

# DCP UK Chair's update

Esther Cohen Tovée

---



**T**HE DCP 2020 annual conference: *New Adventures in Clinical Psychology; personal, professional and political partnerships* took place on 22–23 January in Solihull, and incorporated the Faculty of Children, Young People & their Families' conference. It was well attended and the programme was very rich and wide-ranging. I was very pleased to open the conference jointly with Jo Hemmingfield, DCP Experts by Experience lead for England and Amra Rao, Chair of the Leadership & Management Faculty; we all shared some thoughts and context with the delegates.

The conference programme featured keynote addresses, public lectures, symposia, workshops, oral presentations and poster presentations. Themes included equality, diversity & inclusion, the importance and value of lived experience, the climate crisis, the healing power of music, and innovations in clinical practice. A wide range of people attended the conference, including: DCP and BPS members; people at every career stage from psychology graduates to people with over 30 years' experience in the field of clinical psychology; Experts by Experience including service user and carer representatives; other interested colleagues and stakeholders; and members of the public. We were also very pleased to welcome the Chief Executive of the BPS Sarb Bajwa and BPS President David Murphy to the conference. More reflections on the conference will follow in the next Chair's update.

We made some amendments to the conference programme in order to foreground issues of equality, diversity and inclusion. There is a wide range of narratives and experience amongst us as regards both historical and recent events. Whilst many of us may have experienced inequality, discrimination or marginalisation at times, either directly or indirectly, it is very important to recognise that these experiences are much more constant and powerful in the lives of some of us. All of us will also have made mistakes at times as we are human beings, and no-one is perfect! We hope that we can build on the conversations that took place at the conference, continuing to show compassion, empathy, understanding and validation to each other. We hope that we will be able to continue to seek understanding, healing and constructive ways forward, holding in mind first and foremost the people we are here to serve – people who use our clinical services and their families.

We hope that everyone who participated in our conference found it valuable both professionally and personally, and the feedback I heard from delegates was indeed very positive. Taking time out for reflection, learning and connecting with others is important, and supports our wellbeing as well as improving our knowledge, skills and understanding, all of which help us in our work with and for people who use our services. Those of us who participated in the collaborative community choir were particularly positive about the impact on our wellbeing, and it was a privilege to attend the performance of *Voices for Missing*; a choir made up of people who have suffered the loss of a loved one who has gone missing (find out more on about them at @voicesformissing or <https://www.facebook.com/voicesformissing/>).

## DCP 2020 AGM

The AGM took place on 23 January during the conference. I gave a presentation to complement my written annual report, both of which can be found here <https://www.bps.org.uk/member-microsites/division-clinical-psychology/news>.

My report and presentation comprised a summary review of 2019 and an outline of the DCP priorities for 2020. The review of 2019 covered:

1. Working in Partnership & Co-production.
2. Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity.
3. Professional voice & influence.
4. Membership strategy.
5. Communication & engagement.
6. DCP roles and structures, new DCP subcommittees.
7. International and European links and support for members.

Working in partnership with Experts by Experience and also with wider stakeholders is a core principle and cross-cutting objective for the DCP. We also aim to work together to improve the wellbeing of the whole population, and to raise our professional profile, professional voice and influence. Some of our partnership work in 2019 that has had wider impact includes the following:

- Participation in the BPS 2019 campaign has enabled the DCP to make a tangible contribution to the general public through highlighting research evidence and clinical expertise relating to the mental wellbeing of children and young people and contributing to national policy development in this domain.
- Working in partnership with other relevant professional bodies in 2019 has raised our profile with those organisations; the APPG (All Party Parliamentary Group) guidance has been coproduced with BACP, UKCP and Experts by Experience, and the campaign for a Chief Psychological Professions Officer has been developed in partnership with ACP, ACP-UK, BABCP, BACP and BPC.
- Our work with HEE and NHSE/I has raised our profile and influence with these ALBs (Arm's Length Bodies) in England.
- Contributing to the open letter on Climate Change has demonstrated our commitment as a profession to influencing leaders and highlighting the impacts of climate change and anxieties about climate change on mental wellbeing.
- Presenting and participating at the European Congress of Psychology in Moscow (July 2019) and European Association of Clinical Psychology and Psychological Treatments (EACLIPT) conference in Dresden (November 2019) has raised our profile in Europe and also with our UK colleagues.
- The APPG therapists' guidance launch at the House of Commons in December 2019 has demonstrated our important role in this domain to the general public and this will have further impact as the guidance is implemented through training and CPD.
- Our 2019 DCP conference in Manchester included a public lecture and fringe events which raised our profile with the general public locally.
- 2019 has been a challenging year in which issues of equality, diversity, inclusion and racism have been at the forefront for the profession. The DCP Executive has been working closely with our Minorities subcommittee, our Prequalification Group and other members to try to find helpful ways forward. Our 2019 high level actions were:
  - Our Prequalification Minorities Group (MG) was extended to become a subcommittee of the DCP Exec and to cover the whole career span.
  - The subcommittee agreed to review the DCP inclusivity strategy.
  - We agreed to work together to ensure image of clinical psychology profession is diverse.
  - We agreed to ask mentors on the Leadership & Management mentorship scheme to provide information re. their characteristics so that mentees could identify a mentor with shared characteristic(s) if they wished.
  - We agreed to co-develop an action plan to improve diversity in clinical psychology training.
  - The MG subcommittee published a letter to the profession & the DCP Exec produced a response.

- We jointly agreed on revisions to the DCP 2020 Conference programme to foreground EDI issues & provide safe spaces for discussion & coproduction.

Our high level priorities for 2020 are:

- Co-production & delivery of a multi-layered action plan re. Diversity & Inclusion.
- Review of remuneration of elected roles, development of a needs-led affordable model and developing a BPS framework for EbE (Expert by Experience) roles and remuneration.
- Participation in BPS Campaign 'From Poverty to Flourishing'.
- Setting up a Prevention sub-group and a Clinical Psychology lived experience workstream.
- Publications strategy.
- Contribution to BPS 5 year strategy & Development of DCP 5 Year Strategy.
- Further actions re. climate change and its impact on wellbeing.
- Development and promotion of the DCP 'online community' to improve communication and promote communication and engagement among DCP members – you can join at <https://connect.bps.org.uk/dcp/home>
- Review of Conference and CPD events to develop more accessible events tailored to members' needs.
- Supporting our members who are impacted by Brexit.
- Maintain and increase membership linked to BPS Change programme member journey workstream.

### **New DCP Executive committee**

I was delighted to announce at the AGM the election of Roman Raczka to the role of Chair Elect for 2020; he will become DCP Chair at the 2021 AGM and will fulfil that role for two years, followed by a year as Vice Chair. Roman is currently DCP England Chair, prior to which he was DCP London branch Chair. We offer our congratulations to Roman and look forward to working with him in his new role.

Other elections ratified at this AGM:

Sheelagh Rodgers was elected as DCP Membership Services Unit Director, and Simon Gelsthorpe was re-elected as DCP Treasurer, both for three year terms. Congratulations to them both. The other committee members remain unchanged apart from Lawrence Moulin who we are sad to announce has decided to step down from his role as DCP Communications Lead. Lawrence has made significant impact during his year in this role and will be missed. We are glad however that he will continue in the role of DCP West Midlands branch Chair.

### **A chance to say 'thank you'**

I concluded the AGM by expressing thanks:

- to everyone who has served on the DCP Executive committee during 2019,
- to the Chairs and committee members of all our DCP member networks,
- to the Chairs and members of the DCP Exec subcommittees, Professional Standards Unit committee, Conference organising committee and *Clinical Psychology Forum* editorial group.
- Special thanks to all the Experts by Experience who have continued to work with us despite the extended delays in establishing a BPS EbE coproduction framework.
- We are also very grateful to all our BPS colleagues who have supported us and worked with us during 2019, and particularly to Helen Barnett, who has supported the DCP Executive committee over the past 7 years. Helen is now Member Network Services Manager, and day to day support for the DCP is provided by Kay Seaton.

### **An alphabetical recipe for life**

I concluded my opening remarks at the conference by reading this anonymous piece called 'spell your life' which I saw recently posted on social media, and thought it was worth sharing again here:

Avoid Bigotry.  
Celebrate Diversity.  
Enjoy Friendship.  
Get Help.  
Improve Justice.  
Keep Loving.  
Make Noise.  
Observe People.  
Quietly Reflect.  
Spend Time.  
Uphold Veracity.  
Ward off Xenophobia.  
Yearn for Zen.

An alphabetical recipe for personal and professional life which I hope will resonate with us all.

#### **Dr Esther Cohen-Tovée**

*Chair, Division of Clinical Psychology*

*chair\_dcp@bps.org.uk, Twitter: @DrEstherCT*