



Traveller Counselling Service

Conference

Traveller Mental Health

Bridging the Gap through Partnership

Venue : Dublin Castle Conference Centre

Date : 20th October 2016, 10.00am Registration - Finishing at 3.30pm

Outline

The Traveller Counselling Service is holding a national conference on Traveller Mental Health. This conference will explore some of the key issues that impact on mental health within the Traveller community and some of the considerations that need to be taken into account in order to address the mental health needs of the Traveller community.

Four presentations will be made in the morning session of the conference, by Martin Collins, Dr Shari McDaid, Dr Ger Moane and Thomas McCann respectively. The afternoon session will consist of four workshops, examining and exploring ways of working with issues raised in each presentation and will be followed by a panel discussion which will give participants an opportunity to pose questions to all of the speakers.

The organisers hope that this conference will create the opportunity for advocates, the community, service providers and policy makers to come together to explore the key issues in relation to developing culturally inclusive mental health services that are accessible to the Traveller community in Ireland

Martin Collins – The Denial of Traveller Identity and the impact on Traveller Mental Health

Martin Collins has been a Traveller activist for 30 years and is a founding member of Pavee Point Travellers Centre, of which he is now Co-Director. He has represented Pavee Point and Irish Travellers both nationally and internationally and is presently the Irish delegate to the European Roma Traveller Forum in Strasbourg. He represented Pavee Point on the Irish Human Rights Commission (IHRC) from 2001-2007 and also on the 'Task Force Report' on the Travelling Community which was published in 1995 and it is generally regarded as a milestone in offering an innovative analysis on Traveller issues and how they might be addressed. Martin has extensive experience in providing anti-racism/intercultural training for both statutory and voluntary sectors.

Dr. Geraldine Moane – Internalised Oppression

Geraldine Moane, having completed a PhD specialising in personality development in adulthood, took a position in UCD in 1989 and became involved in women's studies as well as in psychology and is currently the Director of the Higher Diploma in Psychology and is an Affiliate with the School of Social Justice. The thread running through her work is the question of how people can grow and flourish across the lifespan. She believes that the social context plays a vital role and has specialized in diversity, oppression and liberation. She has trained and has extensive experience in group work and counselling with diverse groups. She has published a book, several articles and an edited collection on liberation psychology and diversity, receiving a Distinguished Publication Award in 2010. Her current interests focus on LGBT psychology and on postcolonial psychology and the Irish psyche. She is a member of the Equality and Inclusive Practice Working Group of the Psychological Society of Ireland, and Chair of the Sexual Diversity and Gender Issues Special Interest Group.

Dr. Shari McDaid –the Need for Cultural Competency in Mental Health Service Provision

Shari McDaid was appointed Director of Mental Health Reform, the national coalition advocating for reform of the mental health system, in October 2013. She is the Chairperson of the Children's Mental Health Coalition and a member of the Healthy Ireland Council. In July 2016 she was appointed to the National Taskforce on Youth Mental Health by the Minister with responsibility for mental health, Minister Helen McEntee. Shari joined Mental Health Reform Ireland as Policy Officer in 2011. Prior to that, Shari worked with Amnesty International Ireland from 2008 to 2011 as Policy Officer on its mental health campaign. She was previously Policy Officer at the National Disability Authority and Policy and Administration Manager at Shine. Shari received her PhD in 2008 from the Equality Studies Centre at UCD, with a thesis entitled Power, Empowerment and User Involvement in the Public Mental Health Services in Ireland. Shari co-edited with Prof. Agnes Higgins the text *Mental Health in Ireland: Policy, practice and law*, published in 2014 by Gill and Macmillan.

Thomas McCann – Developing Partnership Process – The Way Forward

Thomas McCann is a member of the Irish Traveller community and a long time Traveller activist. He was active in the Irish Traveller Movement for many years where he was employed as the Equality Worker and as Director among many other roles. He was active in the early days of Minceir Misli and was active in campaigning for the Equal Status Act and the Traveller Accommodation Act and was a board member of the Equality Authority for its first two terms. Thomas holds a Diploma in Community Development from NUI Maynooth. Now working in the field of psychotherapy, Thomas is a counsellor and holds a BSc in Psychotherapy and Masters in Counselling Supervision. Thomas is currently a council member of Minceirs Whidden, a Traveller only organisation and is also a member of the National Traveller, Roma Inclusion Steering Committee. Thomas is currently undertaking a PhD in NUI Maynooth where he also lectures on the Traveller Mediation Programme. Thomas established the Traveller Counselling Service in 2008 and is currently Director of the organisation.

Conference Programme

10.00 Registration

10.30 Welcome by Jim O'Brien, Chairperson, Traveller Counselling Service (MC for the conference)

10.45 Official opening of the conference by Minister of State, David Stanton, with responsibility for Equality, Integration and Immigration.

11.00 Martin Collins – The Denial of Traveller Identity and its Impact on Traveller Mental Health

11.20 Dr Geraldine Moane – Internalised Oppression – the Impact on Mental Health

11.40 Dr Shari McDaid – the Need for Cultural Competency in Mental Health Service Provision

12.00 Thomas McCann – Bridging the Gap through Partnership – the Way Forward

12.30 Lunch – (A light lunch will be provided)

01.30 Workshops

02.15 Feedback and Plenary

03.15 Summary and Closing words by Minister of State, Helen McEntee, with responsibility for Mental Health and Older People