

## **#RCSIttogether Bulletin 10 - Rethink Stress, Young People, Workplace Wellbeing Day and RIMS**

Dear Colleagues,

I hope you've had a good week – my personal highlight was the fantastic response to our Comfort Carers appeal. In a few days we hit the target of €10,000 to provide kits to help ICU staff who are incurring skin damage as a result of wearing protective face masks for prolonged periods. A great example of RCSI coming together with a practical solution for the greater good.

Before we get into this week's suggestions and resources, I wanted to say something about how we are all experiencing this time differently. Some of your colleagues are struggling with the chaos of working, schooling and caring at home. Other colleagues are experiencing intense isolation and loneliness. You also have colleagues who are feeling vulnerable and unsafe. While some of your colleagues may be thriving - online yoga, netflix and banana bread - others will be simply surviving. But in each case, there is an emotional burden of being worried about the health of their loved ones, grieving the loss of an expected reality and being anxious about the future.

RCSIttogether is about supporting each other and we can do this by connecting, showing compassion and empathy. Please take the time to ask the simple question "Are you ok?" – ask the colleagues who are busier than ever, check on those who have been quiet recently and don't use their camera anymore as well as those who seem to have everything under control. Listen for their answer, look for the answer and don't forget the range of [support resources](#) available to staff.

### **#RCSIttogether Learning**

Thanks to everyone who joined our first session of the RCSIttogether webinar series this week. Next week's topic is "COVID-19: How to talk and listen to the young people you live with" led by Dr. Trudy Meehan. If you have small people in your family or are just interested in the topic we'd love you to join. Prof Ciaran O'Boyle referenced a fantastic course in his webinar which I'm sharing for anyone who wasn't able to attend. It's the [Stanford Rethink Stress](#) toolkit which is a series of short videos and reflective questions designed to help people use stress to enhance their work and health – an interesting way of reframing stress as something useful rather than something to be resisted.

A short article in Harvard Business Review is also worth a read this week. In line with asking our colleagues 'Are you Ok?' [this article](#) looks at how '[Empathy Starts with Curiosity](#)'. The author makes a good observation that this pandemic may be calling us to slow down and listen – not only to others but also to ourselves.

**Barry Holmes**  
Director of Human Resources

HPECS's monthly [Fast Facts](#) were also issued this week, some great tips from the team on Developing Your Online Teaching and links to some really helpful resources.

### **#RCSIttogether Health Science**

With the major shift to online-only interaction recently, it's important to keep research profiles updated to facilitate meaningful engagement within the research community. Completing your research profile on RIMS is quick and easy, providing [a place on the RCSI website](#) for you to showcase your career and research to date. Details on how to use RIMS can be found [here](#). RCSI's Communications team have also put together a guide for communicating research across social media, available [here](#).

### **#RCSIttogether Minding Others**

Self-care is about the things we can do to look after our own mental health. Our colleagues in EDI have shared resources from The Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families in the UK who have put together a list of strategies young people use for self-care. There are over [90 ideas and activities](#) to help them manage their wellbeing. Young people can help build an evidence-base for these activities by clicking on the 'Did this activity help your mental wellbeing' button on each page.

### **#RCSIttogether Minding Yourself**

To mark National Workplace Wellbeing Day RCSI Inspire have created a list of wellbeing activities that are happening across the University that you can get involved in. We hope you'll participate in a few and be sure to post any pictures on WorkVivo with the tags #RCSIttogether #WorkWell20. A full list of activities and suggestions is attached.

To continue on the wellness theme, WellFest 2020 have announced they plan to host the festival LIVE on Instagram to mark the original dates it was due to take place on May 9th & 10th. This will be a free event although there will be an option to donate to their charity partner Barretstown. There will be 2 full days of live-stream events, recreating each area of WellFest from WellYoga to WellPilates, WellMind, WellTalk, WellFood, WellKids and live workouts with their usual big names. More details can be found [here](#). They also have great resources and podcasts available online on topics such as nutrition, movement and mindfulness which can be viewed [here](#).

To end this week, another poem! This week it is a piece by Irish American poet Kitty O'Meara

*"And the people stayed home. And read books, and listened, and rested, and exercised, and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and were still. And listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows. And the people began to think differently.*

*And the people healed. And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways, the earth began to heal.*

**Barry Holmes**

Director of Human Resources

*And when the danger passed, and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and dreamed new images, and created new ways to live and heal the earth fully, as they had been healed”*

If you have a poem or a piece of writing that has resonated with you at this time please do send it in.

Enjoy the long weekend everyone,

Barry and Team