

Special Interest Groups

Heads of Universities Counselling Services

The Heads of University Counselling Services (HUCS) Special Interest Group supports the work of those managing counselling services in higher education.

HUCS has its own website at:<http://www.hucs.org/>

and has a lively e-mail list, to which Heads of Counselling Services with management and clinical responsibilities, in Universities and Colleges of Higher Education can request to be added by sending an email with their details to:Hucs-request@jiscmail.ac.uk

Additionally HUCS has been involved over some time in developing a wide a variety of web-based resources:

<http://www.student.counselling.co.uk/>

- provides more information about the support available to UK university students - helps students locate appropriate services - helps parents, families and friends of students find what support is available - provides easy access to pages dealing with common student psychological and emotional problems and - provides links to others sources of help for such problems.

<http://www.beautifulminds.info/>

- Conference papers from HUCS conference in December 2002 on Student Mental Health

<http://www.studentdepression.org/>

- Funded by the Charlie Waller Memorial Fund to provide a resource for students, their parents and anyone worried about a student and seeking help with how to help them.

The HUCS Special Interest Group of AUCC is steered by its Exec committee who are:

- Mel Withers (Chair) University of Sussex - Pat Hunt (Past Chair) - University of Nottingham - Adam Sandelson (Secretary) - London School of Economics - Dave Berger -University of Hull - Ann Conlon - Kings College, London - Lynda Shaw - University of Bangor - Yvonne Harris - Manchester Metropolitan University - Kate Tindle - University of Sheffield

Staff Counselling

Background

Counselling for students has long been an established part of further and higher education provision. Recognition that there was also a need for a counselling service for staff meant that many student counselling services began to see staff informally. More recently, dedicated staff counselling services have been established using a variety of models. Some counsellors working in these services are isolated; some are unfamiliar with the extra dimension involved in being counsellors in the workplace. The need to make contact and work together led to various networks.

The roots of this special interest group began in places as far afield as Edinburgh, Bristol and Plymouth. An informal network emerged in 1995, in Preston, consisting of a group of counsellors interested in counselling provision for staff. Members of the group exchanged ideas and information. The group expanded as interest grew at conferences and meetings. It became clear that this informal group could develop effectively if it was established as a special interest group of AUCC,

working in partnership with the Association for Counselling at Work (ACW).

An inaugural meeting was held in January 1999 at the London Institute and the staff special interest group was established, with a small committee meeting three times a year.

General aim

The group has formal terms of reference in which the general aim is:_'To provide a forum in which counsellors in higher and further education can share information, current concerns and trends in staff counselling, and in which they can discuss issues related to these, and to the management of staff counselling services'

There are eight objectives that expand the general aim, including research, raising awareness, and disseminating information and good practice. The committee meets at least three times annually and there is a jicmail discussion group as well as events organized by members.

Achievements to date

The group has established a list of around 90 members who are able to consult each other on a variety of issues such as evaluation and publicity. Strong links have been established with ACW, as our work transcends both divisions. ACW has produced guidelines for good practice in workplace counselling. As BACP develops as an organisation, and the structure and roles of the divisions change, the group will be able to adapt creatively and flexibly to meet future challenges.

A small but active committee meets three times each year, and continues to collect and collate information on the different types of staff counselling provision that already exist, with a view to being able to provide consultancy to other organisations. Lists of resources, which could include books, leaflets, examples of policies and publicity material, standard forms, and evaluation material, are being collected and will be made available.

Four one-day events, each attended by around 30 to 40 participants, were held in 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003. Local Practitioner days are being organized by the committee members from 2007-2008.

How we can help you

You can have access to a list of counsellors working with staff, to exchange ideas and to get support.

If you need information to assist in building a case for staff counselling provision in your institution, we could help you.

If you need some information on the variety of ways to provide staff counselling services, the group could help. Useful resources include 8 papers which have been published in the journal and are available from the Members Area: - Setting up a staff counselling service - Defending a service (students/staff) under threat - Staff counselling - models of provision - Preventative work with staff - Auditing a small counselling service - The counsellor, the client and the organization - Challenges for staff - Organisations behaving badly

If you have a query or problem with a particular aspect of your work, you can use the jicmail membership and committee members.

There is a twice yearly newsletter for counsellors working with staff. How you can contribute

We know that many of you will be aware of information and resources that could be useful to the group. If you tell us, we can pass it on to others. You may be doing some research or have some examples of best practice to share.

Contacts

- Mary Dailey (Chair), University of Bradford - Marie Feltham, University of Sheffield - Angela Hodgson, University of Central Lancashire - Jules Howdin, Liverpool University - Sally Ingram, Durham University - Mary Jones, Newcastle Under Lyme FE College - Suzie Shepherd, Gwent College

If you are interested in joining, or if you have helpful information to share or something you would like us to do, contact the Chair of the Staff SIG:

Mary Dailey

Head of Counselling Service, University of Bradford

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Further Education Special Interest Group

The purpose of the Further Education (FE) Special Interest Co-ordination Group is to ensure that the interests of counsellors working in FE and Sixth Form colleges are represented; it aims to facilitate counsellors to be proactive in:-

- promoting an awareness and understanding of counselling in FE and, where appropriate, liaising with external bodies
- supporting the continuing existence and development of the counselling services in FE
- being a source of information and advice to each other
- sharing good practice and innovative ways of working
- maintaining and raising the profile of counselling in FE colleges

The FE Special Interest Co-ordination Group meets regularly to consider how these aims are best met.

How can I get involved?

The Co-ordination Group understands that raising the 'voice' of counsellors working in FE and Sixth Form Colleges is the collective responsibility of AUCC members working in the field.

You could, therefore, be involved in a range of ways: by joining a Sub Committee or Special Interest Co-ordination Group, or by undertaking particular tasks or roles, for example:

- joining and contributing to the 'Counsellors-in-FE Jiscmail' (e-mail discussion group) to share and reflect on counselling practice and FE issues. This is open to counsellors working in FE who are either individual or organisational members of AUCC - please contact one of the Jiscmail List Holders listed below for further information.
- writing an article for the AUCC Journal.
- getting involved with or instigating some research.
- offering/co-ordinating some training for counsellors in FE and Sixth Form Colleges (possibly at the AUCC annual conference)

FE Special Interest Co-Ordination Group Members

- Dawn Hastings(Executive Committee Representative)d.hastings@cornwall.ac.uk - Andy Bateman(Counsellors-in-FE Jiscmail List Holder)andy.bateman@sheffcol.ac.uk - Mary Jones(Counsellors-in-FE Jiscmail List Holder)mary.jones@nulc.ac.uk