In Memory of Tony Leahy

On the 15th of November we lost a valued colleague, leader and friend in Tony Leahy. Tony has played a major leadership role in realising so many of the innovations in change and reform in mental health.

Tony was one of the first to invite people with lived experience and their family members/supporters to sit at the national table with those who provided the services. He understood that change could not happen until we were inclusive of all voices, and made it part of how we plan our services.

He listened intently to everyone’s views, heard all suggestions with empathy and more importantly, Tony championed the Recovery approach. He didn’t only champion it he lived it. Tony would cite how Recovery is personal and it’s about being the best you can be despite the limitations of illness and he really understood the meaning of this from his own personal experience.

He worked tirelessly to support the building of a modern mental health service which saw the establishment of the office for Mental Health Engagement, the inclusion of Peer Support Workers working to support recovery on the Mental Health Teams and many more service improvements through leading a dedicated mental health service improvement team for the last two years.

All this culminated in the coproducing of the National Framework for Recovery in MH 2018 - 2020: which is his ultimate legacy to ensure a consistent evidenced based approach to embedding recovery oriented practice in services.

Everything that Tony did was based on his vision of making lives better for anyone who used services, their supporters and those who worked in the services.

Tony was a true mentor, fun, strategic, compassionate, an advocate, a friend, a confidante. He has left a mark on each and every one of us. We are all much better people, more focussed on the Vision for our services. Tony will never leave us he will always be that quiet voice in the back of our heads when we are struggling over how we might handle a difficult situation, developing a new way of implementing change or just to give us a little comfort.

Rest in Peace Tony.

‘Memories: let them fill your mind, warm your heart, and lead you through.’
National ARI Update


All mental health services are currently developing their recovery framework implementation plans. The national ARI team are supporting services with the development of their plans. The three guidance documents, recovery education, family recovery and co-production documents are a resource to support services with their plan development. All co-produced framework implementation plans will be returned to the HSE by end of December 2018.

In 2019 the national ARI team will meet with every service to monitor implementation progress. The team along with local Mental Health services, recovery committees and other relevant partners will also be providing information sessions to the relevant stakeholders about the implementation of the framework in early 2019.

Feature: The International Initiative for Mental Health Leadership (IIMHL)

The IIMHL is a unique international collaborative of nine countries (Australia, England, Canada, New Zealand, Republic of Ireland, Scotland, Sweden, USA and recently Denmark) that focuses on improving mental health, addiction and disability services and aims to provide better services to individuals and families. The 2018 IIMHL meeting was held in Stockholm, Sweden, from May 28 to June 1, 2018.

The theme of the IIMHL Leadership Exchange was “Building Bridges Beyond Borders” and Ireland had 23 representatives. The first two days of IIMHL offered intensive workshops, or "matches," on issues of critical importance to mental health across member countries. Matches in 2018 included, but were not limited to, opportunities to understand mental health care systems for indigenous groups, integrated care, peer support, youth participation and stigma.
IIMHL Exchange Experience - Key learning from match: Facilitating Young Peoples Involvement and Advocacy in Service Design and Delivery, Policy and Research

My name is Ciara Gillespie. I am a 24 year old who has just qualified as a mental health nurse. My title of expert by experience comes from the fact that I utilized the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) when I was younger. I had a very positive experience in CAMHS and now have a great interest in helping other young people the same way that I was helped. Although, it was not an extremely happy period in my life, it has made me the person I am today and I am forever grateful for that. Since then I have been involved in the setting up of the advocacy services in CAMHS Galway and am now part of the national scoping group. I am also on the ARI scoping group for advancing recovery in CAMHS and studied mental health nursing in DCU. My dream was always to go back and work in CAMHS when I qualified. I wanted to help develop CAMHS further and in turn provide high quality services to the young people of Ireland. This dream has just come through and I can now say that I not only used CAMHS but now work there too, where I will now be in the position to help others the same way that I was helped and supported.

During this IIMHL match I learned so much that I could not possibly write it all down, but here are some of the key learning’s for me:

- In Ireland we ensure that there is guidance documents and policies in place before we implement new strategies or aspects of care e.g. we have the Framework for Recovery which a lot of countries were very impressed with. In Ireland we have advocacy and peer support in the adult services but not in the child and adolescent services. Although the advocacy side of this is being worked on by CAMHS Galway, we have no peer support at all. Peer support appears to play a fundamental role in the mental health services in Sweden, Canada and Germany.
- All over the world we face the same problems/issues in mental health care such as stigma, waiting lists, the hard transition from CAMHS to AMHS, lack of system literacy/navigation, integration of services (e.g. Collaboration between government services and NGO services), lack of youth involvement in policy making and finally how to adapt a mixed approach to gathering and appreciating the research evidence that is a person centred approach whilst also recognising and involving wider stakeholders (How do we bridge lived experience with clinical data).
- One of the greatest things I learnt from this exchange was that around the world there is such positivity and enthusiasm in ensuring mental health services are the best that they can possibly be.
The Office of Mental Health Engagement

The Office of Mental Health engagement held a national event in the Royal Hospital Kilmainham on May 22nd of this year. The event celebrated the engagement of service users, family members and carers within our mental health services to date.

There were over 250 people in attendance with a mixture of service users, family members, carers and service providers. We started the day with speakers, followed by workshops and a Q and A with the Area Leads for Mental Health Engagement. We also had a take away library and information stands which were very successful. This allowed a number of both HSE groups and NGO’s to display and explain what they do and how they can help SUFMC and service providers.

We started the day with speeches from a number of people. Jim Daly T.D., Minister for state for Mental Health and Older People, spoke of his support of engaging service users, family members and carers with the services. Con Buckley, a service user from Limerick, gave an excellent speech on his experiences and hopes for his local forum. Liam Hennessy spoke about Mental Health Engagement and launched the well-received *Family, Carer and Supporter Guide*. Anne O’Connor, Deputy Director General, HSE, spoke about the organisation’s commitment to engagement in the mental health services.

We had a number of workshops offered on the day to allow everyone to learn about different topics. The workshops ranged from learning about certain projects to learning about the benefit of arts in mental health. You could choose to learn about the *ARI National Recovery Framework*, *CAMHS Advocacy*, *Peer Support Work* and *QSUS Best Practice Guidelines*. You had the option to learn about the local forums set up across the country by the Area Leads for Mental Health Engagement. You could also learn about the positive impact that arts can have on mental health through both a drama workshop and music workshop. It was an opportunity to celebrate the excellent work that is being carried out by service users, family members, carers and service providers across the country.
UCC & HSE Summer School in Open Dialogue & Clinical Network Practices in Mental Health

West Cork Mental Health Services in partnership with the Applied Psychology Department in UCC were delighted to host the first Open Dialogue Summer School in Ireland. The summer school ran over two days, 23rd and 24th of August 2018. The two day event took place in UCC. People travelled from all over Ireland to attend.

Open Dialogue draws on the values and principles of inclusiveness, collaboration, transparency. These values and principles are allied with Advancing Recovery Ireland and with the National Framework for Recovery in Mental Health.

There were a variety of workshops and presentations on Dialogic practice hosted by mental health practitioners, mental health tutors, service users, families and peer support workers. Key note speakers from the Bantry Clinic were Barbara Downs, Michelle Crotty, AnnMarie Hohmann and Dr Iseult Twamley. The Summer School were delighted to also have International Speakers, such as Dr Russell Razzaque, Dr Volkmar Alderhold, Mia Curtis and Flick Gey.

Themes of workshops included Trialogues hosted by Dr Liam MacGabhann, Recovery Stories, hosted by families and service users living in West Cork, Psychosis workshop hosted by Dr Volkmar Alderhold and AnnMarie Hohmann, Implementing Open Dialogue in an Adult Mental health service hosted by Dr Iseult Twamley and Dr Russell Razzaque and lastly Peer Support and Open Dialogue hosted by Nuala Kenny, Flick Grey and Adrienne Adams.

A huge thanks to all that came and supported the event, to staff, families, service users, volunteers and to the Department of Applied Psychology.
The Service Reform Fund (SRF) Site Visits

From August to October members from the ARI team in partnership with our Service Refund Fund colleagues at Genio visited every Mental Health Service around Ireland. The aim of the visit was to review how services around the country are building on current practice and service delivery and moving to a recovery approach.

Our visits gave great hope that we are indeed moving towards a recovery approach, the pace of transition varies from service to service. We were delighted to meet fantastic service users, family members and service providers who are working together to plan, design and deliver a mental health service that meets the mental health needs of us all.

What was evident was how service users, family members are growing from the experience of being involved in various recovery initiatives in areas around the country. Listening to that experience really showed how collaboration, partnership, being valued and working on a shared recovery mission can enhance recovery of all.

The visits also gave an opportunity to discuss the challenges in advancing recovery practice. This conversations supported services plan how this issues could be overcome.

It was great to see how services are utilising the Framework for Recovery in Irish Mental Health services 2018-2020 and associated guidance as a mechanism of delivering recovery practice (https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/advancingrecoveryireland/national-framework-for-recovery-in-mental-health/)

Overall the visits were inspiring and positive with lots achieved with lots of good plans to implement. If anyone would like to get involved please contact the SRF or Recovery coordinator from their area.
Learning Sets

Since our last newsletter, there have been two Learning Sets held. These took place in June in Carlow (representing CHO5, 6 and the National Forensic Services) and in September in Tralee (representing CHO 4).

Over 600 people attended both days representative of staff, service users, families and communities from the regions. These learning sets followed a similar format to previous ones; having a coproduced organizing committee, key note speakers with expertise in recovery and workshops that relate to recovery oriented practice which are co-produced, co-delivered and co-received. Exhibition spaces at the learning sets provided a space for sharing and leaning more about current recovery initiatives.

NEWSFLASH

Next year the Office for Mental Health Engagement and the national ARI team will join together as Engagement and Recovery. Following on from this our next newsletter will be inclusive of both engagement and recovery and we are seeking your suggestions now for a new newsletter name. The person with the winning idea will receive a gift voucher! Please contact Michaela or Jackie with your ideas

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