



Press Release
Immediate Release
18 March 2024

Three Cygnet Doctors Elected Into Positions at the Royal College of Psychiatrists

Dr Sai Achuthan, Medical Director at Cygnet Hospital Kewstoke: Chair of the Royal College of Psychiatrists South West Division

Dr Richard Church, Medical Director at Cygnet Hospital Woking: Chair of the Adolescent Forensic Special Interest Group

Dr Dave Barker, Medical Director at Cygnet Hospital Taunton: Regional Advisor to the Royal College of Psychiatrists (London division)

Three Cygnet Health Care doctors have been elected into various positions at the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

Dr Sai Achuthan is the Medical Director at Cygnet Hospital Kewstoke. He has been appointed as Chair of the Royal College of Psychiatrists South West Division.

Sai said he was truly humbled to have been elected. He added: "Stepping into this position fills me with a mix of excitement, responsibility and gratitude.

"I am deeply touched by the faith and trust my esteemed colleagues have placed in me and I am dedicated to fulfilling my duties to the best of my abilities for our profession and the mental health community.

"I am fully aware of the challenges and opportunities that await me. The role of Chair is one that I approach with seriousness to invest my time, effort and enthusiasm in advancing our divisions objectives. I look forward to working with our members, stakeholders and partners to drive positive changes and create a meaningful impact on those we are here to support."

Explaining his key priorities, Sai said he would firstly focus on enhancing training programs so that trainees receive the best education and assistance.

"Investing in the development and growth of psychiatrists is key to enhancing the foundation of healthcare in the South West region," he said.

"My focus will be on attracting, retaining and recruiting doctors from sectors such as independent practices, voluntary organisations, charities and the NHS. By fostering

an environment that values our healthcare professionals we can draw in and retain top notch psychiatric experts.

"I am especially enthusiastic about encouraging engagement from individuals of all age groups within our division to cultivate an inclusive community of health specialists. Moreover, I strongly believe in the power of collaboration and integration.

"Through cooperation with NHS providers and the broader NHS network we can establish synergies, exchange practices and enhance the quality of patient care. Together we can bridge gaps dismantle barriers between sectors and establish a united and efficient mental health environment."

Sai added he was sincerely thankful for the backing he has received from his Cygnet colleagues.

"Their support and confidence in my capabilities have been a source of motivation for me. The support I have received from senior management showcases Cygnet's dedication to advancing psychiatry and enhancing the wellbeing of our communities.

"As I take on the role of Chair I feel a sense of purpose, enthusiasm and resolve. I am prepared to listen learn and guide the way, alongside our members, partners and stakeholders in shaping the future of psychiatry in the South West. Together we have the power to make an impact inspire change and improve lives. It is a privilege to serve as Chair and I eagerly anticipate the journey ahead."

Dr Richard Church, Medical Director at Cygnet Hospital Woking, has been appointed as Chair of the Adolescent Forensic Special Interest Group.

He said it was a huge honour to be elected. He added: "I'm thrilled to have an opportunity to work with a group of inspiring colleagues and to take forward this subspecialty that serves a particularly disadvantaged group of young people and their families, and to take forward the fantastic work of the College."

He said one of his early priorities will be to build on the strong Executive Committee and develop links with key stakeholders in youth mental health, youth justice, academia and third sector organisations doing important work in the field.

He explained: "I would like the AFPSIG to identify and encourage effective system-wide thinking at times of transition and to advocate for thinking of families - we know that there is often little available for relatives, who can be so significantly affected by youth crime.

"I'm delighted that my colleagues in Cygnet have been so supportive of my role in the Royal College of Psychiatrists, and that they recognise the value that this brings.

"As I strive with the AFPSIG to deliver better services for young people and their families at a national level, I have no doubt that we will be enriched as clinicians, to the benefit of our own services, patients and colleagues."

Dr Dave Barker, Medical Director at Cygnet Hospital Taunton, has been appointed as a Regional Advisor to the RCPsych within the London division.

He said: "This appointment is a true honour and a remarkable opportunity to not only contribute to the College's activities, but to also forge links between the College and the Cygnet family."

His role entails a number of duties, chief amongst them will be the close collaboration with Postgraduate Deans and Heads of Schools of Psychiatry. Additionally, he will act as the College representative on all matters relating to postgraduate education in psychiatry and continuing professional development. Dr Barker will also be involved in quality assurance procedures and assist Training Programme Directors and supervisors to implement recommendations accordingly. He will also provide advice to employers about job descriptions for new and replacement consultant, specialty doctor and specialist psychiatrist posts.

He added: "Armed with this knowledge and connections, I will prioritise closer ties with Deaneries and Schools of Psychiatry to establish training posts within Cygnet and formalise our consultants as GMC Trainers.

"Working in the post will add legitimacy to my ongoing endeavours to foster close connections with universities for academia and research.

"I have been hugely supported by my South West colleagues and senior management within the wider region, so would like to send out a huge thanks to all."

Cygnet's Group Clinical Director, Jon Van Niekerk, is the Chair of the Royal College of Psychiatrists General Adult Faculty Executive Committee. He passed on his personal congratulations to his Cygnet colleagues.

He said: "These appointments are thoroughly deserved and I personally extend my congratulations to Sai, Richard and Dave. They are all first class doctors with excellent leadership skills and I have every confidence that they will influence and affect real change in mental health.

"Their core values place service users at the very heart of the work they deliver and they are all committed to ensuring care is of the very highest standards.

"They understand both the challenges and opportunities which exist within the sector and their drive, compassion, commitment and dedication make them excellent additions to our leadership team at the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

"Myself, and everyone at Cygnet, celebrates their appointments and wishes them all the very best."

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Notes to Editors:

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