

Editorial

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The quarterly professional journal
for counsellors and psychotherapists
in healthcare settings

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BACP and the BACP Healthcare team welcome your queries on healthcare counselling and psychotherapy related issues. To get in touch, please email us at healthcare@bacp.co.uk or telephone 01455 883300 (ext 331) to leave a message for a member of the team. Please remember to quote your BACP membership number.

One of the aims of HCPJ is to provide a forum for healthcare practitioners to communicate with, and learn from, each other, and this issue suitably reflects this purpose.

We start with two articles on the important subject of supervision. Many of us working in healthcare receive supervision within an organisation, which brings along its own challenges. In our lead article, Raymond Dempsey describes a training programme piloted to provide internal supervision within a counselling service. Taking existing research as his starting point, he outlines the literature about supervising in organisations and the demands on both the supervisee and the supervisor. He then goes on to offer innovative solutions via the pilot training programme – a multimodal and multidisciplinary programme which had the aim of training participants to have skills appropriate to the supervisory relationship within the context of the NHS.

In our second article on supervision, Liz Coldridge contributes a thought-provoking article about how working environments can influence personal and professional engagement in the supervisory relationship. Through the notion of 'reliable witnessing', Liz offers another solution to counter the effects of working within an organisation. She asks us to contemplate the idea of considering the supervisor as a witness within supervisory practice, an idea which positions the relationship more centrally and sees the supervisor acting as witness to validate and record practice, to advocate for clients and supervisees, and to support the supervisee.

Learning from each other means making contact with counsellors and psychotherapists worldwide, and we are lucky to have secured an article by Aisha AL-Thani from Qatar University, who writes about the person-centred approach (PCA) and the Islamic view of counselling; her research illustrates the potential of applying a modified PCA to working with depressed Muslim clients, with effective results.

Following on, Richard Mason's research involved examining how counsellors and psychotherapists manage the task of working with clients who come from different cultural backgrounds and who have different world views; the results of which led him to conclude that his person-centred background may serve him well in demonstrating a competency of practice that will serve the complexity of all those differing in world views to his own.

In our best practice feature, Deidre Marshall outlines the ground-breaking work of Archway, Scotland's first sexual assault referral centre; and takes us on a client's journey through the service.

HCPJ is also pleased to feature personal experiences of either giving or receiving therapy: psychotherapist and author Cordelia Galgut writes from first-hand experience about the consequences to her, both personal and professional, of the long-term effects of treatment for breast cancer; Fiona McCrea writes about how helpful therapy has been for her – if only there was more of it; and, in another personal piece, Pam Jokhun describes her own journey of self-discovery.

In the spirit of learning from each other, the executive of BACP Healthcare are looking forward to welcoming you to the division's spring seminar – Healthcare in transition: strengthening our professional identity. The day aims to inform members of developments and reforms in primary care at a time of transition, and will provide vital information, as well as a forum for your views. Please turn to page 46 to find out more details.

Finally, our designer, Fran Shall, is leaving us after this issue. Fran has done a fantastic job on the journal for the past few years, and we thank her for her excellent work, and wish her all the best in the future.

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