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## A message from Des Kavanagh General Secretary

*"... the PNA continues to fight to maintain our earnings, to protect Premium Pay, to retain Allowance for existing and future staff and of course to maximise the quality of our service to the Community."*



In its 41 years representing nurses we have travelled through a number of recessions, all of them difficult periods in our history. Today's environment is the worst we have ever experienced. Managers openly admit the only imperative is budgetary. They tell us they are never asked about quality of care, only about budgets and future cuts. Against this background the PNA continues to fight to maintain our earnings, to protect Premium Pay, to retain Allowances for existing and future staff and of course to maximise the quality of our service to the Community.

At national, regional and local level we continue to fight to protect services, we seek to create alliances with advocates, services users and their families and Mental Health and I.D. campaigners, other health professionals and politicians in pursuit of fair play for those members of society who need our services. While we can boast of some successes the overall picture is negative and frustrating.

Following laborious discussions re the implementation of a national Assisted Admission Scheme and an Authorised Officer Scheme we are currently awaiting final papers on these two initiatives from the Employers. It will then be up to each nurse to volunteer their services on the basis of the terms offered.

Our work in campaigning for a review of the Psychiatric nursing profession has borne fruit and the Minister, Kathleen Lynch has recently launched the report A Vision for Psychiatric / Mental Health Nursing, A Shared Journey for Mental Health Care in Ireland. We have also been actively involved in the Undergraduate Review which we hope will positively add to the quality of nurse education going forward and hopefully provide us with the numbers of high quality mental health and Intellectual Disability Nurses our growing and ageing society needs into the future.

On the IR front we await a date for a Labour Court hearing in relation to Long Term Actors in which we will be asking the Court to recommend that the agreement already reached with the HSE CERS be implemented across all grades immediately. At the time of going to print we are also actively pursuing the restoration of the Senior Staff Nurse Grade.



# A Vision for Change Threatened

Recent research by the PNA has revealed that the Government Mental Health Strategy “A Vision For Change” is under severe threat in many parts of the country with closures of community services in order to shore up acute admission units left short staffed due to the mass exodus of nursing staff from the Mental Health Services in the run up to February 29th 2012.

Almost 400 nurses are leaving the services in 2012 and this is on top of the 1,200 that have left in recent years. Mr. Des Kavanagh speaking at the PNA Press Conference on February 8th said “the Government, patients and their families had to recognise that current provision of mental health services are not sustainable with this level of staff losses.” Mr Kavanagh when on to urge Minister Kathleen Lynch to urgently release the promised €35m to recruit staff so that services can be maintained. For more details on this story and full survey findings log on to [www.pna.ie](http://www.pna.ie)



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# PNA Training Programmes

*“ Over the last few years the PNA have responded to members requests for advanced training and up skilling. ”*

Over the last few years the PNA have responded to members requests for advanced training and up skilling.

The yearly branch activist training days, held this year in the Hodson Bay Hotel, were bolstered by the addition of colleagues from IFESA and NASRA.

The work of Gerry Kenneally with the members in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy continues to be a great success.



whereby 40 minutes to 1 hour of education/learning activity equates with one ABA CEU.

Two courses have now been completed over 5 Saturdays. One course before Christmas 2011 and the other in spring 2012 with 21 Nurses in all participating. It is a skills-based learning programme that gives an overview of the theories underpinning CBT, and equips participants with an understanding of the clinical context and application of CBT. Particular emphasis has been given to equip the participants with the skills needed to apply CBT techniques to the following disorders, Depression, Anxiety, Panic, Worry, Psychosis and Social Phobia.



As a further development this year the PNA have engaged La Touche Training to run several courses broadly covering the Nurse and the Law. Over three days we looked at the role and experience of “The Nurse in a Coroner’s Court Setting” “The Nurse and report writing” and then the broader view of “The Nurse and the Law”.

Numbers were kept low as it could be quite intensive. A small fee was charged to assure attendance. The training was outstanding, and the Group felt that it was empowering and helped to demystify the whole area of legal engagement.

We hope to have a full programme of training again next year. Feedback and suggestions are welcome.

## **CBT Skills Based Learning Initiative**

This is a Category 1 Bord Altranais approved course. As an approved Category 1 programme it is assigned An Bord Altranais Continuing Education Units (ABA CEU),



The course was taught through lectures, PowerPoint presentations, experiential learning, role play and video presentations using evidence based scientifically researched information.

It is hoped to run the CBT Skills Based Learning Initiative again in the Autumn of 2012 as feedback from current participants is very positive.



# Developments in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry



*“Are things rosier in the garden now?”*

Child and Adolescent psychiatry has become a political hot potato over the last number of years. It is a division of Mental Health that has actually attracted funding and with the support of the wider community and with key decision makers in health all should be rosy in the garden.

However this is at odds with the experiences of PNA members working in this services and particularly those members working in CAMHS admission units.

Having attended a meeting in October 2011 with PNA members in the CAMHS unit in Merlin Park in Galway I was astounded by what I was told.

Out of date policies, terrible or non-existent staffing levels, unbelievable levels of assaults on staff, low morale and a sense that nurses just weren't valued by anyone.

The PNA wrote to management, we received an acknowledgement but no reply, we wrote again requested a meeting, we received an acknowledgement but no date. Faced with this we had no choice but to engage the Labour Relations Commission. Following a conciliation conference, managements position was clear. Enough staff were recruited; a lot of assaults were “minor or insignificant”. Why do managers who work in nice safe offices far away from the client group always feel that assaults can be “minor or insignificant”.

Following a further meeting of the branch the group took a decision to ballot for industrial action. The branch set out several issues that had to be resolved.

- An end to the assaults (191 in 6 Months)
- New policies on “specializing” and “dealing with assaultive behaviour”
- Agreed Staffing Levels.
- Establishment of Bank Staff.
- Further recruitment.
- Education and training for staff.

Following an intensive campaign including a work to rule, lunchtime protest and a local and national PR campaign we were able to achieve most of our goals. We have further engaged with the LRC in a mopping up exercise and await the outcome. The HSE even re-opened the recruitment process!  
Are things rosier in the garden now?

Maybe...

The changes we agreed with management will take time to bed in. The centralised recruitment process is not quick, and a new management structure needs time to adapt. Staffing continues to be a problem. The key is the branch maintaining constant vigilance.

Following our “success” in Galway we received enquiries from the Warrenstown Service, who were being asked to move to a new location in both St. Lomans and Cherry Orchard under the PSA. Members from the new admission unit in Cork made contact, with depressingly similar problems as Merlin Park.

The PNA must respond to these issues. To that end we hope to set up a CAMHS PNA Network over the summer. This will give members in similar positions a chance to have structure within the PNA and share professional knowledge and experiences with each other.

Watch this space!

# PNA Communications Group

*“To enhance communications to members.”*

The Communications Group was established by the Officer Board in September under the Chairmanship of Peter Hughes.

The Group consists of: *Liam Mc Namara, Noel Giblin, Paul Brophy, Aisling Culhane, Elayne Melia and Declan Breen.*

The objectives of the Group:

- To enhance communications to members.
- To facilitate communication at all levels of the Association.

To achieve these objectives we plan to produce 3 newsletters per year and one magazine. In this regard a template of the newsletter is sent to all branches on the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month requesting branches to submit material for the newsletter. This, our first newsletter has been distributed in hard copy however it is planned for this to be circulated electronically only in the future.

In order to circulate information to our members we are formulating a database of all members emails and mobile numbers. Forms have been distributed to branches and we would appreciate all members to complete the data form and return to head office. A report on the work of the communication group will be presented at Officer Board and NEC meetings. Once again please submit your data form to Head Office as this will mean you will receive the newsletter electronically and also receive regular emails from Head Office to keep you informed. We would welcome any suggestions from members to enhance communication.

**Rights & Entitlements Available in Information Section on PNA website:**  
**[www.pna.ie](http://www.pna.ie)**

HSE Circulars

Parental Leave

Interview Leave

Leave to attend Union/Association Meetings

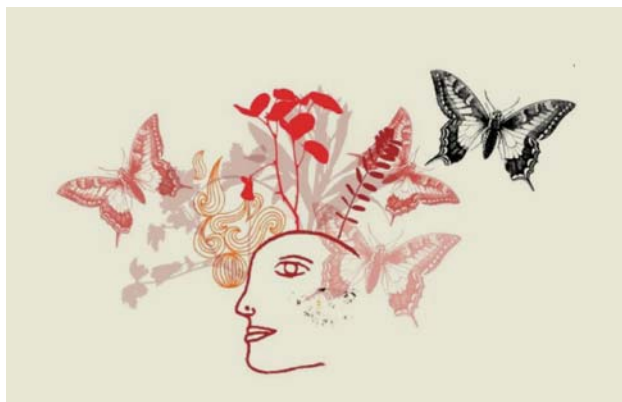
Study and Exam Leave

Term Time

Compassionate leave

Force Majeure leave

Unpaid Leave Career Break



**Horatio Festival  
PNA Delegation**

The PNA are awarding 10 bursaries to attend the Second European Festival of Psychiatric Nursing.

Following on from the successful Malta Festival in November 2008 we are looking forward to meeting our European colleagues and exchanging thoughts and sharing examples of best practice.

**<http://www.horatio-web.eu/>**

# PNA Student Nurse Recruitment – 2011

## Noel Giblin Chair Student Recruitment Group



**Donegal Student Recruitment**

The proposal to arrange a structured student recruitment campaign came about following the passing of two motions at Annual Delegate Conference 2011, by Laois Offaly and Sligo Leitrim Mental Health Services. Both motions had similar ideas one called that “the PNA invest in an orientation / welcome pack for first year student nurses on an annual basis to better enable branches recruit students on entry to the undergraduate course” and the second specifically looked for “the PNA to appoint a member of the officer board to have responsibility for student nurses” both motions were passed at conference and were placed on the agenda for the July officer board meeting. At which time I was appointed as chairman of the student group.

At a first meeting of the group a 4 point student recruitment plan was created, in brief the plan was:

- To visit all the 13 colleges and recruit students, and (as was set down in motions) to have a pack to provide to all students.
- To visit colleges again prior to 4th year students commencing their internship, to provide information on the local union representatives, and other helpful information.
- That each branch would elect a recruitment / student representative.

*“ . . . .we have this year recruited students from colleges where traditionally the PNA did not recruit, this is a very positive step.”*

- That the Officer Board would create a system of listening to students and form a committee for students voices to be heard.

The process of rolling out this plan was discussed and packs ordered, and an open day held in head office to discuss the plan as it would roll out in each of the colleges/ regions. The colleges were contacted and dates arranged.

Of the 13 third level Institutes, 12 have been visited and first year students recruited, the 1 remaining college has stated “their policy will not allow Unions into the college”. However I understand that next year, there are developments afoot into gaining access to this 1 outstanding college.



**Donegal Student Recruitment**

It's worth sharing the facts that we have this year recruited students from colleges where traditionally the PNA did not recruit, this is a very positive step.



### Donegal Student Recruitment

It is important to note that students do not pay union subscription and the reality is that students can “test drive” the PNA for 4 years and then decide what union to join. With this in mind our major goal is to inform students and be available to them at all times.

During the year I have made contact with the 13 colleges and requested access to the students again

this time aiming to meet the 4th years, it has not been as easy with little feedback from some and time table difficulties been flagged as a concern for many of the colleges, however the plan remains to make contact with as many 4th years as possible.

What each Branch now needs to do!

It would be most useful if each branch could elect a recruitment/student officer that I can liaise with for the upcoming student recruitment events. If these names and details could be passed to me I would be grateful.

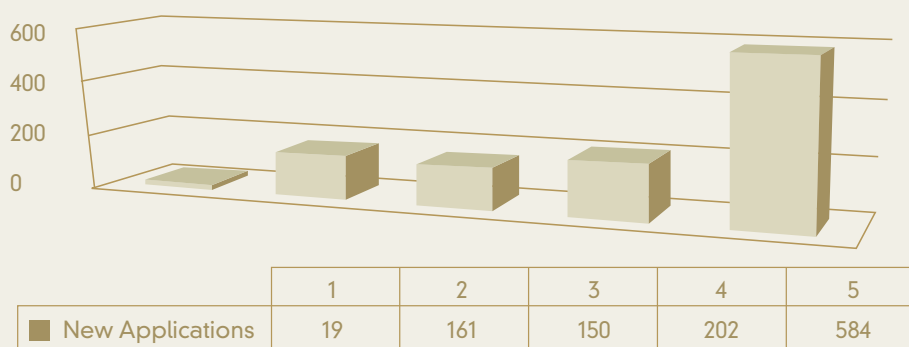
What the Officer Board now needs to do!

The Officer Board will develop options and opportunities to meet and listen to students, it would be important to have each branch recruitment/ student officers view and ideas on how best to do this.

The first year recruitment drive has been particularly successful, this year and this is down to the individual branch members that showed up to colleges and talked to students and took part in the plan. Below sets out some of the recruitment facts:

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Numbers of student applications received	19	161	150	202	530	54
* note this refers to the calendar year not the academic				584		

### New Applications 2007 - 2011



On behalf of the Std committee (John Byrne, John Hughes, Sean Melia, Kerrie Cunningham, Aisling Culhane) I must thank you all for your support, and

I look forward to working with you all during the remainder of the 2011 recruitment drive.

**Noel Giblin Chairman Std Recruitment Committee**



# Review of Undergraduate Nursing and Midwifery Degree Programmes

*"... the Department of Education and Skills and the HEA in consultation with the higher education institutions will lead on the development of any changes required in relation to the organisation and delivery of nursing and midwifery degree programmes within the higher education system."*

As you are aware the Department of Health has commenced a review of the undergraduate nursing and midwifery degree programmes in order to establish their efficiency and effectiveness in preparing nurses and midwives to practice in the Irish healthcare system now and into the future

The review is guided by a Review Group representing key stakeholders. The PNA are represented on the Review Steering Group by Mr Des Kavanagh General Secretary.

Professor Martin Bradley is the Review Group chair. Martin is recently retired Chief Nursing Officer Northern Ireland.

This Review is being conducted on a modular basis consisting of the following elements:

- 1) An examination of:
  - the content of the undergraduate programmes
  - the structure of the current degree programmes including the separate points of entry, clinical placement requirements and governance arrangements.
- 2) An analysis of the number of student places required to ensure sufficient numbers of nurse and midwife graduates for new patterns of service delivery within the public health system

The Review Group will consider the findings of both exercises and report to the Minister by September 2012. Following the completion of these exercises the Department of Education and Skills and the HEA in consultation with the higher education institutions will lead on the development of any changes required in relation to the organisation and delivery of nursing and midwifery degree programmes within the higher education system. This will take into account the broader education policy considerations in relation to demand for such programmes nationally and internationally and the overall funding implications involved and take full consideration of the findings of the report to the Minister for Health on workforce planning and curricula changes."

## Student Nurse Internship - State of Play

Through the efforts of the PNA working with our trade union colleagues and continuous engagement with the Department of Health .The Minister has reviewed the decision to phase out pay for student nurses

The outcome of the Ministerial review is as follows:

- 2012 rostered placement (January - August 2012)
  - 60% of the first point of the relevant staff nurse/ midwife salary scale;



*"The PNA will focus on the priority issue of post qualification employment opportunities for new graduates."*





- 2013 rostered placement - 50% of the first point of the relevant staff nurse/midwife salary scale; and all subsequent years - 50% of the first point of the relevant staff nurse/midwife scale pending the national review of the undergraduate programme which has just begun.

See at [www.pna.ie](http://www.pna.ie) (information jobs training & information) for a copy of the letter received from the Department of Health, and circular detailing clarification on student scales for nurses and midwives. The PNA will focus on the priority issue of post qualification employment opportunities for new graduates.

## Labour Court Recommendation Re Removal of Payment for Pre Registration Nurses & Midwives

The Labour Court considered our claim, that the Department of Health/HSE, breached their obligations under the Information and Consultation Directive in the manner in which they introduced this pay reduction, at a formally hearing on the, 1st November 2011. Below is a student nurses account and perspective of proceedings.

*Firstly, I wish to thank Aisling Culhane (PNA) and Paul Brophy (ADON Lakeview Unit) for this unique opportunity and excellent learning experience. The proceeding started with the opening statements, given by the student's representation which consisted of the PNA, INMO and SIPTU. This was quickly followed, by the opposing parties which consisted of HSE, IBEC and DoHC. Thereafter, the adjudicators which consisted, of two men and one woman, asked a number of detailed questions from both sides of the argument. When all is considered, I believe that the student's representatives forwarded a superior argument.*

**Sean Conroy,**

**3th year TCD Psychiatric Student Nurse.**

The full recommendation of The Court's finding can be found on [www.pna.ie](http://www.pna.ie) (industrial relations section).

## Contributions from PNA Kerry Branch

PNA Kerry branch welcomes the long overdue opening of a new 15 bed hostel in Killarney. The €2.8m Hostel was completed in 2009 and has been lying idle for over 2 years following disagreement between the HSE, Kerry Mental Health Association and Kerry County Council in relation to tenancy agreements and responsibility for the day to day running costs of the Hostel. 15 clients transfer from St, Margaret's Road, Cherryfield Hostel, to the new facility in December 2011 coming weeks. To date, Clients have articulated their satisfaction with the comfort and standards of accommodation in this state of the art facility.

The Mental Health Commission has informed the HSE South that the registration license of St. Finan's Hospital will not be renewed from April 2014. This will bring to an end the 150 year history of the hospital.

A capital funding of 6 million has recently been allocated to build a 30 bed facility to replace the existing long term beds which remain in St Finan's complex.

HSE South Management is proposing a range of cuts to services. This will impact severely on many of the county's community facilities. The Association has condemned the proposed staff reductions and has instead called for the recruitment of graduate nurses to cut the overtime bill. The PNA recently wrote to all Kerry TD's and Senators calling for an end to the moratorium on recruitment of Psychiatric Nurses and the recruitment of recently graduated nurses from IT School of Nursing Tralee.

# 41st Annual Delegate Conference 2012 Hodson Bay Hotel Athlone

*Thursday May 10th and  
Friday May 11th 2012*

The 41st annual PNA Conference is taking place on Thursday May 10th and Friday May 11th 2012 in the scenic surroundings of the Hodson Bay Hotel on the shores of Lough Ree. Roscommon Mental Health Branch is hosting conference for the first time.

The Officer Board for 2012 will have significant changes as Gerry Kenneally, Sean Melia and Tom V Mc Carthy are all have retiring and are not seeking re-election. Margaret Mc Kenna is also stepping down so there will be at least four new members elected.

We will have a review and photographs in our next publication and more details are available on [www.pna.ie](http://www.pna.ie).

## Snap Shots from Annual Delegate Conference 2011



Irene Grehan, Dublin North Central received John Gahan Memorial Award 2011.



Sean Melia receives Gantly Award 2011

## Clinical Governance Development- Recently Published Documents



Improving quality and protecting patients from harm is the job of all health care professionals – clinical governance delivers the leadership and accountability frameworks to achieve this.

### Clinical governance is described today as:

*A framework through which healthcare teams are accountable for the quality, safety and satisfaction of patients in the care they have delivered.*

### For health care staff this means:

Specifying the clinical standards you are going to deliver and showing everyone the measurements you have made to demonstrate that you have done what you set out to do. A framework for clinical governance development is being developed in collaboration with health service providers. The framework is made up of a vision, principles, matrix and assurance check for clinical governance development

Please go to [www.pna.ie](http://www.pna.ie) for copies of the above documents

# PNA Salary - Protection Scheme

## Safeguard your Income

### FACT not fiction

- Typically nurses who fall ill for more than 12 months in any period of 4 years or less are taken off the payroll.
- If within this period you are ill for more than 6 months in any 12 month period your pay is cut by half.
- If you are forced to retire on the grounds of ill health, you may be entitled to an Early Retirement Pension.
- If you do not wish to retire, you will receive no income from your nursing post and only those paying class A PRSI may be entitled to a Social Welfare Benefit.

**Have you ever stopped to think what would happen in the morning if you were unable to work due to an accident or an illness? Where would your income come from once your sick pay stops? Unfortunately this is the reality many people face including your fellow PNA members.**

The PNA Salary Protection Scheme aims to protect you in the event that you fall ill and are unable to work. It does this by providing you with a realistic level of income in the event of a long term illness.

The Scheme aims to pay you a benefit of up to 75% of salary, less any Early Retirement Pension (ERP)/ Pension Rate of Pay and/or State Illness Benefit to which you are entitled should you suffer long term illness. One of the key advantages of the Scheme is that benefit is paid as long as you are unable to carry out your normal job – regardless of the nature of the illness/disability or whether it arises from an accident.

The Scheme also provides other benefits including Life Cover of three times annual salary up to age 65, Accidental Death Benefit, Specified Illness Benefit, Spouse's Death Benefit, Children's Death Benefit.

### Cost of membership

As membership is so important, the Scheme is designed to be affordable for every member. The contribution rate is currently set at 2.02% of gross salary. You are eligible for tax relief on the majority of this premium. Example: a PNA nurse earning €45,000 will pay approx. €12.68\* a week after tax.

**Call today on (01) 408 4195 for more information on the Scheme or log on to [www.cornmarket.ie](http://www.cornmarket.ie)**  
**Link: <https://www.cornmarket.ie/pna.htm>**

\*Paying income tax at 41%

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### Financial Planning Service for PNA members

In 2011, over 500 PNA members availed of Cornmarket's Financial Planning Service

- Would you like to see if you can reduce your Car and Home Insurance bills?
- Would you like to hear about possible ways to reduce your tax bill?
- Are you on the right point of the Salary Scales?
- Are you receiving your full allowances?
- Do you know your sick pay entitlements?
- Are you financially prepared for the future?

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**See PNA website [www.pna.ie](http://www.pna.ie)**



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## Registered Psychiatric Nurses' Practice with Mentally Ill Parents and their Children/Families within General Adult Mental Health Services in Ireland - Family Focused Practice

– a word of thanks from Anne Grant , (Registered Psychiatric Nurse (RPN) and Lecturer at University College Dublin),

*“ It is estimated that between 25 and 50% of adults known to general adult mental health services have children (Mayberry and Reupert 2011).”*

It is estimated that between 25 and 50% of adults known to general adult mental health services have children (Mayberry and Reupert 2011). Although mentally ill parents value their parenting role and perceive that it promotes their recovery and integration within their communities (Gopfert et al., 2004), the literature also suggests that a substantial number experience varying degrees of difficulty in fulfilling their parenting responsibilities due to their mental illness (Mayberry and Reupert 2010, Gopfert et al., 2004). These difficulties in parenting tend to occur at times of relapse and during the acute phase of their mental illness and can adversely affect their own and their children's well-being on a temporary and on an ongoing basis (Gopfert et al., 2004). However the literature suggests that, with appropriate supports, the majority of mentally ill parents can be facilitated to cope with and to enjoy their parenting role; with benefits for parents and their children/families.

The literature is also increasingly highlighting the role that RPNs play in supporting mentally ill parents and their children/families; endorsing the notion that this group of mental health professionals represent a potentially valuable source of support for mentally ill parents and their children/families. However, due to an absence of research in the Irish context, little is known about RPN's practice with service users who are parents. The findings of this research will generate an understanding of RPN's practice with service users who are parents and this knowledge can be subsequently used to inform developments in mental health service provision for mentally ill parents and their children/families in Ireland and elsewhere.

Between September 2011 and May 2012 an anonymous questionnaire was distributed by myself  
– Anne Grant, (Registered Psychiatric Nurse (RPN)

and Lecturer at University College Dublin), to RPNs practicing in 15 mental health services throughout Ireland. The questionnaire aims to ascertain RPN's perspectives of their practice with service users who are parents. The questionnaire can be completed by both RPNs who have experience and who have no experience of caring for service users who are parents.

To date, I have distributed questionnaires within 10 of the fifteen mental health services; I personally distribute the questionnaires whenever possible, as I value the opportunity to visit the various clinical sites to get some insight into the context in which RPNs are practicing and to talk to them about their practice and the challenges they encounter in engaging in family focused practice. To date, 63% of the RPNs targeted have completed a questionnaire. This response is greatly appreciated and invaluable in ensuring the relevance and merit of the findings. A high response rate will ensure that the findings are representative of the majority of RPNs practicing within general adult mental health services in Ireland. A representative sample will enable the findings of the research to be used to inform practice development in the future.

The majority of RPNs who have taken part, to date, have indicated that completing the questionnaire allowed them time to reflect upon their practice, with service users who are parents, and facilitated them to discuss issues related to parental mental illness with their colleagues. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those RPNs who have completed a questionnaire and to encourage those RPNs, who have not yet completed a questionnaire, to consider participating in this research.

Full ethical approval for this study has been obtained from the UCD Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). Further information about this study can be obtained from Anne Grant at (01) 7166424, email: [anne.grant@ucd.ie](mailto:anne.grant@ucd.ie) or <http://www.parentalmentalillness.info>