

SIG Newsletter 2022

Introduction, Dr Trudi Seneviratne, Registrar

I am delighted that we have our first annual newsletter to share with our members the fantastic work of our Special Interest Groups (SIGs). The College has 15 Special Interest Groups which provide a forum for members to come together in a particular area of psychiatry.

Our SIGs lead on key issues within psychiatry and mental health, such as diversity and marginalised groups. Each Special Interest Group has a Chair, a Finance Officer, and an informal Executive Committee.



Trudi Seneviratne,
Registrar

They are:

- Adolescent forensic
- Arts psychiatry
- Digital psychiatry
- Evolutionary psychiatry
- History of psychiatry
- Neurodevelopmental psychiatry
- Occupational psychiatry
- Philosophy and psychiatry
- Private and independent practice
- Rainbow (LGBTQ+)
- Spirituality
- Sport and psychiatry
- Transcultural psychiatry
- Women and mental health
- Volunteering and international

SIGs are created where there are particular areas of psychiatry that our members want to focus on.

Whilst we have a capacity for 15 groups at any one time, this does not prevent members from coming together more informally to discuss other areas of interest and using College facilities to meet.

You will see that the SIGS have been very active with numerous conferences, activities and an exhibition. I am grateful to all our SIGs for taking forward important aspects of psychiatry and encourage you to become members of as many as you want.

With warmest wishes,



Trudi Seneviratne
Registrar

Adolescent Forensic Special Interest Group

The Adolescent Forensic Psychiatry SIG aims to raise awareness of the value of forensic adolescent psychiatry within, and outside of, the College, and to encourage professional networking, dissemination of knowledge and appropriate research on the subject. It acts as a forum for psychiatrists and others interested in adolescent forensic psychiatry to share ideas, dilemmas and research ideas. The SIG maintains good working relationships with NHS and private facilities concerned with the care of adolescents who present with forensic issues.



Gill Bell, Chair

The SIG put on a remote conference in 2021, addressing issues around personality disorder in this population. The event was well attended with over 100 delegates and included presentations from carers. Last year's conference 'Medico-legal Aspects of Adolescent Forensic Psychiatry' had to be postponed and will be held later in 2023.

The SIG draws on the experience of the committee – many of whom have worked in various NHS and private services. There is a strong collegiate focus and trainees are encouraged to participate, which helps the sharing of ideas and research in this area.

Dr Gill Bell, outgoing AFPSIG Chair, has brought many new faces into the SIG, increasing opportunities for collaboration and support. Their support with communication, social media and other vital aspects that extend our reach, and will no doubt be invaluable at a time when this complex population can easily be neglected due to funding pressures.

Although we've grown, there is certainly room for further growth, and we would welcome new members who are interested in what we think is a fascinating area of psychiatry.

Arts and Psychiatry Special Interest Group

The ArtSIG has over 3,000 members and has been running for seven years.

The SIG was set up to

- provide a forum for collaboration and exchange of ideas,
- increase understanding of arts therapies and art as therapy, and
- promote the authentic portrayal of mental states.



Hannah Ali, Chair

The Arts and Psychiatry SIG Executive Committee meet monthly for committee meetings.

In 2022, the SIG continued to focus on promoting art in training and treatment; expanding the membership and promoting its events to members. In addition, we utilised the new arsenal of virtual events we had gained experience in running, using creativity for the wellbeing of our members of every grade and for social cohesion.

The ArtSIG continued to run lunchtime arts workshops in 2022, with virtual sessions on Creative writing for wellbeing, zen doodling, quick assemblage and Tools for Creative Living.

These were as a result of the SIG commissioning six artists to deliver workshops from December 2021. The organisers received over 80 submissions from artists which were shortlisted by the Chair, Dr Hannah Ali, and the SIG's patient carer rep, Daniel Regan. There are plans to run future workshops with some of the artists who weren't shortlisted in 2022, as they appear to be well appreciated by attendees.

The SIG also held a trip to an art exhibition in the Southbank in the Summer of 2022.

In 2023, we are planning an in-person poetry conference at the College in May, as well as more wellbeing lunchtime workshops.

The ArtSIG is also collaborating with other College groups on proposals to host temporary exhibitions at Prescott Street, following the success of the HoPSIG's Eugenics exhibition.

Digital Psychiatry Special Interest Group

The DPSIG is the College's youngest SIG, launched in 2020, but already has over 1,000 members.

The SIG was founded to increase awareness about the importance of digital technology and innovation in relation to mental health. This includes the impact of social media, and screen time usage, the increasing use of data and artificial intelligence in psychiatry and society, the impact of gaming on mental health, the use of Virtual Reality in the diagnosis and treatment of mental health problems and the digitalisation of patient records.



Romayne Gadelrab and David Rigby, Co-Chairs

The SIG aims to do this by creating an interested community of psychiatrists and public engagement events, hosting online and face-to-face events, engaging on social media platforms including Twitter and publishing resources on our website.



The SIG's highlights of 2022 included an engaging debate at the International Congress on the subject of Artificial Intelligence, as well as a sold-out face-to-face conference at the College in November.

Members of the SIG also contributed to two publications in BJPsych Advances on digital literacy, including a contribution from our patient representative, Maria, and a book chapter on Digital Research.

In 2023, we're hoping to engage with more College members, including those overseas, and are planning a new podcast series.



Evolutionary Psychiatry Special Interest Group



Paul St. John Smith, Chair

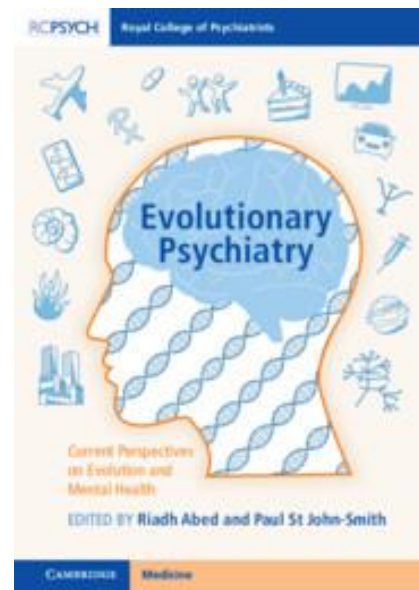
The EPSIG have approximately 2,300 members and have been running for six years. The EPSIG was set up to raise awareness of the value of understanding the contribution of evolutionary theory to psychiatry.

In 2022, members of EPSIG wrote a number of EPSIG related articles, chapters and papers as well as a book, 'Evolutionary Psychiatry; Current Perspectives on Evolution and Mental Health'.

We ran our annual essay prize, receiving a number of excellent entries, and continued to write

regular newsletters. In addition, the SIG continues to collaborate with the Evolutionary section of The World Psychiatric Association, and our sister organisation at the Irish College of Psychiatrists the EPSIG in Ireland.

In 2023, we're prioritising trainee engagement, having already hosted a successful in person trainee workshop at the College, and its fifth international symposium in March.



History of Psychiatry Special Interest Group

The HoPSIG has over 3,000 members and has been running for eight years. The SIG was set up to encourage clinicians to research the history of psychiatry; to improve our understanding of the subject and its value, including relating to current policy and practice; and to provide a forum for discussion.

2022 saw a full calendar of events for the HoPSIG, including joint educational events with the Medical Education team at East London NHS Foundation Trust and West London NHS Foundation Trust, a session at the International Congress in Edinburgh, and a visit to the London Metropolitan Archives.



Graham Ash, Chair

The HoPSIG also staged an exhibition at the College entitled: "*We Are Not Alone*" *Legacies of Eugenics*. The exhibition examines the global history of eugenics and its legacies, particularly regarding those with intellectual disability, and the ways that eugenic science was championed by psychiatrists in Britain and elsewhere. It represents our response to the College Diversity Leads' invitation to consider how psychiatrists could be encouraged to reflect on experiences of discrimination.

HoPSIG continued its long tradition of collaborating with the Historian in Residence, Honorary Archivist, Archivist and Librarian to ensure the College's archives held the important work created during COVID.

We also contributed questions on the history of psychiatry to the College's inaugural MindMasters Quiz Event.



Neurodevelopmental Psychiatry Special Interest Group

We have over 3,200 members and have been running for five years. The NDPSIG was set up to provide a group within the College for neurodevelopmental issues that cross faculty and/or divisional boundaries – it also supports the Autism Champion.

In 2022 we supported the creation of a national autism Community of Practice for all clinicians working in Autism Specialist teams – now funded by NHSIE and HEE with planned date for first meeting of 17 January.



Peter Carpenter, Chair

We also supported the development of ASD training and are now in process of supporting CALC in producing a foundation day course for autism/NDDs and a more advanced course.

The SIG also advocated and achieved the explicit recognition of neurodevelopmental disorders in the College Curriculum.

In 2023, the SIG aims to collaborate on a number of College reports and positions statements – including a college position statement for Autism, a college position paper for Foetal Alcohol Syndrome, a College report on management of ADHD, and a college policy and education for ADHD and improving links with GPs.

Occupational Psychiatry Special Interest Group



Darren Minshall, Chair

The Occupational Psychiatry SIG has over 2,300 members at last count and approximately half are in training grades.

The SIG's central themes are the positive impact good work can have on mental health and that appropriate work should be seen as a treatment outcome for working-age patients. The SIG aims to promote the understanding of this crucial bi-directional interplay between work and mental health. We have established partnerships with the Faculty and Society of Occupational Medicine, as well as the Defence Medical Services.

A landmark achievement for our SIG has been the development of the [Royal College Position Statement PS01/22](#): "Occupational Mental Health: Addressing patients' occupational, educational and psychosocial needs as an essential aspect of mental healthcare" – published in July 22.

We have run a successful programme of events to engage the SIG membership, including face-to-face in Prescot Street, and have recently welcomed new and enthusiastic executive committee members.

We've had a very successful start to the year thanks to our popular January webinar on "How might doctors' health affect their ability to safely deliver high quality, effective, care?", with keynote speaker Dame Clare Gerada. The event attracted a large audience and excellent questions. A summer event is scheduled for 5th July 23, face-to-face at the RCPsych in Prescot Street, focusing on aviation psychiatry.

This year we also hope to engage our membership through a formal poster prize, for trainees, to award at the summer meeting.



Mark Tarn, Finance Officer

Philosophy Special Interest Group



Anastasios Dimopoulos,
Chair

The Philosophy SIG is one of the College's longest running SIGs, having been active for over 25 years. With over 6,000 members, it is also the largest SIG. The Philosophy SIG was set up to develop the dialogue between philosophers and psychiatrists in the belief that such dialogue would be mutually rewarding, both in conceptual and clinical terms.

2022 was a year where we tried to identify ways to engage our membership and continue with the organisation of events that will be of interest to our membership. We organised a successful event with the title "biopsychosocial model; myth and reality". It was initially planned for September 2022 but was postponed to December 2022 because of the death of Her Majesty the Queen Elizabeth II. The event had over 140 attendees, mostly attending online. The feedback has been very positive.

We have recently sought to engage with our members by organising new types of meetings, such as drop-in sessions, and online reading groups. Currently there is an online reading group aimed at trainees and medical students and another one is about to start aimed at the wider membership of the Philosophy SIG.



We are looking forward to our Advanced Interdisciplinary workshop on Psychopathology in April. This will be a training event with a maximum number of 50 participants that will aim to bridge descriptive accounts with subjective experiences. The trainers will be a combination of philosophically informed clinicians, researchers and philosophers who adhere to the tradition of phenomenological psychopathology.

Private and Independent Practice Special Interest Group



Mona Freeman, Chair

Dr Mona Freeman was co-opted as interim Chair in the summer 2022 after Dr Simmi Sachdeva-Mohan stepped down, and has now been elected as the Chair for four years.

We have just over 5,000 members and have been running for over 20 years. The PIPSIG was set up for those members of the College who work to any extent outside the NHS, whether this be in private practice, retired working psychiatrists, doctors doing medico-legal and Mental Health Act work and those working in independent hospitals or clinics.

Many PIPSIG members have portfolio careers, straddling both NHS and non-NHS commitments and our numbers have increased significantly in the last few years. The group's aims have up to now been to better connect those working outside the NHS with the College and College affairs.

During 2022 we ran monthly free drop-in sessions, facilitated by two executive committee members. These sessions proved to be very popular and are continuing to be run in 2023. The PIPSIG are putting on an online conference this year (on Friday 30 June) showcasing the 'best bits' from the successful drop-ins.



PIPSIG will also end the year with their regular in person winter conference: 'Starting Out In Private Practice' on 11 December at Prescot Street for those considering a move into independent work.

Rainbow (LGBTQ+) SIG: Annual Report to Council 2022



Pavan Joshi, Chair

In February 2001 a Special Interest Group in Gay and Lesbian Mental Health was established in the College to promote discussion and research, provide expertise within the College and contribute to education. The group subsequently extended its remit to include gender diversity and mental health.

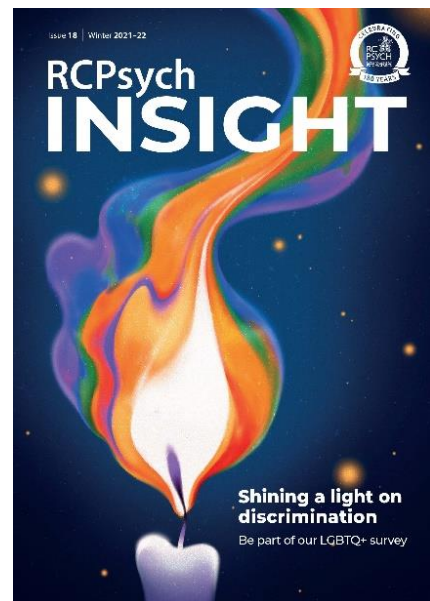
We have over 1,700 members and an active executive committee, working towards our aims of promoting and researching the mental health of LGBTQ+ people, promoting training for all mental health professionals regarding the mental health of LGBTQ+ people, supporting and advocating for LGBTQ+ mental health professionals, and advising on local and national policy relating to LGBTQ+ mental health.

The group is open to anyone and everyone who has an interest in LGBTQ+ matters.

Last year saw the Rainbow SIG worked closely with the College on a survey to understand LGBTQ+ psychiatrists' experience of discrimination, bullying or harassment in the UK. This work generated several meetings for ongoing collaboration with the SIG and College members, the College EDI leads, and various stakeholders.

During 2022 the Rainbow LGBTQ+ SIG also held a well-attended Divisional webinar on 'Working with Transgender Patients', chaired by SIG exec member (and incoming Finance Officer) Dr Elinor Hynes.

Our outgoing Finance Officer, Dr Josep Vilanova, also chaired a free member webinar to mark Pride month on the topic of 'Bringing your whole self to work'.



Spirituality & Psychiatry Special Interest Group



Christopher CH Cook, Chair

We have over 5,000 members and have been running for 23 years. The SPSIG was set up to provide a safe place within which College members can discuss spirituality, broadly conceived, in relation to their professional practice and vocation. This has happened mainly through its day conferences but also a newsletter and publications archive.

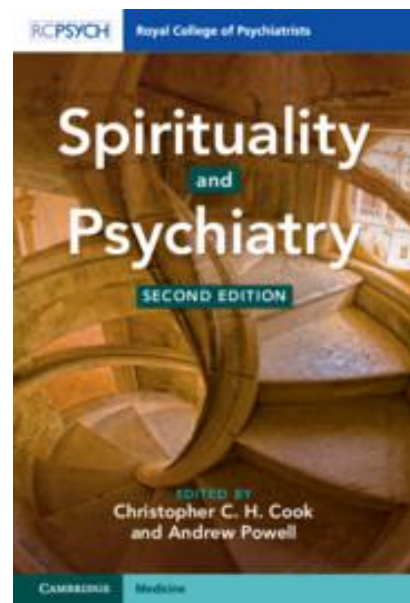
We also aim to positively influence the wider College in all its affairs, notably policy, publications, curriculum and the annual essay prize, and engage in debate on spirituality in relation to psychiatry nationally and internationally. We also liaise with and influence national and international bodies with common concerns, notably the WPA.

In 2022 we held two day conferences at the College - *The Bigger Picture: Exploring mental health frameworks that encompass spirituality/SPSIG members* and *Further Down the Road: Ageing, mental health, and spirituality*.

We also welcomed our new patient representative, Emma Duffy, to our executive committee.

We were pleased to have helpful discussions with the Dean on College curricula. As a result, our input to the new curricula was incorporated in the final approved documents.

The 2nd Edition of *Spirituality & Psychiatry* was published by CUP in 2022, as well as the revised version of the RCPsych information leaflet on Spirituality & Psychiatry. In addition, one of our trainee reps (with the Chair and other co-authors) has submitted a paper for the Praxis section of *The Bulletin*.



In 2023, we are aiming to submit CASC stations on spirituality for MRCPsych exam and will continue to monitor opportunities for other contributions to exam, curriculum, and MRCPsych training.

Sport & Exercise Psychiatry Special Interest Group

We have over 2,600 members and have been running for six years. The SEPSIG was set up to raise awareness of mental health problems in sport and to promote best practice in addressing these, as well as to promote evidence-based, safe physical activity and exercise interventions throughout mental health services.



Amit Mistry, Chair

In 2022, we created our first ever poster prize competition for trainees. Many of these abstracts went on to be accepted for a future publication in the new Sports Psychiatry Journal.

Several SIG trainees such as Dr Jennifer Keal and Dr Alice Pitt co-published papers related to elite weightlifter mental health and social media perceptions and mental health.

Our May conference, *SEPSIG12* on elite cricket mental health involved collaboration with the ECB medical team and was held at the University of Loughborough. This was followed by an October conference, *SEPSIG13*, held at the College in London, with a focus on safeguarding in elite sport and mental health care in F1 racing.



Our Chair, Dr Amit Mistry has been appointed Consultant Sports Psychiatrist to ASICS Europe and continues to work with the ECB Womens team. He has co-published two scientific papers related to Sports Psychiatry.

Our Finance Officer, Dr Caz Nahman, has co-authored a scientific paper published in the Journal of Sports Psychiatry and presented at ISSP scientific sessions. Also, she presented alongside other SEPSIG colleagues at a UK Sport Mental Health education event.

We also wanted to highlight the incredible achievement of SEPSIG member Dr Hari who completed 10 marathons in 2022!

Transcultural Psychiatry Special Interest Group



Fabida Aria, Chair

With over 5,500 members, the Transcultural Psychiatry SIG aims to ensure clinicians develop an understanding of patients' and families' cultures to help in their care and treatment.

In 2022 we worked on training around cultural sensitivity and cultural competence and developed expertise in engagement, assessment and treatment of patients for mental health problems in UK and globally.

We continued to look at ways to use the strengths of a diverse workforce to help patient care and also help and support staff and collaborate with faculties and special interest groups to develop and implement culture sensitive interventions.

Members of the TSIG have collaborated with the College's International team, for example helping to share information with MTI trainees, as well as with diaspora groups.

We have linked with several universities and have given talks to medical students at psychiatry societies which have been well received. We will also be providing a session on transcultural psychiatry to trainees in psychotherapy at Warwick University in 2023.

We had a successful conference in 2022 with excellent speakers from both clinical and academic backgrounds, and with experience of helping patients with transcultural psychiatry.

Our drop-in slot at the International Congress was very well attended, and allowed delegates to talk to executive members about how they can be involved with the SIG and help plan our future activities.



Volunteering and International Psychiatry Special Interest Group



Anis Ahmed, Chair

We have 4,400 members and have been running for 10 years.

The Volunteering and International Psychiatry SIG was set up to promote volunteering work among members of the RCPsych and harness the skill sets within diverse international members of the College, whilst promoting the College values and assisting with implementing the three-year international strategy.

In 2022, the VIPSIG held a successful in-person conference at the RCPsych, as well as a MhGAP training weekend in Nottingham. One of the outcomes of these training events is to liaise with international volunteering bodies and explore opportunities for psychiatrists to participate in the existing projects.

We have successfully collaborated with Bangladesh Judiciary Training Institutes on developing a training manual for Judges on raising awareness of vulnerability of the persons with mental disabilities.

In 2023 we plan to host another MhGAP training event, as well as an in-person conference at the College.



Women's Mental Health Special Interest Group



Beena Rajkumar and Ruth Reed, Co-Chairs

The WMHSIG was established over [25 years ago](#) and has over 5,000 members. In 2021 we marked this with our 25 women campaign, which celebrated a wide range of unsung female heroes in psychiatry.

In 2022 the WMHSIG's working groups regularly met to discuss its work on the Violence Against Women and Girls project, as well as advising the College on its Gender Pay Gap work.

The WMHSIG has continued to work to increase the voice of the SIG in the RCPsych through all members webinars, interviews and content for RCPsych publications. We have continued to grow our social media presence through work with the RCPsych social media team and our own @womeninmind twitter handle.



In 2022 the WMHSIG has helped raise the profile of the Gender Pay Gap in medicine and continues to support and promote action. Our members lead on work highlighting the issues for carers in our workforce (disproportionately women) and improving policy in this area.

In the last year the issue of Violence against Women & Girls (VAWG) has remained at the forefront of the work of the WMHSIG. We have established a monthly VAWG forum, to progress work under 3 key headings: Domestic Abuse, Sexual abuse & Trauma informed approaches. We continue to represent the RCPsych at the national INCA-DVA and chaired the bi-annual meeting in February 2022. We have continued to progress work on best practice in response to those perpetrating domestic abuse in healthcare, and our working group has now been established as a regular sub-group of the INCA-DVA.

We have run an all-members webinar on 'Coercive control' that had an audience of over 1,000. Other key achievements have included our Domestic Abuse Lead giving oral and written evidence to the APPG on 'Domestic abuse in healthcare' on behalf of the RCPsych, which was based on our on-going policy work.

In 2023 we welcome our new Chair, Dr Stella Kingett, and new Finance Officer, Dr Katie Clyde.



Stella Kingett,
Incoming Chair