

DCP England

Newsletter – June 2020

Stop Press – Health Education England [announces a 25 per cent increase in trainee clinical psychology places](#) from October 2020. Thanks to DCP members for their hard work and collaborative working to make this happen!



England chair's update – Dr Roman Raczka

Black Lives Matter

On May 25, George Floyd was killed after being arrested by police outside a shop in Minneapolis. This triggered Black Lives Matter rallies in many cities around the world, including in the UK.

We have witnessed worldwide demands to recognise and reject racism. The DCP stands united with our colleagues and others in speaking out in support of the Black Lives Matter movement.

We strongly condemn the racial violence, racial discrimination and persistent structural racism that underpins UK society.

We have made a statement on our initial responses to Black Lives Matter, George Floyd's Life Matters, which has been emailed to all DCP members and is available [on our website](#).

I have been reflecting on what personal action I can take in this significant time for the opportunity to change. I have re-read the book "How to be an Antiracist" by Ibram X. Kendi. I acknowledge that the answers will not be found in a book, but the steps outlined really resonate with me, and act as a guide on my journey to be antiracist. Kendi suggests that if we want to be antiracist, we need to:



England chair's update, continued

1. Understand the definition of racism
2. Stop saying "I'm not racist"
3. Identify racial inequities and disparities;
4. Confront the racist ideas we have held or continue to hold
5. Understand how antiracism needs to be intersectional
6. Champion antiracist ideas and policies.

Kendi states that "what an antiracist does first and foremost is identify racial inequities".

As many will be aware, I was elected as DCP-UK Chair Elect in January, but have continued as DCP England Chair until we find a successor.

This has been delayed by the pandemic. However, as we move into the next phase of the pandemic, we will send out a call for nominations. We acknowledge that, currently, people from BAME communities are not widely represented in DCP committees and we are committed to doing everything we can to change this.

Therefore we would like to encourage psychologists from BAME communities to also stand for election to the position of DCP England Chair. We know that

psychology has a long way to go to tackle structural racism in our profession and our professional organisation, and the DCP has produced an action plan to progress this important work. This will be published in the coming weeks.

We also welcome representation from psychologists from BAME communities in all DCP branches, faculties and on other sub-committees, so please do [contact me to discuss this further](#).

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the vulnerable position that people from BAME communities are in, disproportionately affected by the virus. Amra Rao has written an excellent and thought provoking article for this newsletter.

Amra has posed some really challenging questions for us all to reflect on, including: "is this disparity in deaths and serious illness correlated with race due to more structural issues?" and "what part have we played at personal, professional and organisational levels in arriving where we find ourselves?".

We need to seek answers to these and other questions in order for us to progress on our journey.

Covid-19 update

We suspended production of the DCP England newsletter over the past three months as we focused our efforts on responding to the Covid-19 pandemic, and producing the weekly (and now fortnightly) DCP Covid-19 bulletin.

During this time a wide range of excellent resources have been developed by colleagues in the DCP as well as across the BPS.

I have written a detailed report on the DCP and BPS response to Covid-19 which has been published in the June edition of the Clinical Psychology Forum. This is available to members to download for free in digital form. All Covid-19 resources developed by the BPS are available to everyone and may be accessed [here](#).

Prevention and public health webinar

As part of the switch to new ways of working during the pandemic, DCP London and South East Coast branches jointly organised a conference which was delivered as an online webinar in May.

A number of really impressive presentations and speakers contributed and some challenging questions were raised. A summary of the presentations is included later in the newsletter and a Youtube video of the webinar is [available](#).

I have been thinking about the challenge made by Sally and Jake to reflect on our roles and imagine ways of including prevention-based, co-produced initiatives central to our work.

I wonder, if we had to create a strategy to reduce demand for our services, what would we do and how would we do it?

Experts by experience virtual event

Conversations about what really matters to us: Building compassionate communities together. Friday 10 July 2020, 2-3.30pm.

Register for this free, virtual event via the [BPS website](#), and please circulate widely across your networks.

Professional Standards Unit

The DCP Professional Standards Unit (PSU) is looking to recruit further members to join the committee.

The role of the DCP PSU is to develop a strategic approach to publications, review proposals for new publications against the strategy and principles of the unit and develop key principles to decide how to revise and update existing publications.

In addition, the role will include overseeing the production of professional for individual practice and to inform the provision of clinical psychology services. The unit is committed to ensuring wide stakeholder

involvement including co-production with experts by experience. The vacant positions are:

DCP faculties lead
Two expert by experience representatives

To apply please complete a [statement of interest form](#) before the deadline on Friday 3 July.

If you have any comments, feedback or topical news items to be included in future editions of the newsletter I would love to hear from you. Please [email me](#).

Raising our game, Covid-19 is far from an equaliser - Dr Amra Rao

Public Health England announced a review into disparities in the risk and outcomes of Covid-19 following evidence suggesting a disproportionate impact on people from black and minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds.

This review is now published and confirms that the impact of Covid-19 has replicated existing health inequalities and, in some cases, exacerbated them further, particularly for black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) groups. The largest disparity found was by age. Risk of dying among those diagnosed with Covid-19 was also higher in males than females, higher in those living in more deprived areas, and higher in those in BAME groups.

Shoomi Chowdhury, Human Rights Education Officer at Amnesty International UK, highlights that the impact of Covid-19 is far from an equaliser:

“Not only are BAME communities disproportionately impacted by health inequalities, the economic impact is likely to hit them harder too, with rates of poverty in BAME communities being twice that of their white counterparts”

The rapidity with which the pandemic has hit BAME groups is shocking and alarming. A censoring row has broken out over the PHE report and the lack of recommendations. Emerging concerns about the impact of structural racism and health and social disparities have been [highlighted during this crisis](#).

Questions have been raised about whether BAME people are suffering through this crisis not only because of racism but also because of how racial discrimination over years has tied them to social inequalities and health disparities.

Dynamics of race and class have existed for a long time and cannot be ignored. It would be futile to argue that race or class is the main risk factor, as they cannot be separated from each other.

Neither can the impact of structural racism and discrimination be ignored. We have to examine in detail the barriers at many levels that minority races, ethnic and marginalized groups have faced for decades and still do today. This is more urgent as we witnessed the killing of George Floyd by law enforcement officers, leaving many of us profoundly disturbed asking ‘whose lives do matter?’.

There are many painful questions for us to ask. Is this disparity in deaths and serious illness correlated with race due to more structural issues? What part have we played at personal, professional and organizational levels in arriving where we find ourselves? What cannot be acknowledged and blinds us to societal divides such as poverty and class? Are we really exempt from unconscious biases and ‘othering’ dynamics? Are our institutions compromised despite legislative and social action drivers? There are no simple answers, neither silence nor maintaining the status quo is an option.

The DCP has [condemned](#) the racial violence, discrimination and persistent structural racism that underpins society, and is developing its work to engage with equality, inclusion and racism.

Going forward, we need to utilise our psychological knowledge, and mark gaps in our understanding. This cannot be done without looking inwards and outwards; backwards and forward to contextually position ourselves.

We need to consider challenges psychologists from BAME backgrounds face and what can be learnt from their experiences. Preparing the profession to combat the pandemic and systemic racism and contagion of fear will require a bold and committed assertion by its leadership.

This involves us all working at personal, organisational and political levels to promote social cohesion, dialogue, tolerance, building trust and modelling. Only then are we likely to make a positive impact on wider societal issues. Equalising the way and taking up an antiracist position requires all of us to find our own personal connections with a reflective stance to forge the way to meaningful actions.

“It’s up to all of us – Black, white, everyone – no matter how well-meaning we think we might be, to do the honest, uncomfortable work of rooting it out. It starts with self-examination and listening to those whose lives are different from our own. It ends with justice, compassion, and empathy that manifests in our lives and on our streets.” – Michelle Obama

A new DCP workstream on racial and social disparities has been formed to look at concerns around inequalities put to light again by Covid-19. Please [contact Amra](#) if you want to contribute and take part.

Workforce updates - Professor Tony Lavender

Increase in training commissions for 2020

The DCP has been working with NHSE and HEE on estimating the workforce required to deliver the NHS Plan for more than a year.

The announcement by HEE of a 25 per cent increase in training commissions this year is therefore greatly welcomed.

Although it is in the first instance for one year, we will be working to ensure the new numbers continue. It makes the work that was undertaken to secure the current funding arrangements announced in the previous newsletter very timely. It also arrived just in time for courses to offer this year's applicants places prior to the clearing house deadline.

National assessors review

A review of the national assessor (used in the appointment of consultant psychologists band 8c and above) guidelines and processes has been undertaken by the DCP/BPS in collaboration with ACP-UK.

The review, chaired by Tony Lavender, has sought to make the guidelines more practical, supporting the use of online platforms, developing clearer appointment processes and online chief, lead and

general application forms.

The changes have been put to the BPS practice board for approval, and we hope to begin the process of recruiting a new chief national Assessor, lead assessors (where there is a vacancy) and national assessors will begin. This should relaunch and reinvigorate the national assessor system.

Psychological professions into action online workshop

The third national psychological professions into action online workshop is now live – it will stay open until noon on 22 June.

This conversation seeks feedback about five pillars for future direction, and the support psychological professionals need to fulfil their potential.

This work builds on the previous two workshops commissioned by NHSE/HEE and we would encourage people to respond.

To join the national online workshop please [visit the website](#) and sign in using your username and password, or register for an account.

Conference update - Dr Lorna Farquharson and Dr Olga Luzon

A [webinar](#) on prevention and public health theory and practice – raising our contribution and sharing innovative practices, organised by the DCP London and South East Coast branches, took place in May

2020. The webinar addressed the profession's current and future contribution to prevention and public health including how longstanding community psychology frameworks can be applied to the work we

do and highlighting the importance of co-production. We've summarised the presentations below.

Pushing the prevention agenda: How the BPS is making a difference on policy - Kathryn Scott, BPS Director of Policy

The main BPS workstreams right now are:

Poverty to flourishing - child and family poverty and community resilience.

Psychological government - putting people and psychological processes at the centre of the policy making process.

Workforce - embedding psychologists in key workforce policy initiatives, promoting the profession and ensuring that the psychological workforce benefits from robust career pathways and service structures which maintain wellbeing.

Contextual prevention: What could it mean for your role and service? Sally Zlotowitz, MAC-UK and BPS Community Psychology Section, and Jake Lake, MAC-UK

MAC-UK works with communities struggling with psychological consequences of inequality and marginalisation – mainly focusing on the experiences of young people. Psychologists should include prevention-based, co-produced initiatives in their work.

Delivering on the population health and prevention agenda via digital based education - Neil Ralph, HEE

The Covid-19 e-learning platform was launched in March. Research identified that 50 per cent of health workers in the UK had experienced a decline in mental health and that there was a demand for learning materials.

The [Coronavirus staff resilience hub](#) was developed, along with a [population wellbeing portal](#) providing free training and resources relating to population health,

wellbeing and prevention.

Prevention and public health: Clinical psychology training - Dave Harper, UEL

Trainee clinical psychologists need specific teaching on prevention and novel placement experiences moving them away from waiting list-based services and exposing them to community psychology oriented services.

Basic community psychology competencies include applying principles of social justice, adopting an ecological perspective, working collaboratively with community stakeholders and collective action.

These principles and practices need to be universally incorporated into clinical psychology training.

Alternative approaches to meeting the needs of children and young people - Carl Walker, University of Brighton

Carl and local parents and carers set up a multi-stakeholder event in Worthing, involving local agencies to discuss prevention in children's and young people's mental health.

They focused on wider determinants of health including complex life events, emotional literacy, substance misuse and domestic violence.

A set of resources for parents and carers was developed as well as an anti bullying project for 5-11 year olds by addressing contextual, town-wide issues.

Young black men's mental health and wellbeing: A co-production project - Chanelle Myrie (SLAM), Taiwo Azeez (SLAM) and Sadiki Harris (Black Thrive)

This project aims to find out directly from young Black men how they see their mental health and wellbeing, and what they think would be helpful in terms of supporting wellbeing.

Minorities Sub-committee, Runa Dawood

The DCP Minorities Sub-committee has been involved in the executive's Covid-19 Strategy. We have been engaged to consider aspects related to the impact of Covid-19 on individuals from various minority groups and on social inequality.

We have engaged in a number of DCP workstreams

including those related to changes to work for psychology professionals, clinical psychology trainees, the general public who use psychological services, and a workstream focusing on the impact on racial inequality in light of Covid-19.

A sub-group of the committee has been working on

a resource paper focusing on special considerations for psychological staff from various protected characteristics.

Part of this involved conducting a large-scale survey to ask various individuals who identify as minority group members about specific challenges that they have encountered in the current situation. This should soon be available on the BPS Covid-19 Resources webpage.

Additionally, we have been engaged in a number of DCP documents including guidelines for staff, training courses, aspiring psychologists and their employers, the Group of Trainers in Clinical Psychology risk assessment for trainees, and a document on the DCP Covid-19 strategy.

We have continued to conduct the work that we do as a committee as best as possible, by continuing committee meetings when we can. Prior to lockdown we chose to cancel our clinical psychology interview practice event, and instead adapted this for online delivery. We had a fantastic response, and thankfully many clinical psychology candidates were able to receive practice interviews.

Furthermore, we have set up a [slack forum](#) which is a support forum for anyone at any level of the profession.

You can contact the group via [email](#), and also follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Pre-qualification Group, Leanna Ong and Katie Knott

We have been working closely with the DCP Executive Committee on a number of projects to support our members and the broader workforce and public during the Covid-19 pandemic.

We are committed to providing a voice to our members through all issues that our profession and the public face.

We recently released documents for trainees and aspiring psychologists related to how roles have been adapted during the pandemic, and what the BPS advises during these changes.

The document for DClinPsy trainees was developed in collaboration with the ACP-UK trainee directors and DCP Minorities Sub-committee. We are continuing to collaborate with stakeholders including the Minorities Sub-committee about supporting our DClinPsy trainee community during the adaptations to both academic and placement expectations of training.

We are working alongside other members of the DCP executive committee in relation to the racial disparities and health inequalities that are being exacerbated by Covid-19. We are committed to challenging these inequalities, and working to support our members and the public in processes and living through these inequalities.

We are adapting to the new way of working online, and working with the BPS to develop a webinar series over the coming months on themes including adapting in your role during the Covid-19 pandemic, a joint event with the

Leadership and Management Faculty, and preparing for and developing in your first jobs.

The second season of our podcast 'Lets get to Clinical' has begun and you can now [have a listen](#).

In addition to our webinar series, we hope to continue to grow the online resources available to all pre-qualified colleagues. We sit alongside our colleagues in the difficulties and frustrations that are faced in getting onto DClinPsy training and in qualifying as a clinical psychologist. We welcome any thoughts people have on how to grow this further.

We have a number of new committee members who have joined us in the past couple of months. We've been excited by the knowledge and enthusiasm they are bringing to the committee, and looking forward to working with them to develop and shape the support we offer to our members on their journey to qualification.

Additionally, a number of our committee and wider members have recently been offered places on the DClinPsy training courses. We are delighted that they are making these positive steps in their career, and hope to share their experiences of this process in the coming months as we work on our online content.

Finally, the pre-qualification group supports the BlackLivesMatter movement, and we are [committed to actioning on the commitments we speak to](#).

Local branch updates

DCP West Midlands

In these difficult times for so many, the West Midlands Branch continues to offer support to our members, sustain our ongoing work, and is making plans for the future.

When the challenge of the virus became clear we put out a note to all members offering support and help if needed. Since then there has been a great deal of excellent advice and guidance from the DCP, BPS and others, and we have held back from putting more material out for risk of flooding people.

The West Midlands Heads of Service and DCP branch meetings are going ahead as planned, mainly in 'support mode' at this time, offering a place where people can talk, listen and learn from each other.

We are also thinking ahead. Virus-permitting we plan our annual AGM and conference in December with a focus on

co-production. It's a chance for us to gather and share. It's what we do here.

Depending on resource availability we hope to run our annual newly qualified psychologists event this year. It's a chance to welcome those new to the West Midlands, and to help them build local support mechanisms.

We also want to hold joint events with our three university courses for all supervisors so we can focus on the issues around diversity. This is a wonderfully ethnically diverse region, but we simply do not reflect that - it is not good enough and we have to change.

On behalf of all the psychologists in the West Midlands can I send very best wishes for the health and wellbeing of all colleagues across the UK in these very hard times.

DCP Yorkshire and Humber

Sadly, due to Covid-19, we had to cancel our much awaited event in April, titled 'Embracing diversity and cultural awareness'. We are considering how we can put this on as a webinar in the future.

Recent events have highlighted that we continue to need to continue to challenge the whiteness of the profession.

On June 16 there is an [information event](#) for clinical

psychology applicants from BAME backgrounds with the universities of Hull, Leeds and Sheffield.

There are further plans to support newly qualified clinical psychologists with an online event in the autumn.

Finally, we are looking for new committee members so anyone interested in joining this friendly group is warmly invited to [contact our chair Annette Schlosser](#).

DCP East Midlands Branch

We are continuing in our efforts to work with Mike Marriot to restart this branch in the autumn.

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