

Setting up in independent practice

Fenella Jeffers offers the following-random-thoughts:

- Do I want to work by myself? If not, who with? - What kind of practice do I want to develop? Do I have to confidence to do it? - Premises, where? Is it suitable? Do I need them? Or do I contract myself out? What is the expense here and what are my obligations? What are the health and safety issues? - Costs, especially the start-up costs - Advertising (my race and blackness) - Contact details - What happens in the event of my illness or death - Furniture and fittings and decoration - Confidentiality - Insurance - Personal and professional development - Where to get help and how can I help myself? - The clients - what do I do and who do I want and not want to see? - What happens if a client doesn't show up? - How can I make assessments - does my training equip me to do this? - How much do I charge? How do I want payment and when by? What happens if client cannot/does not pay? Where do I keep the monies before banking it? - Arranging appointments - Safety - how do I protect myself (female) and ensure safety of clients? What if a client is abusive? What if a client dies whilst being counselled? - Record keeping and administration - Supervision - BACP - how can it help or hinder? - Being self employed, what does this mean regarding earnings, tax, insurance etc? - Competition - is my practice viable? Does it matter that there are similar practices in the area? - Time - how much time do I spend on it? - Monitoring the service - Professionalism - what does it mean for my practice? Can I be business minded? - Am I prepared? Or dazed and confused? - Does my training/approach help or/and hinder my efforts? Do I need more training? - Where's the excitement - what happens when it's not working - where are the clients? Where's the back-up? - IT security - What do I do with my doubts and disorganisation? - Where does the family come into this? - How do I look after myself and the other parts of my life? - How long to keep client records after contact has ceased? - What to do if clients bring presents? - How do I handle seeing clients in the street, shop, doctor etc.? - Legal aspects: do I need to register the business somewhere; confidentiality in case of a court; statutory obligations eg disabled access to premises? - Contracting with clients - Contracting service with others eg EAPs - how does this work? - Winding up the practice - Complaints from clients and others. What if I want to make a complaint?

This document and its companion-Independent practice in rural areas: points to consider-are intended to be dynamic and will be part of a larger article to be published in a future issue of the AIP journal. Thus, contributions are welcome. Please send in your thoughts, additions to the list, confusions, concerns and clarifications (anonymously, if you prefer) to:

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