

Monday 07th March 4pm – Maynooth University Psychology Department

Prof. Susan Klein (Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen)

Trauma management following major disasters: myths and realities



Professor Klein is Director of the Aberdeen Centre for Trauma Research and Interim Lead for Remote Healthcare within the Faculty of Health & Social Care. Her research interests lie in the area of the psychosocial aspects of trauma, emergency preparedness and response, and the impact of dealing with critical incidents on occupational groups including remote healthcare practitioners.

Brief Overview of Guest Lecture

Disasters tend to be exceptional and complex events characterised by substantial loss, physical and psychological injury and economic hardship, as well as by extensive internal displacement and damage to the social and economic infrastructure. The severity and extent of such major incidents has the potential to challenge the coping abilities of individuals and communities and may result in a wide range of psychosocial/mental health consequences in the immediate, intermediate and long term. Despite the frequency of major incidents worldwide, and their potential to affect large numbers of people, it is only relatively recently that national policies, strategies and local operational practices for emergency preparedness, response and recovery, have been developed. This lecture will first present key factors underpinning these developments by examining some common, prevailing myths about the psychosocial response to disasters and contrast these with the empirical evidence on how people actually respond before, during and after such life changing events before addressing the core principles associated with effective trauma management.