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978-1-904-67187-9 — Social Inclusion and Mental Health
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Social inclusion and mental health

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17 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8PG
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British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data.
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.
ISBN 978 1 904671 87 9

Distributed in North America by Publishers Storage and Shipping Company.

The views presented in this book do not necessarily reflect those of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, and the publishers are not responsible for any error of omission or fact.

The Royal College of Psychiatrists is a charity registered in England and Wales (228636) and in Scotland (SC038369).

Printed by Bell & Bain Limited, Glasgow, UK.

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Foreword

Being part of society, contributing to it and, in return, being recognised and acknowledged, is a core need of human beings. The impact of social factors, whether they be isolation, unemployment, poor housing, financial hardship or debt, in the aetiology of mental and physical ill health and their role in its management cannot be underestimated. Whether an individual is egocentric or socio-centric, social inclusion is of great significance in ensuring that an individual feels part of the larger community. Mentally ill individuals often seek employment, housing and social contacts as their key priorities and it is essential that clinicians do not forget these goals. There is little doubt that social inclusion is often seen as a political or moral concept, but it is much more than that: it is a quintessential basic need that every individual has, to be accepted and to have the self-esteem and the self-confidence which will allow the individual to deal with stress. Social inclusion for individuals has many meanings, depending upon gender, age, sexual orientation, educational attainment or socio-economic status, among other things. The challenge for clinicians and policy makers is to make social inclusion work and not simply to rely on rhetoric. This book is doubly welcome for highlighting an important topic and for guiding practitioners and policy makers to encourage social inclusion. The book originates from a report which was developed by Jed Boardman, and for the book he has managed to attract a many eminent contributors. I hope that it will be of interest not only to clinicians but also to stakeholders, including politicians and policy makers.

Dinesh Bhugra
President, The Royal College of Psychiatrists

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Preface

The origins of this book lie in the unpublished report written by the Social Inclusion Scoping Group of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. The Scoping Group was set up to examine the nature and extent of social exclusion in people with mental health problems and those with learning disabilities, the implications for the future organisation, structure and culture of mental health and learning disability services and for the practice and training of psychiatrists. The report was published in a shortened form as a position statement which summarised the findings and views of the Scoping Group (Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2009). The evidence amassed by the Group and their deliberations were considered too good to waste and have been adapted to produce this book, aimed primarily at psychiatrists but also of relevance to other mental health professionals and others working in mental health services. It should also be of value to those who have an interest in mental health policy and anyone who cares about the plight of those more vulnerable members of our society.

Included in the Scoping Group review was the full range of people with different diagnoses represented by the specialties within the Royal College of Psychiatrists, including learning disability, drug and alcohol problems, children and adolescents, older adults and mentally disordered offenders. In addition, people who have comorbid diagnoses such as psychotic or non-psychotic mental illness, alcohol and/or drug dependence, learning disability, personality disorder and adult neurodevelopmental disorders (Asperger's syndrome, autism, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder) are included. The review also covered the full range of age groups and social identities – women, people from Black and minority ethnic groups, lesbian, gay and bisexual people, and faith groups. Most of these groups are represented by the various Faculties, Sections and Special Interest Groups of the College and they parallel many groups covered in the Equalities Review (2007). In addition, specific groups, including the homeless, refugees and asylum seekers with mental health problems, were highlighted by the Scoping Group as they are, by the nature of their circumstances, excluded by society.

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The original Scoping Group report took a broad view of the socially inclusive perspective – anti-discrimination laws, equality and human rights, social justice and citizenship – in addition to a clinical perspective. The belief was that it is only from this standpoint that the importance of social inclusion for people with mental health problems and learning difficulties and the role that our social and political institutions have in creating exclusion can be truly appreciated. The report's title, *From Exclusion to Inclusion: The Transformation of Psychiatry in the 21st Century*, implied that change is needed if we are to move from 'exclusion' to 'inclusion'.

The aspiration for the Scoping Group was borrowed from the Equalities Review: that we wish 'to live in a society…which provides for each individual to realise his or her potential to the fullest' (p. 1). The Group confirmed what is already well established – that people with mental health problems and learning difficulties are excluded and discriminated against, and that this remains a blight on the status of a considerable number of citizens in our society. This book reports and expands on the findings of the Scoping Group, examining the ways in which this blight is manifest and how mental health professionals and services might respond to the challenges posed by the social exclusion of people with mental health problems and learning difficulties.

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Acknowledgements

Many people have generously shared their time and knowledge to help us write this book. The Scoping Group members have participated in the intense discussions that took place in the group's meetings, made comments on drafts of the original report and subsequent position statement, and helped write the report. In addition, the Faculties, Sections and Special Interest Groups of the Royal College of Psychiatrists all made contributions. Thanks are due to all of those and to Candace Gilles-Wright who provided administrative support.

In many ways the book is an output of collaborative efforts between many individuals from the College and several other organisations and most of the chapters contain some input from people other than the chapters' authors. Tania Burchardt and Tom Scharf both contributed to Chapter 2 through discussions on the concepts of exclusion; Tom also provided a summary paper. The section on philosophy was taken from George Ikkos's paper on philosophical concepts. For Chapter 3, Chris Phillipson provided a paper on the life course and Kwame McKenzie presented one on social capital. Tania Burchardt provided material on the capability approach and Glenn Roberts on recovery. Chapter 4 on policy covered all areas of psychiatry and material was shared by Liz Sayce, Tom Scharf, Susan Benbow, Robert Lindsay, Tom Carnwarth, Roger Banks and Shaun Gravestock. The sections on the wider economic and social benefits of inclusion in Chapter 5 were based on material submitted by Michael Parsonage and Geoff Shepherd. Chapter 6 was based on material provided by members of the Royal College of Psychiatrists Faculties, including Child and Adolescent (Robert Lindsay), Liaison (George Ikkos), Psychotherapy (Ches Denman), Old Age (Susan Benbow), Addictions (Tom Carnwarth) and Learning Disability (Roger Banks and Shaun Gravestock). Paul Maklin provided information on physical health problems for Chapter 8. Bob Grove shared material from the evidence he gave to the *Foresight Review* and some material was provided by Robert Lindsay, Tom Carnwath, Susan Benbow and Tom Scharf. The material for Chapter 9 was provided by members of many of the College special interest groups and others with specialist expertise: women (Louise Howard),

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parents (Carol Henshaw), asylum seekers (Jo Stubley and Kam Bhui), sexual orientation (Michael King and Helen Killaspy), faith (Simon Dein), and homelessness (Phil Timms). Michael Parsonage and Max Rutherford from the Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health supplied material on the criminal justice system. Geoff Shepherd and Michael Parsonage shared information on the drivers of social exclusion for Chapter 10. The contributions from service users and carers in Chapters 11 and 12 were facilitated by Naomi Hankinson from the National Social Inclusion Programme. The unattributed quotes from service users in Chapter 11 were gathered by the chapter's authors from a range of people whom they had spoken to over several years. The quotes from service users used in Chapter 14 were all provided by Sophie Corlett from Mind, while Rene Cormac submitted the material on carers. Janey Antoniou gave us the information on service user involvement for Chapter 15. Glenn Roberts and Lisetta Lovett provided material on training for Chapter 16.

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