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UCT researcher honoured with two prestigious mental health global awards



Professor Petrus de Vries

Photo: Dwayne Senior

Professor Petrus de Vries, from the Department of Psychiatry & Mental Health at the University of Cape Town (UCT) recently received two prestigious international awards for global research and capacity-building in child and adolescent psychiatry and mental health.

The first award came from the Royal College of Psychiatrists (RCPsych) in the United Kingdom and was their inaugural 'RCPsych Psychiatric Global Health Contributor of the Year 2022'. The president of the RCPsych, Dr Adrian James, praised de Vries for leading a range of actions and initiatives in global health that inspired a wide group of mental health and other professionals, as well as families and communities. The award was made as part of

the 2022 RCPsych award ceremony where a range of psychiatrists were acknowledged for outstanding contributions to psychiatry.

De Vries received his second award in December 2022 at the Congress of the International Association for Child & Adolescent Psychiatrists and Allied Professions (IACAPAP), which took place in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. He received the IACAPAP Medal for outstanding contributions to the IACAPAP and to the international child and adolescent mental health community. The award recognised de Vries' contributions as treasurer of IACAPAP (2018-2022), as co-editor of three issues of the IACAPAP Monograph and for a decade as coordinator of the Helmut Remschmidt Research Seminars (HRRS), an international research capacity-building programme for early-career child and adolescent mental health professionals.

De Vries commented: "I was very excited when I saw that the RCPsych recognised the importance of global mental health by introducing this award. Needless to say I was very surprised but delighted to be the first recipient!"

About the IACAPAP Medal, he said: "None of us does what we do for awards, but the recognition helps us recharge our own batteries, and can be a very powerful motivator for others to make socially responsive contributions in their communities."

Notes for editors:

Professor Petrus J de Vries is a British-South African Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist, who trained in Medicine at Stellenbosch University in South Africa, before moving to the UK where he trained in Psychiatry, Child & Adolescent Psychiatry and completed a PhD in Developmental Neuropsychiatry at the University of Cambridge. He returned to Cape Town in 2012 and set up the [Centre for Autism Research in Africa](#) at UCT.

The Royal College of Psychiatrists is the professional medical body responsible for training and career support of psychiatrists in the United Kingdom.

The International Association for Child & Adolescent Psychiatry and Allied Professions is an international non-profit organization to advocate through policy, practice and research, for the promotion of mental health and development of children and adolescents around the globe.

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