**Inaugural meeting of Sports and Exercise Psychiatry Special Interest Group**

27th October 2016

10.30am to 12.30pm

Royal College of Psychiatrists

21 Prescot Street,

London,

E1 8BB.

**In attendance**

Gary Bell, Anitdoel Bhattacharya, Alan Currie, Giovanni Galavotti, Phil Hopley, Adrian James, Brian Lunn, Hassan Mahmood, Reshad Malik, Judith McAuley, Andrew McKechanie, Renato Merolli, Amit Mistry, Tim Rogers, Pamela Walters, Gary Woods.

**Welcome and introduction**

The college registrar (Dr Adrian James) opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

**Receipt of nominations for chair and finance director**

Written nominations had been received as follows:-

Chair – Alan Currie

Nominated by Steve Peters

Seconded by Allan Johnston

Finance officer – Allan Johnston

Nominated by Alan Currie

Seconded by Hamish McAllister-Williams

Both were elected unopposed.

**Aims and Objectives of SIG**

Dr Alan Currie then took over the role of chair and opened a wide discussion on the aims and objectives of the new SIG. The proposal that had been submitted to the college in 2015 was circulated to aid the discussion.

Establishing links with partner organisations was discussed. Collaborating with psychologists who work in sport was raised. The threshold when a problem reaches a clinical level and requires further assessment or extra support was thought to be important. In these cases assessment and support may not always be readily available from suitably qualified clinicians. Links with the sport and exercise medicine associations in the UK were considered next; noting that psychiatry is probably under-represented as a branch of medicine on these groups. The International Society of Sports Psychiatry is a largely US based organisation that focusses on sport psychiatry rather sport & exercise. Dr Currie is already a member and will make them aware of the SIG and its role and function. The importance of links with sports organisation was also mentioned. There are many and they have overlapping functions. UK Sport has overarching responsibilities and would be a good starting point.

Raising awareness of mental health issues in elite sport was discussed next. This developed into a discussion of the competencies needed to provide treatment and care to athletes. The group might wish to work on describing these competencies and in time creating training opportunities. A short CPD module is already in preparation at the college.

All were agreed that exercise and physical activity are important and beneficial in mental health settings. Exercise promotes social inclusion, reduces stigma and improves the physical health of a group who generally have poorer physical health. Many were aware of excellent initiatives and projects. The evidence base for interventions is growing but there are difficulties in translating evidence into practice. A possible survey of such projects was suggested. Psychiatrists may also benefit from improving their knowledge on exercise physiology and nutrition.

Finally the suggestion of a strategy day to promote wider discussion of these and other topics was put to the group. This could be combined with the next business meeting. A date in early February at the college headquarters in London was put forward and will be investigated. There will need to be a charge and CPD approval would be sought.

**Current aims**

To raise awareness of mental health problems in sport and to promote best practice in addressing these.

To promote physical activity and exercise interventions throughout mental health services.

**Guest speakers**

Two guest speakers were then introduced. Dr Steve Peters gave a talk entitled ‘Working in Elite Sport’. Steve has been working in elite sport for many years. He described his experiences including the additional problems faced by a psychiatrist working in this way and outside of mainstream mental health services. As he is currently abroad his presentation took the form of a pre-recorded video.

Dr Amit Mistry spoke next and reviewed exercise interventions in a talk entitled ‘Exercise, Physical Activity and Mental Health’. The evidence base is improving and growing and there are important initiatives driven by Public Health England and the Department of Health.

**Action points**

Dr Mistry will provide a brief summary of the current evidence base for exercise intervention for inclusion on the SIG college webpage.

Dr James suggested we consider a half-day programme for inclusion in the 2018 annual international congress.

Dr Currie will begin preparing a programme for a strategy day which can be circulated among attendees for additional suggestions and comments. Dr Johnston (finance officer) will begin investigating dates, venues and costings.

**Date and time of next meeting**

TBA – Feb/March but avoiding half-term school holiday