

News Release



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Dr Raj Persaud Becomes Patron of OCD-UK

Following the Government initiative of 170 million funding to recruit psychologists to treat depression and anxiety disorders such as OCD, Maria Bavetta Chair of OCD-UK is delighted to announce that Dr Raj Persaud and Professor Paul Salkovskis have accepted the request of becoming Patrons of OCD-UK. "Our Patrons will help to raise awareness through both the Medical and Media sectors". "Professor Paul Salkovskis is no stranger to the charity and has actively supported it for a long time; it is a great pleasure to welcome him as a Patron to the charity" commented Maria Bavetta. "Ideas and suggestions have started to become implemented from the two Patrons, and obviously their status, knowledge and respect in both industries will reward OCD-UK with an awareness audience otherwise hard to reach."

Dr Raj Persaud commented "I hope to be an active patron of OCD-UK by helping to promote a wider understanding of the nature of OCD both amongst the public and the clinical professions - OCD is often mis-diagnosed and mis-treated due to widespread ignorance of this common but complex condition. It is probably the case that many thousands of sufferers from OCD unlike other mental or physical illnesses are missed by the NHS as its something that the sufferer may not realise is a recognised condition and is treatable. I hope OCD UK will benefit from my energy and assistance and the profile that being Gresham Professor for Public Understanding of Psychiatry might bring to the role."

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About Dr Raj Persaud (photo available)

Dr Raj Persaud is a Consultant Psychiatrist at The Bethlem Royal and Maudsley NHS Hospitals Trust in London which are the leading teaching, research and clinical institutions in psychiatry in Europe. Unusually for a psychiatrist he also holds a degree in psychology that he obtained with First Class Honours, and in addition he has been awarded over 8 degrees and diplomas including a Masters in Statistics. He has been recognised for the innovative nature of his research by the receipt of numerous academic awards and prizes including the prestigious Royal College of Psychiatrists Research Medal and Prize and The Maudsley Hospital's own Denis Hill Prize plus the exclusive medical award, the Osler Medal. The Royal College of Psychiatrists recently awarded him the Morris Markowe Prize for his Public Engagement work and elected him a Fellow of the College "the highest honour it can bestow on a member. In 2004 The Times Newspaper elected Raj Persaud one of the top twenty Gurus in the world in terms of influence. The Spectator has described him as 'the most eminent psychiatrist of the age' and The Guardian, 'the crown prince of media dons'.

About Professor Paul Salkovskis (photo available)

Paul Salkovskis is Professor of Clinical Psychology and Applied Science. For 40% of his time he is also Clinical Director of the Maudsley Hospital Centre for Anxiety Disorders and Trauma. Professor Salkovskis graduated in clinical psychology from the Institute of Psychiatry in 1979. He then worked as a clinical psychologist based in general adult psychiatry and in liaison psychiatry until 1985. In 1985 he moved to the University of Oxford where he worked on Medical Research Council funded research on panic. During this period he worked on theoretical, experimental and clinical applications of cognitive theory, particularly in the area of anxiety disorders and hypochondriasis (health anxiety). He was appointed to a Wellcome Trust Senior Fellowship, focusing on the treatment of obsessive compulsive disorder and health anxiety. His final title at the University of Oxford was Professor of Cognitive Psychology. During his period in Oxford he developed a strong interest in health psychology, particularly aspects of health screening and health decision making. He moved to the Institute of Psychiatry in 2000 to take up the post of Professor of Clinical Psychology and Applied Science and his role as Clinical Director in the Centre for Anxiety Disorders and Trauma. His research in both anxiety disorders and health psychology continues at the Institute of Psychiatry. He was recently involved in the channel 4 series, House of Obsessive Compulsives, which placed three OCD sufferers into a house, as the cameras watched them undergone extensive treatment for their OCD.

Note to editors:

OCD-UK is the leading national charity, independently working with and for people with Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) . For further information about the charity's work and OCD, call 0845 120 3778 or go to <http://www.ocduk.org>