**Committee Member’s Blog**

A person wearing glasses and a purple shirt

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Name: Dr Declan Hyland

Job title: Consultant in general adult psychiatry, Pine Ward, Hartley Hospital, Southport, Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust

**Biography**

Having completed my Core Training in Psychiatry and Higher Training in General Adult Psychiatry in the Mersey region, I achieved my CCT in General Psychiatry in August 2016. I have worked as an inpatient Consultant in Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust since my CCT date. For seven years, I worked across three Acute Care wards (and the PICU for a short while) at Clock View Hospital in Liverpool. I then decided I needed a change and so moved to Pine Ward at The Hartley Hospital in Southport in August 2023. I manage an inpatient caseload of 20 (mixed male and female) and have an ST and 2.5 junior doctors (currently 1 CT and 1.5 Foundation Trainee 1 doctors).

I am an elected staff Governor. I sit on the Trust’s Drug and Therapeutics Committee, providing medic representation for the Local Division of the Trust.

Aside of my clinical role with Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust, I have several medical educator roles. I am the Deputy Director for Year 4 at Liverpool Medical School and the undergraduate psychiatry lead for the Medical School. I am an External Examiner for Year 4 at Aberdeen Medical School. I am the co-Core Training Programme Director for Mersey and Cheshire Core Trainees in Psychiatry. I am an External Examiner for the MSc in Psychiatry offered by the University of Chester. Having recently moved to Southport, I have now started to get involved with Edge Hill University’s Medical School and act as Clinical Supervisor for Year 4 Edge Hill medical students on placement at The Hartley Hospital and Educational Supervisor to the students for the placement. I provide clinical supervision to student Physician Associates on their mental health placement at The Hartley Hospital. I am an Examiner for the National Physician Associate OSCE.

I have a couple of roles with the NHSE North West School of Psychiatry. In my role as the co-TPD for Core Training for the Mersey and Cheshire region, I sit on the School Board and also help to chair the Specialty Training Committee. I am also the Core Psychiatry Course Psychopharmacology Lead and co-lead for the general adult psychiatry module of the course.

I also hold multiple roles with the Royal College of Psychiatrists (RCPsych), with the most significant one being the RCPsych’s Associate Dean for Choose Psychiatry / Recruitment. As part of that role, I chair the RCPsych Choose Psychiatry Committee and have been invited to sit on the RCPsych Wellbeing Committee. I am an appointed Member of the RCPsych Council and, in that role, sit on the RCPsych Disciplinary and Complaints Committee and Nominations Committee. I am Chair of the MRCPsych Quality Assurance Panel and Deputy Chair of the MRCPsych Clinical Topics Panel and sit on the Education and Standards Committee (ESC). I am a member of the MRCPsych Standard Setting Panel and a CASC Examiner. I am a member of the RCPsych’s Trainees Support Committee. As undergraduate lead psychiatry lead at Liverpool Medical School, I sit on the RCPsych Undergraduate Education Forum. I also sit on the RCPsych’s Physician Associate Working Group as I have a keen interest in the role of Physician Associates in mental health. I am a CESR Evaluator and sit on the RCPsych’s Equivalence Committee. I am a Peer Support Psychiatrist for the RCPsych’s Psychiatrists’ Support Service (PSS). I sit on the RCPsych’s International Congress Board, helping to decide on and shape the programme for the annual International Congress.

I am also involved with the RCPsych’s CCQI Quality Network for Working Age Adults (QNWA). I chair the QNWA Advisory Group and am a peer reviewer of general adult inpatient services.

Within the North West Division of the RCPsych, I am the appointed Academic Secretary of the Division and appointed Executive Member of the Division’s Executive Committee. I am also the Regional Specialty Rep for general adult psychiatry for the Mersey region.

I am a member of the North of England Approvals Panel (NEAP), reviewing Section 12(2) and Approved Clinician initial approval and renewal applications.

I occasionally act as a Specialist Advisor for the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and, at least once a year, will get involved in CQC inspections of general adult inpatient services.

I am an appointed Trustee of the Cheadle Royal Hospital (CRH) Charitable Trust, providing medical expertise to the work of the charity.

I work on an ad-hoc basis as a Clinical Adviser for the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.

Most importantly of all though, I am husband to my (very tolerant and long suffering some might say!) wife of 12 years and proud father of two beautiful daughters.

1. **What made you choose psychiatry?**

I first became interested in psychiatry when I was in my third year at Sheffield Medical School. Whilst on my psychiatry placement at Bassetlaw Hospital in Worksop I became fascinated by the concept of hearing voices and psychosis and how “different” and “unique” mental illness was compared to the rest of Medicine. My interest grew and grew from there. By the time I left Medical School in 2008, I knew I wanted to train to be a Psychiatrist. But at that time I was dead set on a career in forensic psychiatry. Doing a CT post in inpatient general adult psychiatry changed all that though - that was my calling! I have never looked back since and am so pleased I chose general adult psychiatry as my career!

1. **Tell us about your current professional role.**

It is very varied and very busy! See above.

1. **What would you say to someone considering a career in psychiatry?**

Psychiatry is a fantastic career choice because of every patient has their own unique story to tell and own set of individual circumstances and difficulties to overcome. The variety in psychiatry is what makes it such a rewarding, interesting and fulfilling career. No other specialty in Medicine will challenge your communication skills and your ability work as a member of an MDT the way that psychiatry will. The fact that, as Psychiatrists we get to spend so much more time with our patients compared to G.P, Physician and Surgical colleagues makes such a difference. As a trainee in psychiatry, you are incredibly supported and encouraged to get involved in lots of different activities and projects that may take your interest. It is certainly a fantastic career choice in Medicine and one that I have never once regretted making!

1. **What do your roles at the College involve?**

Perhaps here I will focus on my roles with the RCPsych North West Division. As the Division’s Academic Secretary I lead on designing and delivering the Division’s annual Spring and Autumn Conferences and the regular webinars that are offered by the Division to its members. As an appointed Member of the Division’s Executive Committee, I help to lead on the work of the Executive Committee for the Division. As the Regional Specialty Representative for general adult psychiatry for the Mersey region, I have responsibility for reviewing and, through this, informing the approval of any job description (JD) for a general adult psychiatry post in the Mersey region. In reality though, I am currently looking at a lot of JDs of general adult posts on behalf of the RCPsych’s Trent Division and Northern and Yorkshire Division, presumably due to neither Division having a regional specialty rep for general adult psychiatry.

1. **What do you enjoy most about being involved in the work of the College?**

I really enjoy the opportunity to meet and network with other members of the College from around the U.K and the opportunity to work with individuals from a range of backgrounds, from patients and carers to medical students, trainees, SAS doctors, Consultants and the President of the College! I also really enjoy giving back to the College and value the opportunity to get to know and work with the College staff, who are all so supportive in helping me with the various roles that I do with the College. I have always viewed being a member of the College like being a member of a large supportive family!