



Supporting Professionals to
Prevent Sexual Abuse

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

NOTA NI 2017

Minutes of NOTA Northern Ireland Branch Annual General Meeting 2017 Tuesday 6th June 2017 at 11-15am NSPCC Offices, Jennymount, Belfast.

The Annual General Meeting of the NOTA Northern Ireland Branch took place at 11-15am on Tuesday 6th June 2017, during a break in a half day conference entitled- **Exploring the Complexities in Assessing Sexual Offending within Intimate Partner Relationship**. The main speaker at this conference was, Kerry Malone (Independent Social Work Consultant) a member of the Northern Ireland branch committee.

The AGM was opened by Yvonne Adair (Chairperson) and a report given on the various branch activities during the period June 2016 to June 2017. These included - **Two branch training events**- One on the 8th June 2016 entitled- **Understanding Sexual Behaviour in Adolescents** and one on the 9th November 2016 entitled- **Sexual Offending 18 to 25: Young People or Risky Adults**- These two events continued the theme of focusing on sexual behaviour through the lifespan of children and young people having started the previous year with that of pre-pubescent children. Each of the training events proved very popular, with excellent feedback from those who attended. **Power point presentations are available on the Northern Ireland branch section of the NOTA website**

Joint Northern Ireland / Republic of Ireland Conference

On the 28th April 2017 a joint conference entitled - **When is an Individual with a history of Sexual Crime no longer a Sex Offender?** Was held in Newry, this conference was very well attended with Karl Hanson (Canada) as keynote speaker and Simon Hackett (NOTA National Chair) in attendance, alongside several of our own home grown (North and South) experts. This conference proved to be very successful with very positive feedback and suggestions for future events. **Power point presentations are available on the Northern Ireland branch section of the NOTA web site.**

NOTA's Annual International Conference

The annual NOTA Conference took place in Brighton between the 28th/ 30th September 2016. It attracted many speakers and workshop facilitators from throughout the world (including from Northern Ireland) and was both stimulating and thought provoking. This year's conference is taking place from the 20th to the 22nd September 2017 in Cardiff, an opportunity for us here in Northern Ireland to showcase our excellent and progressive work.

Local Governance

The Northern Ireland Branch Committee have met as a Branch committee on four occasions (quarterly), working well together, to follow, review and deliver on our Business Plan, both national and local. As Chair, I sit on the National Board and have attended 3 of 4 Board meetings - representing our Branch and ensuring that we are kept abreast of the development and issues relating to the organisation. We have representation nationally - on the Training Committee (Marcella Leonard) and on the Policy and Procedures Committee (Val Owens).

Circles of Support and Accountability

The NOTA Northern Ireland Branch continues to lobby for the establishment of a Circles of Support, as within the United Kingdom, the Northern Ireland region is the only one without such a public protection measure. The past year has seen some movement locally in this field and the branch will continue to lend its support.

Business Plan for the Year 2017- 2018

Copies of the Northern Ireland Branch Business plan for the year 2017-2018 are available. This plan builds on all that has been achieved in previous years, with a continued determination to increase our membership, promote diversity, enhance our identity and provide constructive response and guidance to local government and statutory policy.

Yvonne Adair - Chair 2016/17

Journal Club report 2016/2017

We have hosted 4 events this year, two at Queen's University and two at University of Ulster [Magee Campus]. All have been well supported by students and practitioners from a range of disciplines.

In November 2016 at Queen's University; Yvonne Adair and staff from Youth Justice reviewed "A qualitative investigation of treatment components for families of young people who have sexually offended." Volume 22 Issue 2 July 2016.

The importance of family work with parents and carers of young people involved in harmful sexual behaviour was well outlined. Educational input about appropriate and inappropriate and abusive behaviours was viewed as an important treatment goal during the early stages of treatment before it moved on to address family dynamics. Another goal was to improve family structure by establishing new boundaries, rules and individual responsibilities. This was viewed as crucial in enmeshed families and those who struggled with decision making and leadership. Working through the pain caused by the sexual offending was a vital process of healing, allowing families to express feelings of anger and frustration. The overall objective of all treatment components is to develop skills and competencies so families can function independently of treatment. The importance of the therapeutic relationship was viewed [as in many treatment studies] as a component that impacted on all treatment goals. Staff provided very helpful examples from their own practice and a useful discussion followed.

Kerry Malone, Independent social worker then reviewed "Factors associated with contact child sexual abuse in a sample of indecent images offenders." Volume 21 Issue 3 November 2015

This paper about a UK study sought to explore the differences between those who solely accessed indecent images and those who were dual offenders. [Contact and internet]. The study examined:

1. Socio demographic [previous offence history and living arrangements]
2. Internet activities [paying for access, grooming on line and production]
3. Quality and type of image.

Some of the findings included:

Previous offending history

1. Dual offenders more likely to have previous convictions

Living Arrangements

1. Dual offenders more likely to live with children
2. More likely to live with partners who had children
3. Higher relationship stability than non- contact offenders
4. Three times more likely to have access to child [within own family, relationship or volunteering].

Internet Activities

Sexual grooming and production of images

1. Significant difference in production Dual offenders 7 times more likely to have direct involvement in production [actually being there]
2. Non- contact offenders recorded a higher frequency of webcam use
3. Only 14% convicted of sexual grooming
4. Dual offenders had higher proportion of off line groomers
5. Non- contact higher proportion of on line groomers
6. For both off line and on line Dual had 88% compared to 11% for non-contact

It was noted that the ability to communicate well and groom enables dual offenders to be in contact on the internet and they are more likely to initiate face to face and also to use internet when they have no access to a child. Dual Internet use tends to be in relation to sexual grooming off line and images tend to be hands on with the offender actively involved Non-contact more likely to use webcams to produce image as opposed to being actively involved in sexual touching.

There was much interest in the study and Kerry led a very useful session.

In February 2017 at Magee, Colin Gorman reviewed “Sexual offenders contacting children online: an examination of transcripts of sexual grooming. [January 2017] Georgia M. Winters, Leah E. Kaylor & Elizabeth L. Jeglic

At the same meeting in a new and welcome development for the Journal Club Matthew McCourt, a Masters student presented his qualitative research project, exploring the lived experiences of males presenting to psychosexual services with problematic use of internet pornography.

Some general introduction was useful including the rise in the use of internet pornography [77%] in Ireland between 2010 and 2014 [Roberts and Turner 2014]. 10% first access at the age of 12 though some reporting use from age 8 years [Sabina et al 2008]. 23% reported trying to stop and 7% [aged 16 to 20 years believed their viewing was “out of control”.

Matthew posed a number of questions around the understanding of the topic, including links to addiction, personality disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, previous trauma including sexual abuse and the link between pornography and offending. He pointed out that much of the evidence is inconclusive. In his research method four participants were recruited who self- identified problematic usage. They completed two short psychometric tests [Internet Addiction test [IAT: that has pre-set cut offs for the level of addiction] and the GPIUS [Generalised problematic internet usage scale that measures 5 distinct factors of problematic use]. Semi structured interviews were carried out and open ended questions were used to allow the participants to talk about their own experiences and ideas about problematic use. The findings in respect of causative factors noted easy access [you have it in your pocket all the time]; lack of control almost like an alcoholic; a desire to escape from “normal life”. The side effects were guilt and shame, suicidal thoughts, performance difficulties in sexual relationships and the “double life” of the public and private self.

Recovery factors were identified as more structures and routines, talking with others honestly, getting off the computer and the support of a loving family. Matthew noted that some of the implications for treatment were promoting help that was available, talking therapies possibly focusing on self-concepts, self-esteem, emotional regulation but also practical strategies about structure and routines and the importance of family functioning and support. He also noted that staff needed to be more familiar with the law in respect of the content of internet pornography.

A very full and useful discussion followed and it was evident that the audience were able to link with their own practice.

In March 2017 at Queen's University

1. The relationship between childhood adversity and adult psychosocial outcomes in females who have sexually offended: implications for treatment. [Gwenda M Willis and Jill.S Levenson]. This article was reviewed by Gareth Mc Gibbon from PBNI'S Alderwood Centre. The study reflected on how many female offenders grew up in chaotic households with parents with multiple problems and poor ability to protect their daughters. The possibility that female criminality may be more symptomatic of underlying trauma had clear implications for treatment. Trauma informed care was viewed as important and in the long run more effective than a standard relapse prevention approach. Gareth led an interesting discussion on the article.
2. Multi component behavioural intervention reduces harmful sexual behaviour in a 17 year old male with autism spectrum disorder: a case study. [Pritchard, Graham, Penney, Owen, Peters and Mace]. This article was reviewed by Yvonne Adair, Independent Social worker who has long experience in the Youth Justice Agency

Details of all the Journal club reviews will in future be posted on our web site.

Many thanks to all our reviewers and participants in the last year. Particular thanks to Colin Gorman who has led the Derry club so well. We look forward to more good debates in the next year.

Val Owens Chair of Journal Sub Committee

Northern Ireland Branch Financial Report 6th June 2017

Income 2016-2017

AGM and Conference 8th June 2016	£3531-09p
Conference 9th November 2016	£1978-87p
Total Income	£5509-96p

Expenditure 2016-2017

AGM and Conference 8th June 2016	£1914-10p
Conference 9th November 2016	£1366-04p
Journal Club	£--38-00p
National Conference Bursary	£-195-00p
Total Expenses	£3513-14p

Net Income for the Year 2016-2017 **£1996-82p**

Profit for the year **£1996-82p**

All Ireland Conference 28th April 2017 (Figures not included in above report)

Income from Conference	£8065-51p
Expenses for Conference	£3142-48p
Net Profit from Conference	£4923-03p

The income/profit from this joint conference (£4923-03p) is to be shared between the Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland Branches.

Election of Branch Officers for the Year 2017-2018

There being no nominees for the positions of branch officers the following were re-elected- Chair Yvonne Adair, Secretary Paul Stephenson, Treasurer Denis Ferguson, NOTA National Board representative, Yvonne Adair, NOTA National Training Committee, Marcella Leonard, NOTA National Policy and Procedures Committee, Val Owens.

This being all the business the meeting was closed at 11-30am, the date time and venue of the of the next committee meeting was agreed as Wednesday 6th September 2017 at 2.30 PM the venue being the NSPCC Offices, Jennymount, Belfast.