

Confer presents

State regulation – the issues

A one-day conference to consider the impact of statutory regulation on psychotherapy and counselling

Saturday 23 January 2010

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London

9.30am – 5.0pm

An opportunity to explore

What the proposed regulations would mean for my practice, modality and training organisation?

What would statutory regulation mean for my patients/clients?

How can I contribute my views on regulation?

What kind of regulatory structure would work best?

SPEAKERS:

Dr Lynne Gabriel, Chair, British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy

Darian Leader, Representative of the Alliance for Counselling and Psychotherapy Against State Regulation

Julian Lousada, Chair, British Psychoanalytic Council

Professor Andrew Samuels, Chair, United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy

Marc Seale, Chief Executive and Registrar, Health Professions Council

Professor Diane Waller, Chair, Counsellors and Psychotherapists Professional Liaison Group of the HPC

Dr Michael Fischer, Research Fellow in Healthcare Management, Kings College London

FACILITATOR: Sarah Lewis

HOST: Jane Ryan

INTRODUCTION

The road towards the state regulation of psychotherapy and counselling has been extremely complex, involving numerous organisations, lobby groups, meetings and documents. The government's decision to regulate the profession by the Department of Health via the Health Professions Council (HPC) is seen by many as a positive, progressive and necessary step in raising standards of training, practice and patient protection. But a significant number, possibly even a majority of practitioners, are deeply concerned that this will have negative consequences for both therapists and patients by over-controlling and ultimately undermining the rich culture, deep knowledge-base and relational quality of this work.

Until the transfer of qualified practitioners' names to the HPC register there may be a narrow window of opportunity for the agreements on the HPC's standards of proficiency and academic thresholds for qualification to be refined. A more complex model, with closer alignment to the professional community, may resolve the problem of regulation for some. For others, a far more radical solution will be sought. Regardless of perspective, all practitioners face a considerable challenge in managing the consequences of great change in our community.

This conference is firstly a fact-finding opportunity to clarify the status of the negotiations, which government decisions are irreversible, which are satisfactory, and what aspects remain open to revision. You will have the opportunity to put your questions and concerns to a panel of individuals leading the introduction of state regulation, those opposed to it and impartial experts. A significant part of the day will be given to a structured enquiry through which you can explore the ways the profession is best managed, how patients are best protected, and to clarify your personal strategies for managing the impact of these changes in your own professional life. The final section will be an opportunity to feed back your findings to the panellists.

Because state regulation of psychotherapy and counselling is a complex and emotive matter that is dividing the community we are seeking to assemble a panel of speakers who evenly represent a spectrum of views on this matter in order to create a neutral and balanced space for this conversation.

PROGRAMME

9.30 Questions to the panel: The panellists will be asked to answer a range of questions relevant to their expertise

LEGAL AND POLITICAL ISSUES

- How does the Government intend to address the widely expressed concerns of the profession?
- What scope remains for amendments to the government's decision to regulate psychotherapy and counselling via the Health Professions Council?
- Is there scope for further negotiation with the Health Professions Council on the details?

FITNESS TO PRACTICE

- The Health Professions Council will have the powers to remove a practitioner from the register or apply other sanctions. How will this be an improvement on the existing role of profession-led ethics committees?
- What, according to research, is the best structure for resolving patient complaints and reassuring the public? A body that is independent of the profession or one that is self-regulating?
- Bearing in mind that the HPC's Fitness to Practice procedures are designed to cover all the professions it regulates, could there be specific and more nuanced provision made for psychotherapists and counsellors?

STANDARDS OF PROFICIENCY

- Is there a risk some psychotherapy and counselling qualifications will not be accepted by the HPC?
- How does the HPC intend to enforce its Standards of Proficiency within the domain of private practice?
- Many of the Standards of Proficiency are raising concerns because they are based on a formula for diagnosis, formulation of treatment plan, and evidence this has been followed. What scope is there for this to be refined?
- Will the HPC's proposed Standards of Proficiency restrict practice by not having sufficient psychotherapeutic knowledge to understand the causes of ruptures in the practitioner-patient relationship when transference and enactment are at the root of a complaint?

REGULATION OF TRAINING

- How does the HPC intend to influence and regulate psychotherapy and counselling training curricula?
- How do will they approach the matter of improving standards of practice?
- What will be the role of independent training organisations in the post-regulation culture?
- What will the role of the current professional regulatory bodies (UKCP, BACP, BPC)?

11.30 Coffee

12.0 Questions from the audience

13.0 Lunch

**14.0 Global Café conversation:
Managing the tension between the needs of the therapist and the patient: how is this best achieved?**

Two speakers will summarise the issues briefly and then the conference participants will explore answers to this question via a café conversation. This is an excellent methodology for a large group discussion, where the aim is to collectively answer a question of mutual concern.

15.50 Large group consultation process – the conference puts fresh questions and views to the panellists and considers what courses of action might unfold.

17.0 End

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

VENUE: The Conway Hall, 45 Red Lion Square, London WC1 4RL

DATE: 23 January 2010

FEES: £50 early bird (until 10 January 2010)
£75 (after 10 January 2010)

REGISTRATION: 09.0

START TIME: 09.30

END TIME: 17.0

BOOKING: Online only at www.confer.uk.com
From the Confer home page click on the *Regulation, Power and Professionalism* conference link

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ORGANISERS: Confer

FACILITATOR: Sarah Lewis of Appreciating Change, www.appreciatingchange.co.uk