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4 April 2014

**'It's Everyone's Responsibility: Think Family'  
Regional Conference  
15<sup>th</sup> May 2014  
9am-1pm  
Trinity Methodist Church & Community Venue  
Ballymacoss Ave, Knockmore Road  
Lisburn, BT28 2GX**

**Conference Outline:**

All individuals who experience mental illness are, or have at some point been, part of a family. The family plays a central role in each individual's experience of symptoms, and ill health in turn has a critical and enduring influence on family life. The ways in which symptoms interact with and are influenced by the affected individual's unique constellation of relationships will determine onset, course and prognosis of any illness. Relationships have a role in protecting against, ameliorating and exacerbating mental illness in children, adults and older people, as well as determining a broad range of outcomes across the lifespan.

A key principle in the achievement of greater family-focused care is the explicit recognition that parenting is a mental health issue and that investment in families brings benefits beyond the well-being and recovery of the affected adult as an individual (Fudge *et al*, 2004.)<sup>1</sup>

**Keynote Speaker:**

Dr Adrian Falkov: Clinical Adolescent Psychiatrist, Westmead Hospital, Sydney, Australia and author of 'The Family Model Handbook'.

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<sup>1</sup> Extract from The Family Model Handbook: An integrated approach to supporting mentally ill parents and their children © Pavilion Publishing & Media Ltd 2012

Dr Falkov is supporting the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) Regional Think Family Sub Group with specific areas of work identified within their action plan. As a result, Dr Falkov will be visiting Northern Ireland throughout 2014/15 to support this important work. We are delighted to have the opportunity to avail of his expertise and advice to guide the development of 'Think Family' on a regional basis.

The conference is an opportunity to enhance capacity building, stimulate our thinking and practice to reflect 'Think Family' and realise that 'Think Family' is everyone's responsibility.

The conference is aimed at all Health and Social Care, Voluntary & Community sector frontline practitioners and managers from all programmes of care and those involved in developing policy and strategy. I would be grateful if communication about this event is circulated to relevant staff at your earliest convenience. Please forward nominations to Andrew Hawthorne at [Andrew.hawthorne@hscni.net](mailto:Andrew.hawthorne@hscni.net) or 028 90553979 by **Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2014**.

Yours sincerely

Aidan Murray  
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