being considered by 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. Gerry Molloy and Frank Doyle met with the review group on the 24th July 2015 in HSE Offices to discuss the current activities and status of Health Psychology in Ireland. This review group has reported to the Director of Human Resources in the HSE and the report is due to be made public in the coming months.

## Legislation

CORU, Ireland's multi-profession health regulator, is unlikely to open the Psychologist Registration Board before the end of this year. The DHP continues to operate its own Specialist Register of Health Psychologists that has been ratified by PSI Council.

## Conferences

### *PSI Annual Conference November 2015*

A DHP-sponsored symposium entitled 'Changing Healthcare Professional's Behaviour' was convened by Gerry Molloy at the PSI Conference in Galway, consisting of 4 presentations:

- Frank Doyle et al. The delivery of smoking cessation advice to hospitalised smokers: A two-hospital survey

- Gerry Molloy et al., General practitioners support of adherence to and uptake of prescription contraception: An exploratory study

- Molly Byrne et al., From evidence base to intervention specification: Example of a sexual counselling intervention in cardiac rehabilitation

- Lisa Hynes et al., Service providers' perspectives on hospital clinic attendance rates among young adults with type 1 diabetes

*PSI DHP Annual Psychology Health and Medicine Conference 27 May 2016*

The 13th Annual Psychology, Health and Medicine conference of the PSI DHP was hosted by University College Cork on Friday 27th May and organised by Conference Chair Samantha Dockray (<http://phm2016.ucc.ie/welcome-2/>).

The Psychology, Health and Medicine conference is a joint venture between the PSI and Northern Ireland British Psychological Society Divisions 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.

Two pre-conference workshops on: 'Participatory Action Research for Health Promotion and Evaluation' and 'Designing for Health: User-Centered Design of Mobile Health Technologies' were held on Thursday 26th May 2016. A Public Lecture was also held on Thursday 26th May entitled 'Tobacco and E-Cigarettes: the good, the bad and the ugly' by Professor Kenneth Ward (University of Memphis). Keynote speakers for the conference were Dr Molly Byrne (NUI Galway), Professor Jane Ogden, and Professor Ivan Perry, (University College Cork).

Next year's conference will be hosted by the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, and will be organised by conference chair Frank Doyle.

## Public Relations

The DHP publicises Health Psychology through

events, the DHP page on the PSI website, Social Media accounts (@PSI\_DHP and Facebook: [www.facebook.com/PSIDHP/](http://www.facebook.com/PSIDHP/)) and through contributions to 'The Irish Psychologist'. The October 2015 Irish Psychologist included a special 10 page feature entitled "Health Psychology In Ireland: Past, Present & a Bright Future" which including the following:

- A Note from the Chair
- History of Health Psychology in Ireland
- DHP Early Career Investigator Award
- Prize winners at the Recent Health Psychology Events
  - European Health Psychology Society Early Career Award 2015
  - Synergy Expert Meeting Report: mHealth for Behaviour Change
  - Event Report: European Health Psychology Society Conference
  - mHealth Research Group National University of Ireland Galway

## Awards and Bursaries

*Early Career Investigator Awards:*

Two DHP awards were introduced this year named after pioneers of Health Psychology in Ireland. The PSI DHP Hannah McGee Excellence in Research/Practice Award was awarded to Dr Lisa Mellon (Royal College of Surgeons). The PSI DHP Ruth Curtis Postgraduate Excellence in Research/Practice Award was awarded to Teresa Corbett (NUI Galway). Applications were reviewed and approved by an international panel of leading health psychologists consisting of Professor Marie Johnston (University of Aberdeen), Professor Ronan O'Carroll (University of Stirling) and Professor Daryl O'Connor (University of Leeds).

*Conference Bursaries:*

The DHP Committee awarded one conference travel bursary to contribute towards attendance to a Health Psychology conference to Amy Brogan

(Trinity College Dublin). Amy attended the European Health Psychology Society conference in Cyprus and gave an oral presentation on “A network approach to understanding child and parent causal attributions in childhood obesity”. Amy wrote a conference report which was published in the October 2015 issue of the Irish Psychologist.



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