



## **Dr May McCann**

I lectured in Social Anthropology at Queens University Belfast, (1973-1998), specialising in the fields of Diversity, Women's Studies and Irish Studies. On early retirement I moved to the community and voluntary sector, working in the areas of policy, equality and peace-building, especially in the Women's Sector where previously I had volunteered for many years. As is often the case with carers, my life experience led me increasingly into advocacy; personal advocacy for, or with, loved ones experiencing emotional distress and

collective advocacy for transformation in mental health care and treatment.

I was an active member of the Mental Health Carer's Reference group throughout the period of the Bamford Review of Mental Health and Learning Disability where I had responsibility for writing responses to the Expert Group's documents: I also sat on its Equality and Human Rights Expert Group. Since 'Bamford' I have been involved, as carer representative with, the Royal College of Psychiatrists, sitting on the Carers Forum and on its Revalidation, and Curriculum Development, and Continuing Professional Development, Committees in London; the Department of Nursing and Midwifery and Department of Psychiatry in QUB; and the Participation Panel in Psychology, QUB.

I have been, and continue to be, involved in a range of strategic planning and service improvement bodies within mental health and social care, including, the Psychological Therapies strategy and implementation groups; the Social Work Research Strategy; DESR (Developing Excellence and Supporting Recovery) – the mental health nursing strategy implementation group; the Belfast Trust Recovery Group and Recovery College planning group. I acted as a critical reviewer on the recent Regional Mental Health Care Pathway, You in Mind, and am involved in the related documentation group, as well as the Review of Mental Health and Well Being Standards.

Throughout my careers I have produced papers, publications and given presentations in the areas of equality, human rights, service developments etc. with particular reference to diversity, gender and mental health and more recently in the related area of PPI (Personal and Public Involvement). In 2009 I was appointed by the Minister for HSSPSNI as a non-executive director of the newly established Patient and Client Council and sit on its Research Committee. I am also a member of the Bamford Monitoring Group (whose activities included participation as steering group member for service user-led research), and which I chaired 2011-14. I currently chair CAUSE, a peer-led regional charity which offers services to families, partners and friends caring for loved ones who have experienced serious mental illness.