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A new tab called 'Specialties' (<http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/specialties/faculties.aspx>) has been created for Faculties.

New WHO report on mental health and development

A new report from the World Health Organization (WHO), *Mental Health and Development: Targeting People with Mental Health Conditions as a Vulnerable Group* (available from http://www.who.int/mental_health/policy/mhtargeting/en/index.html), calls on all development stakeholders – governments, civil society, multilateral agencies, bilateral agencies, global partnerships, private foundations, academic and research institutions – to focus their attention on mental health. The report presents compelling evidence that persons with mental and psychosocial disabilities are a vulnerable group but continue to be marginalised in terms of development aid and government attention. It makes the case for reaching out to this group through the design and implementation of appropriate policies and programmes and through the inclusion of mental health interventions within broader poverty-reduction and development strategies. The report also describes a number of key interventions which can provide a starting point for these efforts. By investing in persons with mental and psychosocial disabilities, development outcomes can be improved.

Obituary: Haroon Rashid Chaudhry

It is with great sadness that we inform you of the recent death of Professor Haroon Rashid Chaudhry, Head of the Department of Psychiatry at Fatima Jinnah Medical College, Honorary Executive Director of Fountain House, President of the Pakistan Psychiatric Society, Fellow of the Royal College of Psychiatrists and a member of the International Advisory Board of *International Psychiatry*. Professor Chaudhry died in Lahore on 5 October 2010, aged 55. A pioneer in bringing psychiatry to general hospitals in Pakistan in the 1960s and an early supporter of rehabilitation programmes in the community, he will be remembered for his contribution to psychiatry and mental health in Pakistan and wider Asia. Deepest condolences go to his family and friends.

Child and adolescent psychiatry training course in Ibadan

A 1-week intensive course in child and adolescent psychiatry was held in Ibadan, Nigeria, from 11 to 16 October 2010. The course was a collaboration between the West African College of Physicians and the Royal College of Psychiatrists under the memorandum of understanding signed between the two organisations in 2007. The course brought together expertise from both West Africa and the UK and it is hoped will have a significant impact on the child and adolescent mental health services, which are under-resourced in West Africa. It is hoped that this innovative way of delivering joint educational activities will be replicated to provide opportunities for further collaboration between the two organisations.

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Loss of the psychiatrist's professional identity

Sir: We read Professor Ikkos's editorial in the October 2010 issue with keen interest. The loss of the psychiatrist's professional identity among patients and colleagues is set to worsen the recruitment crisis facing psychiatry internationally.

The World Psychiatric Association (WPA) has made improving the image of psychiatry and enhancing the quality of psychiatric education its top priorities (Maj, 2008) and, in relation to this, awarded us, at the Royal College of Psychiatrists, a competitive grant to study the aetiology and factors associated with the global recruitment crisis facing psychiatry.

A systematic review of the literature has been undertaken to evaluate pre-medical, undergraduate and postgraduate (including societal) factors that affect doctors' career choices in relation to psychiatry. Informed by this review and other expert discussions, an evaluation is now under way in over 20 countries across the world. The study is using a quantitative cross-sectional design, with triangulation of data from questionnaires administered to final-year medical students, together with institutional and national data on selection policy, working conditions, demographics, and recruitment rates. A secondary analysis is of the influence of country, medical school and individual factors upon choosing psychiatry as a career. A full report will be presented to the WPA by July 2011 and the findings will be presented at the World Congress of Psychiatry in Buenos Aires in September 2011.

We believe that lessons learnt will help national and international psychiatric societies and institutions to develop locally relevant action plans to improve both the image of and recruitment into psychiatry. Any such strategies, however, will have to be an integral part of a wider plan to meet the greater challenges facing psychiatry, as outlined in the editorial (Ikkos, 2010).

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Ikkos, G. (2010) Futures of psychiatrists 2020: external and internal challenges. *International Psychiatry*, 7, 79–81.

Maj, M. (2008) *The WPA Action Plan 2008–2011*. WPA. Available at <http://www.wpanet.org> (accessed January 2010).

The psychiatrist of the new millennium: training needs, clinical skills, professional risks

Sir: On 13–16 October 2010, Italian early-career psychiatrists met at their first national conference, held in Riccione, to address training, and clinical and professional issues relevant to psychiatrists of the new millennium.

Recent social changes and reforms to mental health legislation have occurred in most European countries, together with continuous technological advances and the development of research in all the domains of psychiatry; these have modified the role of mental health professionals, with consequent changes to the training needs of early-career psychiatrists.

The clinical knowledge and skills expected of young psychiatrists today differ from those expected in the past. For instance, in relation to diagnosis, young psychiatrists tend to emphasise the use of diagnostic tools and statistical manuals, at the expense of thorough clinical and psychopathological assessments. Moreover, the first-generation psychotropic drugs, such as lithium, haloperidol and tricyclic antidepressants, whose efficacy is now well documented, have largely been replaced by drugs which are easier to use and safer, but whose efficacy is not as well established.

Furthermore, today's psychiatrists are increasingly challenged to search for a balance between the typical acts of clinical daily work and professional responsibility. In fact, the increasing awareness of patients and their families of the therapeutic options and possibility to recover from mental illnesses has led to several legal controversies with physicians.

During the conference, organised by the Italian Young Psychiatrists' Association, 12 plenary lectures, given by international and national experts, were held to open up the discussion of these issues. Professor Sartorius delivered a lecture on the possible future scenarios of psychiatry, and Professor Munk-Jørgensen on the academic responsibility of being a psychiatrist today. The roles of psychopathology, social psychiatry and biological psychiatry in the training and practice of young psychiatrists were addressed by Professors Sass, Priebe and Moeller, respectively. Professor Burns' lecture highlighted the importance of research findings for psychiatric practice.

The conference was attended by almost 800 European and Italian trainees and young psychiatrists (aged below 40 or less than 5 years from completion of postgraduate training), who had the chance to improve their psychiatric education, to exchange and discuss their experiences with leaders, and to present the results of their own research and clinical activities.

The scientific programme was conceived as an ideal path, which moved from the 12 plenary lectures of opinion leaders to the everyday practice of young psychiatrists discussed in the 30 symposia, 20 forums and 10 courses for continuing medical education (CME). Moreover, three workshops were organised, on how to carry out research (Professors Barbui and Cipriani), how to write scientific papers (Professor Munk-Jørgensen) and how to approach treatment-resistant depression (Dr Joubert). Finally, a symposium on opportunities to work and practise in Europe, with the participation of young colleagues from the UK (A. Malik and J. Beezhold), Germany (I. Calliess) and Croatia (N. Jovanovic), was highly appreciated by Italian young psychiatrists.

The positive feedback received from this event suggests the importance of such meetings, which could be very useful for all European early-career psychiatrists if implemented at national and international levels.

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Correspondence is welcome either on articles published in *International Psychiatry* or on aspects of current policy and practice in psychiatry in different countries. Letters (of up to 500 words) should be sent to:

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Readers are invited to send in quotations for use within the pages of *International Psychiatry*. Please email suggestions to ip@rcpsych.ac.uk