

Best Mental Health Promoting Event

Application Form

1. Answer the questions in the application. Maximum of three A4 pages of writing, (longer applications will not be accepted).
2. Add a copy of your poster/brochure/timetable if applicable plus at least 4 photos from your event and links to any videos and websites and save as one PDF file.
3. Upload your completed application to bics.ie

Rules:

1. The

initiative must be organised by at least one society in a member college.

2. The initiative must empower students to reduce the stigma around mental health and open the conversation about mental health and well-being.

*Check out some ideas on our sponsors website pleasetalk.org and on yourmentalhealth.ie the **#littlethings** campaign.*

3. The initiative may be open to the public
4. A short application form must be completed by **March 19th 2019 at 2pm.**
5. There are no restrictions on the number of initiatives per college which are submitted
6. The initiative must take place between **March 14th 2018 and March 18th 2019.**

The winning entry will be chosen as follows:

- A panel of adjudicators will short list to 3 nominees who will be notified on March 29th and must book the Awards tickets by April 5th.
- The Winner will be announced at the BICS Awards. The judges' decision is final.



Sponsored by

Application

Name of Event
Eating Disorders Workshop -New Maudsley Training
Name of Society
Medical Society
College
University College Cork

Please provide a brief description of the event.

In MedSoc UCC, we feel that our role in the Medical Society is not just about providing for our students, but also giving back to the community around us. We already do this through various fundraisers and our popular 'Teddy Bear Hospital'. This year we wanted to do something for *mental health* in the community. Eating disorders are a complicated condition and, having seen first-hand the lack of services available in Ireland, we decided to organise a workshop for carer's of patients with eating disorders.

Our two-day workshop taught family members/ friends/ caregivers and healthcare professionals methods for caring for people with eating disorders. It provides them with the skills and support to help their loved one/ patient overcome their struggle while also looking after their own mental health in this trying time.

Our workshop was led by Gill Todd RMN MSc, a psychiatric nurse coming from England who helped develop the New Maudsley Model. The New Maudsley Model is an evidence-based treatment method for people with eating disorders. It is a highly effective family-based therapy model and since its introduction into the NHS, has become very popular among clinicians and psychologists worldwide. The Maudsley Hospital is considered the best hospital internationally for eating disorder treatments. We were incredibly lucky to be able to have Gill in Cork and appreciate all the help and support she provided. Our workshop was endorsed by BodyWhys whose staff are currently being trained by Gill Todd so they can provide this course to healthcare workers and families in future years.

We were proud of this event for a number of reasons. Firstly, the course itself was invaluable, and we felt incredibly privileged to help provide so many students, parents and healthcare professionals with the opportunity to learn all these important skills, especially from a world-renowned expert. Without us this knowledge would have been unattainable and inaccessible in Ireland.

Secondly, we were proud of our welfare officer Ciara for having the courage to put herself out there; tell people about this workshop and why it's so important. She attended this workshop in the UK as the sibling of an eating disorder patient. As she describes, the effects of an eating disorder on a family dynamic are unimaginable and indescribable until you experience it for yourself. It can be terrifying and isolating, especially when there are so few support services. During the course itself she also gave my own insight on the condition and answered questions relating to her experience, so that those present might understand how siblings can also be affected in these situations.

1. Describe how your event promoted positive mental health on your campus and any positive outcomes.

There are shockingly few services in Ireland for patients with eating disorders, and even less supports for their families, who, it's accepted by professionals, can be as controlled by the eating disorder as the sufferer. This lack of services and information is often said to contribute to the stigma associated with Eating Disorders.

An eating disorder can be a scary time not just for the sufferer but for those surrounding them too, and this course helps the sufferer's support system to become more comfortable and confident in their role. It deepens their understanding of this illness, the behaviours associated with it, and explains how they can best support their loved one.

During the promotional stages of this event, we received lots of incredibly positive feedback and questions in person, via email and through the use of social media accounts. People were enthusiastic to learn about how eating disorders work and how they can affect whole families. It started conversations that weren't happening otherwise and encouraged people to look for help, or maybe tell a friend who they thought could benefit from it. It showed people that help is out there and that they are not alone in their struggle.

Many of the families at the event were very secretive about their loved one's illness in their everyday life. During the workshop, attendees were given lots of time for questions and answers, as well as role-play scenarios so that they could really engage with the information. We worked on skills carers can use to talk to their loved ones in a way that they will be more perceptive to and will not enable the eating disorder. Our Welfare Officer Ciara says "having experienced how impactful this course is first hand, it's clear that the promotion of positive mental health was central to this event".

2. How many were involved in the event

This event was organised by Ciara our Welfare Officer and our finance officer Eilis, who compiled the balance sheets and applied for funding from the UCC Societies Guild.

A total of 24 participants attended over the weekend. Four of these were UCC students who felt the course would be a valuable experience for their education. Twelve of the participants were healthcare professionals hoping to further their skills as therapists, counsellors, nurses, and dieticians. The remainder of participants had a loved one who was suffering from an eating disorder and were there to develop their skills as a parent/sibling/partner in helping their loved and also minding their own mental health.

We had limited spots on the course as we believed an intimate number of participants allowed for a very interactive session and gave Gill time to speak to each participant about their unique experiences and difficulties. We believe we were successful in doing this and this was confirmed by all the positive feedback we received.

3 How did you fare financially?

Our initial budget is outlined in table 1. We budgeted for return flights from London to Cork and back for our speaker, along with taxis to and from the airport, two nights accommodation, thank you gifts (tokens) for both of our speakers and catering for the attendees.

Table 1.

Income		Expenditure	
Guild funding	569	Speaker flights	115.54
		Speaker taxi	26.4
		Speaker accommodation	198
		Speaker token x2	60
		Catering	120
Total	569	Total	519.94
Balance	49.06		

The balance sheet for the event is detailed in table 2, (you can see we adhered well to our original Budget). UCC Societies Guild granted us €569 in funding for this event. We remained under budget by a tidy €49.06!

Table 2.

Income		Expenditure	
Guild funding	569	Speaker flights	119
		Speaker taxi	50
		Speaker accommodation	220
		Speaker token x2	60
		Catering	120
Total	569	Total	569
Balance	0		

In terms of sponsorship from other avenues, we were very lucky to have received private sponsorship from an individual with a vested interest in the workshop. Though this individual did not pay any money into our account, they very kindly offered to pay the speaker fees of €3000 for Gillian Todd (main speaker) as a gesture of their gratitude for the workshop's existence. This was a substantial fee and without this sponsorship the workshop would not have been feasible.

4 Please give details of the methods used to promote the event?

Promotion was probably the most challenging part of organising this event. It was important to our society that as many people as possible were told about this event in order to maximise the amount of participants that benefitted.

Initially, we posted into the Facebook year chats of all the medical years, but we made sure to utilise the MedSoc Facebook page with over 3000 likes by posting information on it, as well as our recently made Welfare MedSoc page. We also used the MedSoc Instagram page to promote the event. Our welfare officer, Ciara, also posted a status on her personal social media explaining why this workshop was close to her heart. These posts were very well received and garnered over 300 likes and 60 shares.

We emailed many professions in the Munster area. This included an email sent to every single GP in Cork, Kerry, Kilkenny, Limerick and the Mid-West area via the Primary Care Unit of the HSE. We also contacted the Department of Psychiatry and Neurobehavioral Science in CUH who passed on information to their employees. Similarly, we contacted Pieta house in Cork and the Eating Disorders Centre, Cork who passed on the email to other counsellors in the area. The Student Health Services in UCC were also contacted and more than helpful in distributing information about the workshop to their doctors, counsellors and any students they felt would benefit.

We had correspondence with the School of Medicine, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Psychology Department UCC, SÁMH Society UCC, 'UCC Societies', UCC SU and also UCC Chaplaincy. All of these groups were more than encouraging and helped promote the workshop among their students/department members. We were also able to have a staff wide email sent out on the 'all exchange users' platform which has a very broad audience.

Finally, we organised two radio interviews. One was with Cork's Red FM and the other was with Cork's LifeFM. Both these interviews took place the week before the workshop during their popular morning shows. Ciara spoke on air about her personal experience as a sister of someone with an eating disorder, and then her mom joined her on air to talk about how having a child with an eating disorder affected her life. They spoke candidly about the ups and many downs, about the lack of services and how this workshop changed the course of their family's life. It was nerve-wrecking and emotionally intense, however they heard from many people after the interviews who were interested in attending. It is overwhelmingly assuring for us to know that we have provided this change for others by making this workshop accessible to them.

We wanted to maximise the numbers attending the course, but also break down the walls surrounding an eating disorder by talking so openly about it. We believe in spreading the movement of expressing yourself and the struggles you're overcoming in order to get effective help and inspire others.

5 What would it mean to the society to win this award and why do you feel the society merits the award?

A workshop like the one outlined above has never been run by a society in UCC. It is seldom that a workshop like this is even run anywhere in Ireland. We as a college society provided a course that the HSE should be providing; however due to a lack of funding, or expertise in this country; it can't. It was only through the Medical Society, support from the Societies Guild and various other bodies that this course was held in Cork.

Very often, when we talk about mental health, we only talk about depression and anxiety. While these are important conversations to have, it's important to note that eating disorders are increasingly prevalent and also **have the highest mortality rate of all mental illness**. An estimated 200,000 people in Ireland are affected by an eating disorder with 400 new cases each year resulting in 80 deaths annually. So while the focus of this event was different from the norm, it was still very very appropriate for our audience and we hope it continues to be discussed as it was during our promotion of the event.

It was an incredible privilege to be able to run this course through our college and society. This course was life changing for me and the rest of my family, and so I feel incredibly passionate about providing other families in a similar situation with this opportunity.

It meant so much to this society to be able to give back to the community in such a meaningful and impactful way. As stated, we already do this through other events such as Teddy Bear Hospital and our upcoming MedDay, however; this workshop provided an intimate experience that will be transforming for many families. This rewarding experience would only be heightened by the support and recognition from BICS awards

In addition, we on MedSoc are one of the only societies with a dedicated welfare co-ordinator role. If this workshop was acknowledged, it would reinforce the concept that there is a need for a focus on welfare in this society, especially considering how highly pressurised and stressful college can be for all, but especially medical students.

Include poster, brochure and at least FOUR photos of your event plus links to any videos and websites.

** Due to the nature of the workshop; we could not take photos during the course or of any of the participants. Instead I have included pictures from my radio interview, a photo with Gill Todd, and photos of the social media promotion**



New Maudsley Training
EATING DISORDERS

2 Day Family / Carers' Workshop
Skills Based Caring in Eating Disorders

Specialist Training by:
GILL TODD RMN MSc

Date: Saturday 10th & Sunday 11th Nov 2018
Venue Sponsored by:
Rochestown Park Hotel, Douglas, Cork

Registration Day | @ 9am (pre-registration necessary)
Course 9:30am – 4:30pm each day

Cost: €50 Family/Carers, €100 Professionals, €10 students

Subjects covered will include:

- Explore how family relationship issues contribute to maintaining the Eating Disorder.
- Learn about the psychology of an Eating Disorder
- Practice makes perfect - we will practice the necessary communication skills to help improve your Loved Ones' self-esteem.
- Pre reading: 'Skills-based Learning for Caring for a Loved One with an Eating Disorder' Pub. Routledge 2007.

For further information and pre-registration, contact:
newmaudsleyworkshop@gmail.com

Supported by:
UCC Medical Society &
BODYWHYS

