

#RCSIttogether - Bulletin 20 - Handling Conflict, Laughter, DOH Podcast and Staycations

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to our 20th bulletin, we're delighted you're still reading!

This week you may have seen our call out to all staff to consider volunteering as a 'Welcome Buddy' for our new international students during their two week isolation period on arrival in Dublin. Ensuring our new students have the best possible start in RCSI is a key priority for us every year, but it's especially important this year. Throughout this crisis you have all been so generous in offering to help out in whatever way you could and our request now is to consider giving some of your time to help our new students settle in and feel supported during a challenging time for them. You can read more about it [here](#) and if you would be willing to give some time to this over a few weeks at the start of term your assistance would be very much appreciated.

For anyone who missed it, Dave Harris from the gym shared a lovely video on [Workvivo](#) this week of our staff and students who completed the RCSIttogether 10k challenge on June 27th. Thanks to all on the gym team who supported the participants, what a great example of #RCSIttogether – working towards a common goal that supports our health and wellbeing.

#RCSIttogether – Learning

Learning how to effectively handle conflict at work is a valuable skill no matter what your role. In a workplace where people have different priorities, communication styles and ways of working conflict will inevitably occur. But it doesn't have to end badly. [This short course](#) is designed to help you manage workplace conflict more effectively. It explains the dynamics that create conflict and helps you become aware of what your conflict response is. Once you are aware of how conflict arises, you can learn some practical steps to take to manage your emotions and engage with others constructively.

Our Employee Assistance Programme providers, VHI, have shared a recent webinar on understanding and embracing [diversity in the workplace](#) which you might be interested in. You will be prompted for a password to enter the portal, it is VHIrcsi.

#RCSIttogether – Health Science

Knock Knock...Whos' there? A free and effective form of stress relief, mood elevator with positive health benefits! Mounting research has demonstrated that laughter can positively impact our physical and mental health, in addition to reaping social benefits and reducing tension and anxiety. The Mayo Clinic reports that laughter is a great form of stress relief and induces physical changes in your body. According to the Mayo Clinic, the short-term benefits of laughter can enhance intake of oxygen-rich air, stimulating your heart, lungs and muscles and increasing endorphins that

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are released in your brain, it can reduce your stress response and ease tension. Longterm benefits include improving your immune system, relieving pain and enhance resiliency and acceptance of life's difficulties. There are also social benefits to laughter, and it can help strengthen relationships. Laughter attracts others to us, helps diffuse tension, promotes group bonding and helps coping to become a shared experience. You can read the Mayo Clinic's full article on laughter as a stress management tool [here](#). So whether it's watching an episode of your favorite funny sitcom or YouTube videos of the infamous [fainting goats](#), remember laughter has the power to turn a bad day around.

#RCSIttogether – Minding Others

As our country is reopened, keeping up protective behaviours is as important as ever to prevent the spread of infection. The recently developed Stay Safe Guidelines have been published [here](#) in a booklet which is available in English and Irish and contains practical advice on how to protect yourself and others in different settings. We have all learned that those who do not feel sick can still spread the COVID-19 virus. Recent public health advice supports that wearing a cloth face covering in public may reduce the spread of COVID-19 in the community. That is why, as we begin to return to campus, all staff and students will be required to wear facial coverings or masks, in order to protect ourselves and each other. The Department of Health recently launched a new podcast series called '[Health of the Nation](#)'. The series provides a platform where health officials, healthcare workers and experts deliver clear and factual information on topical health issues, COVID-19 developments and public health advice. In support of the national public health communications campaign, the first episode was dedicated to the topic of face coverings; how, when and where to use them. If you want to know more about why we want people to wear face coverings, when you should wear them and how to put them on and take them off, you can listen to medical and nursing experts from the Department of Health on the podcast.

#RCSIttogether – Minding Yourself

As we are now in July, many of us are thinking about what type of break may be possible to take this year – there is no doubt we all need one! Our colleagues in RCSI Travel are bringing us some special offers this summer for holiday deals at home. From now until the end of August, there are a range of 'deluxe getaway' options at special rates for RCSI staff in the 4* Iveagh Garden hotel in Dublin. From next week, they will be launching other special offers for various locations throughout Ireland, if you are interested in any of their deals they must be booked directly via the travel office. Further details of this weeks' offer is attached.

A final reminder that next Wednesday 15 July between 10 and 11.30 we will have our July Townhall. We will be focusing on our 'new normal' and in particular our [Covid 19 response plan](#) which we really urge you all to read in advance. We hope as many of you as possible can join, as ever [your questions](#) are most welcome.

Take care of yourselves and each other,

Barry and the HR Team.