



**FIRST CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT
AND
CALL FOR ABSTRACTS**

'CHALLENGING MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEMS: CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES FROM INSIDE OUT AND OUTSIDE IN'
13 AND 14 NOVEMBER 2019

**SCHOOL OF APPLIED SOCIAL STUDIES AND SCHOOL OF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK, IRELAND
IN ASSOCIATION WITH CRITICAL VOICES NETWORK IRELAND**

Dissatisfaction with mainstream mental health systems, as well as attempts, from both within and outside, to find different ways to support people in distress, have been well documented over the years. This year's conference explores critical perspectives from both within and outside mental health systems, considers the struggles, challenges and barriers people have experienced at developing new approaches, and examines what it means to be on the inside and/or outside of different spaces, such as inside/outside service use, inside/outside academia, and inside/outside different knowledges. Innovations in service delivery, in education, and in activism will be explored, set within the wider context of critical debates on contested areas in mental health.

Confirmed Keynote Speakers (in alphabetical order)

<p>John Cromby is Professor of Psychology at the University of Leicester. His work in mental health is associated with developing alternatives to biomedical explanations, and with understanding the relevance of people's social and material circumstances to their distress. John is a contributing author to the 'Power Threat Meaning Framework'.</p>	<p>Alison Faulkner is an independent survivor researcher with over 25 years' experience of working in mental health research and consultancy, mainly in the voluntary sector. Alison has personal experience of mental distress and of using mental health services. She gained her PhD in 2017 on the role and value of experiential knowledge in mental health research.</p>
<p>Fionn Fitzpatrick is a community development worker, activist and the Co-ordinator of Gateway Mental Health Project in Dublin, a peer led initiative for social support in the community. Gateway provides a way for people to come together in solidarity and develop a community response to experiences of inequality and social exclusion. Fionn is a passionate advocate of human rights, equality and social justice and of using community development approaches to redress inequalities of power in mental health.</p>	<p>Anne O'Donnell is the Co-ordinator of LEARN, an education project which offers mental health courses developed and delivered with people who have lived experience of mental health issues. She has been involved in collective advocacy/service user activism in Scotland since the early 1990s. She is interested in the intersections between collective advocacy, activism and transformative education; in the history of survivor activism; and in how mental distress and madness are understood and responded to under capitalism.</p>
<p>Fiona Venner has been the Chief Executive of Leeds Survivor Led Crisis Service since 2005. She has worked in mental health since the early 1990s, always in the voluntary sector, and predominantly in acute settings. This included working with homeless people with mental health problems in London and managing the Suicide and Self Harm Team at 42nd Street, a Manchester based charity supporting young people. Fiona is a Labour Councillor on the Leeds City Council.</p>	<p>Robert Whitaker is the author of four books, and co-author of a fifth, three of which tell of the history of psychiatry. In 2010, his Anatomy of an Epidemic: Magic Bullets, Psychiatric Drugs, and the Astonishing Rise of Mental Illness won the U.S. Investigative Reporters and Editors book award for best investigative journalism. He is the founder of madinamerica.com, a website that features research news and blogs by an international group of writers interested in "rethinking psychiatry."</p>

Call for abstracts (oral presentations/workshops) of 45 minutes' duration related to the conference theme and outlining its aims and intentions. Please submit (in Word- 250 words max) by **9 September 2019**. Please also submit a brief bio (in Word - 150 words max). Email abstract and bio to l.sapouna@ucc.ie. Inquiries to h.gijbels@ucc.ie or l.sapouna@ucc.ie.

Registration details will be circulated in September 2019.

The Conference organisers are Lydia Sapouna, School of Applied Social Studies and Harry Gijbels (retired), Catherine McAuley School of Nursing and Midwifery, University College Cork, Ireland.