

MANCHESTER MEDICAL SOCIETY

Section of Psychiatry

The section of Psychiatry, of the Manchester Medical Society, held a guest lecture and debate on Wednesday 25th April 2007 in Lecture theatre 1, Education and Research Centre, Wythenshawe Hospital, Southmoor Road, Manchester.

The meeting started at 2.00 pm with a buffet lunch prior at 1.15 pm.

The President of the Section and Chairman of the meeting, Professor A Burns opened the meeting and introduced the speakers as follows: -

Guest Lecture by **Professor Sir David Goldberg**
(Professor Emeritus, Institute of Psychiatry, London)

“Has the injection of money into mental health services together with increased performance monitoring (and target setting) made a real difference to the experience of mental health service users?”

Professor David Goldberg began his presentation by saying that he thought the title of his talk was too long winded and giving an alternative title ‘Where has all the Money Gone?’ He first started by saying how much extra money there had been in 1996 investment in the National Health Service was £40 billion and in 2007 £190 billion. He also pointed out, however, that this was still below the standard European expenditure on health, even with this extra investment. In fact, in reviewing the general increasing trend in expenditure over the last ten years, the extra investment has actually only been £19 billion of which £6.6 billion was on staffing. A third of which was spent on increased management. Between 1989 and 1994 the number of senior managers in the National Health Service rose from 500 to 20,000. In 2003 was the first year that we had more managers than were beds in the NHS. Professor Goldberg was even handed in his discussion on managers saying, ‘That in many ways they can do many things better than doctors can’, ‘A good manager is one who can say no when it is needed but can also work closely with you. Bad managers are those that are hostile, never say no and work against clinicians’.

Professor Goldberg then turned his discussion to the reduction in beds in the National Health Service with a significant impact on the psychiatric beds. In terms of psychiatric spend the South spend 33.9% more per patient than the North. There have been 3,000 fewer beds in the acute and long stay sectors in psychiatry and 700 more forensic beds between 2000 and 2007. There has been an increasing investment in Crisis Access and Home Treatment Services and more modest increases in Assertive Outreach and Early Intervention Services. There has been 2000 more consultants, 3000 more nurses and most new staff other than consultants have been directed to these newer Mental Health Services. SpRs have reduced and SHOs have increased massively, which is obviously of concern in terms of potential wastage. The largest increase in consultant numbers has been in Old Age Psychiatry and Forensic Psychiatry.

Professor Goldberg also revealed a series of views on the National Health Service and Psychiatry in particular by various bodies of users. They were very polarised views with particular concerns about inpatient experiences, increased violence on wards, decreased numbers of ward staff.

In Professor Goldberg’s final conclusions he stated that he felt extra money invested, £10.8 billion had been well spent. There were concerns though that significant proportions of the money had been poorly spent. Some of the investment in increasing management had been inappropriate perhaps up to 50%. There was also the challenge that the increase in GP contract and Consultant contract was not necessarily leading to increased improvement for patients. There was significant wastage on IT technology and also the repetitive and seeming circular NHS reorganisations, which had also caused significant wastage.

So in conclusion the Health Service Improvements had been a curates egg, approximately £10 billion had been well spent and £12 billion had been poorly spent.

There were also some final comments on politicians on the NHS. They share

- 1 A visceral distrust of doctors
- 2 An uncritical faith in managers
- 3 A need to leave a mark on the NHS by Ministers in charge of the Department of Health!

There then followed an extremely lively debate on the motion ‘**This house believes that the Mental Health Service has improved over the last 20 years because of better management**’. The vote taken prior to the debate was strongly against the motion.

For the proposal

Professor M Marshall

(Medical Director, Lancashire Care NHS Trust)

&

Dr F R Margison

(Medical director, Manchester Mental Health and Social Care Trust)

Against the proposal

Dr S M Colgan

(Medical director, Bolton, Salford and Trafford Mental Health NHS Trust)

&

Dr S Lennon

(Consultant in Old Age Psychiatry, South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust)

The first speaker for the motion – Professor Max Marshall who reviewed the reality of Health Services twenty years ago in 1987, which were monolithic and poorly managed. He talked about the significant changes in relation to the NHS plan in 2000, steady increases in spending and also the statement that Mental Health Services received a proportionate larger investment over this time. Professor Marshall said that there as good evidence that services in Britain were better funded and better structured and better supported than any where else in Europe and in many ways Europe was the exemplar in the world. Professor Marshall also felt there was greater sophistication in managers and their training and spoke about some of the key note improvements in relation to management for instance the National Suicide Prevention Strategy. Rates of suicide have fallen in males and females these being the lowest since records began and significant in improvement in management of resources.

The first speaker against the motion was Dr Steve Colgan – Medical Director at Bolton, Salford and Trafford Mental Health Trust. He reviewed the general mistrust of clinicians and the raft of policies, which appeared to have a prime purpose of defending managers and protecting bureaucracies.

Dr Colgan reviewed two main areas. CPA and Risk Assessment. He said that initially CPA seemed to be a good idea, now he believes that there are vast amounts of time spent on CPA which in many ways appears to get in the way of positive patient interaction with clinicians. He also asked what was the evidence for CPA having any significant benefit.

Risk Assessment – Dr Colgan said that was an appearance of a science in relation to this and also a significant industry, which had grown up around risk assessment. He was also concerned that risk assessment was aversive and seemed to indicate if something goes wrong there is a system failure and someone is to blame. Dr Colgan demonstrated with a case showing the impact of the bureaucracy and management on clinical teams and their function, potential with their increased reluctance to manage patients because of CPA and risk assessment.

Dr Frank Margison – the second speaker for the motion – using a series of analogies to indicate how difficult task management was but also how important over the last twenty years this task had been in terms of improving services. Dr Margison gave an analogy of Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar as the National Service Framework with three envelopes method of surviving in management, blaming the predecessor, reorganising and then writing three more envelopes. Finally the story of three parrots. Dr Margison gave a review of the spectrum of management activities.

The final speaker against the motion was Dr Sean Lennon. He gave some examples of the way that poor management in the past had basically diverted future management in terms of trying to solve the problems rather than move forward with time and opportunity lost by managers undoing the work of previous managers and correcting the previous problems. He also spoke about the specific difficulties of Old Age Mental Health services in relation to management decisions.

Professor Burns, the Chair drew the meeting to a close making the final vote, the result of which was not actually clear at the time of writing this report. Suffice to say that this was a lively and interesting debate and enjoyed by the large audience who attended.

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