

Division of Clinical Psychology

November 2021

DCP in Focus

A monthly news digest for our members

As COP26 starts in Glasgow, this edition has a major feature on psychology and the climate emergency, a topic that we know many members are engaged with in both personal and professional capacities.

We also want to draw your attention to a really important conference developed by the DCP group on 'Racial and social disparities in time of Covid' and subsidised by the DCP in recognition of the really significant opportunity it provides for our members and the wider community of psychologists to explore another of the key issues of our age:

"Fully Human: Soul, psyche, skin, exploring race in clinical psychology

We are delighted to announce a special two-day working conference (workshop) on 2 and 3 December.

It is a group relations event to study what it means for psychologists that society separates us on the basis of race, class, gender, ability, language or accent, and creates a system that places more value on some people over others.

We will explore the lived experience of these forces of separation and judgement, and the dynamics of privilege of power.

This is going to be a unique, active learning event that will allow attendees to bring their thoughts, feelings and experiences to share in our contained learning

space. It is delivered in partnership with the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations.

Organisers Amra Rao and Leslie Brissett [recently spoke to The Psychologist](#) about the event and the reasons behind creating it.

We want to put these issues at the front and centre of our thinking, and we hope you'll join us. More information and booking details are [available on our website](#)."

We are always pleased to receive any feedback or ideas - please [email me](#).

Julia Faulconbridge

A focus on the climate emergency - Roman Raczka

With the COP26 summit in Glasgow upon us, the impact of climate change across our communities is foremost in our thinking. Across the globe communities are already experiencing the health effects of more severe storms, floods, air pollution, wildfires and droughts, while food insecurities, extinction events, loss of habitats and an unprecedented loss of biodiversity are drastically changing people's lives. The climate emergency is also a worldwide mental health emergency.

The science of climate change is well established:

- Climate change is real and human activities are the main cause.
- The concentration of greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere is directly linked to the average global temperature on Earth
- The concentration has been rising steadily, and mean global temperatures along with it, since the time of the Industrial Revolution
- The most abundant greenhouse gas, accounting for about two-thirds of greenhouse gases, carbon dioxide, is largely the product of burning fossil fuels
- Methane, the primary component of natural gas, is responsible for more than 25 per cent of the warming we are experiencing today - it is a powerful pollutant with a global warming potential over 80 times greater than CO2 during the 20 years after it is released into the atmosphere

In the UK, the main climate-related health threats are summer heat waves and droughts, flooding, the interaction between air pollutants, pollen and higher temperatures and increases in vector borne diseases. This disruption to life posed by the climate and ecological emergencies presents a significant threat to our health in the UK.

Our mental health is connected to, and dependent upon, the health of our natural world. Climate change has a wide range of potentially damaging effects on the mental health and wellbeing of people. Various research studies have shown that:

- There is a relationship between increased temperature and number of suicides
- There is evidence of severe distress following extreme weather events
- People with mental health conditions are more vulnerable to the effects of climate change on physical as well as mental health
- Climate change exacerbates mental distress (especially among younger people) even for those not directly affected, for example eco-anxiety
- Flooding, which is associated with anxiety, depression and PTSD in survivors - due to climate change floods are increasing in frequency and severity in the UK
- Groups already affected by social inequalities, including people with mental health conditions, people with disabilities and people living in areas of high deprivation, marginalised groups including refugees and homeless people and people from Black and Minority Ethnic communities are less likely to have access to support and resources to mitigate against the emotional impacts of climate change and are at a higher risk of negative mental health and wellbeing outcomes

Our DCP climate emergency champion is Alison Robertson, supported by clinical and community psychologists and longstanding climate activists Annie Mitchell and Tony Wainwright. They have highlighted a number of important climate campaign initiatives including:

- the [Sao Paulo Declaration](#) on planetary health
- the [petition](#) already signed by more than 3,000 people calling for psychologically informed leadership at COP26, which Carl Harris carried on his recent cycle ride to Glasgow

We are currently in the process of bidding for the next BPS policy campaign. The DCP, together with the Divisions of Occupational and Health Psychology have developed a cross-divisional campaign based on the intersection between three urgent priorities:

- Recovering from the impacts of the pandemic and learning to live with Covid-19
- Addressing the global threat of climate crisis
- Improving wellbeing and quality of life for all

Our campaign proposal is 'Emerging Stronger: Living Well, Protecting our Planet'.

Our goal is to adopt ways of living and working differently for the benefit of people, organisations and our planet. We aim to achieve this by:

- collaborating across all domains of psychology to create positive impact on policy and practice
- taking a lead in influencing change at all levels - individual, organisational, community, and national

The global pandemic has had widespread impacts on people and communities. Although the full extent will be unknown for some time, there is real scope now for positive change and recovery as we transition from pandemic to endemic - to living and working with Covid-19.

There has been loss and tragedy, but also an opportunity to take stock of what really matters. Changes resulting from the pandemic can be a stimulus to address climate change. We have learned that significant environmental benefits can be achieved by altering how we live, work, and engage with community led action. Through remote working and travelling less, the air we breathe has become cleaner, we have connected and helped one another, and lived more simply.

We believe that everyone has the right to live well. By living well, we mean maximising wellbeing and human potential; individually and collectively, in the workplace, the community, our nations, and globally. However, in the UK today, the reality is very different for many, due to inequality and disadvantage, combined with increased stress and uncertainty during the pandemic, and in relation to climate breakdown.

At the core of this campaign is the ambition that psychologists from different

backgrounds will come together, as we did during the BPS Covid-19 Response, and work collaboratively with experts by experience and other stakeholders to deliver environmentally-informed guidance and support, so that we can emerge stronger and live well, while protecting our planet now, and for future generations.

Our campaign proposal has been shortlisted as one of the top three and a decision will be taken at the BPS Senate meeting this month

The BPS Division of Counselling Psychology has issued a [statement](#) to coincide with COP26, highlighting that the environment has a critical impact on people's physical and psychological wellbeing and it has joined other allied professions in supporting the delegates attending this very important event.

In the DCP we must join the voices of those who are calling for urgent action and support the declaration of a climate and ecological emergency to ensure we all take collective responsibility to avert a health and mental health catastrophe.

I am delighted that the special edition of Clinical Psychology Forum will be available to everyone free of charge. There are a number of excellent papers providing a wealth of insight into the impact of climate change and the urgency to address the climate emergency.

Special issue of CPF tackles the climate emergency

Released to coincide with the crucial United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow, the latest issue of our publication is free to read for members and the public.

The issue includes articles by clinical psychologists and others on the climate crisis, and what role psychology has to play in any long-term strategy to tackle the ecological emergency.

This has been made free for anyone to access - we hope you will share it with friends and colleagues. [You can download it free by visiting the BPS shop.](#)



Climate change on the DCP website

In addition to the current CPF edition on the DCP website, you can also [download an earlier special edition on the same topic and a range of other resources](#) to support you both professionally and personally.

Clinical psychology service developments during the pandemic

Since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2021, the DCP has been sending regular email updates to members. All past editions of this bulletin are on the DCP website, together with a host of other resources/

Many of the bulletins contain examples of service developments and research, and we have now compiled a list of these to make accessing them easier.

They are sorted into [key themes on our website](#), such as Long Covid and staff support, and we hope this will help you find examples of initiatives that may help you in your own services and also to see how clinical psychology has risen to the challenges of the pandemic.

Workforce and training update - Tony Lavender

HCPC update

The BPS Practice Board has established an HCPC Working Group to address the issues that have arisen over the years about the working of the HCPC for practitioner psychologists. The BPS used to have regular meetings with the HCPC and the intention is to re-establish this contact.

The group was previously chaired by Katherine Carpenter, who has needed to give up the role because of her responsibilities as the newly-elected BPS President. Tony Lavender has agreed to take up the role of chair. We have collated the issues that we have noticed and that have been drawn to our attention by members (thanks to members who submitted points) and we will be developing plans in relation to those issues.

Issues raised have included:

- who should be the regulator
- communication from HCPC about reregistering, the misuse and evasion of titles
- the approval processes for international colleagues
- the relationship between BPS and HCPC accreditation processes
- fitness to practice standards and processes

National assessors update

Eric Karas has been in the role of interim chief national assessor for the appointment to consultant posts and has, with the help of Hannah Farndon, successfully relaunched the scheme.

The role of the national assessor is to advise employers on whether applicants meet the standards for appointment to the role of applied consultant psychologists at Band 8C and above. We advise that national assessors are used for all consultant level appointments. An assessor can be identified by contacting the [BPS Practice Team](#).

Guidelines on the appointment of consultant psychologists can be accessed [here](#).

It was always planned that Eric would stand down after the relaunch of the scheme and so we have sent a request to all lead and national assessors to apply for the chief assessor role.

The advert request only went to the leads and national assessors because the chief role requires someone with a good level of knowledge about the scheme. We are all very pleased and grateful for the energy, ingenuity and thoughtfulness Eric has put into the role.

PTMF update - Jan Bostock and Gilli Watson

The Power Threat Meaning Framework continues to attract interest, with podcasts, talks, seminars and training events, both in the UK and with organisations in Denmark (in person), Sweden and America (online). The co-development of the framework with lived experience practitioners is particularly worthwhile.

A number of articles are also in the pipeline, including one on viewing the climate crisis with a PTMF perspective. We were pleased to be invited to participate in a seminar at the annual American Psychological Association, comparing and contrasting DSM, the emerging HiTOP and RDoC systems, and the PTMF.

We are receiving a growing number of requests for organisational consultancy, and are developing our thoughts about the key strengths the PTMF can offer. Please keep an eye on the website for resources and developments, and we would be delighted to receive your [examples of good practice](#).

Membership grades update

The BPS has provided an update on the implications of proposed changes to its membership grades, following some queries from members.

The new member grades proposal requires that full members and chartered members are required to have GBC. Student members are, of course, on track for that, but not there yet. The other grade, associate member, will not require

GBC, but will require successful completion of one of a number of accredited programmes, all of which are for the wellbeing practitioner roles.

While it is the case that there are a few in this category (those entering training at level six) who have not completed an accredited undergraduate degree, the majority of those entering training, particularly at level seven, have completed an accredited undergraduate degree. The accredited programmes are all at Level six or seven (UG or Masters) and focus entirely on psychological underpinning knowledge and specific practice skills to ensure competence for the role that they are being trained for. This member grade is intended solely for these professions. In practice, many of the members in this grade will have GBC even though it is not proposed as an eligibility criterion.

Should an associate member wish to apply for full member status (perhaps due to additional study and/or practice-related responsibilities) then they would be expected to demonstrate GBC or GBC-equivalence to meet the eligibility criteria to access full member status.

News from around the BPS

Psychological Professions Week

Our colleagues at the Psychological Professions Network have [released the programme](#) for this year's Psychological Professions Week, which is taking place from 15-19 November.

Alternative Handbook launched

The [Alternative Handbook 2022](#), created by our Pre-Qualification Group to help guide prospective clinical psychology trainees, has been launched.

Concerns over new policing bill

The BPS [has said](#) that it is 'seriously concerned' about patient confidentiality and trust under the proposed new Police, Crime and Sentencing Bill.

Chief executive returns to duty

The BPS has [issued a statement](#) confirming that Sarb Bajwa, chief executive, has returned to duty.

Isolation booths

A recent [BPS statement](#) called for a ban on the use of isolation booths, seclusion rooms and segregation in schools following CCTV footage from a special school in London.

Visionary chair needed for EDI board

The BPS is [recruiting](#) for a visionary chair to lead its new equality, diversity and inclusion board.

Upcoming webinars and online events

Our Faculty for Psychosis and Complex Mental Health is launching its guidelines for psychological services within the acute adult mental health care pathway at a [webinar](#) on 4 November.

Our Faculty of Oncology and Palliative Care is hosting a [webinar](#) on addressing inequalities in psycho-oncology services on 4 November.

The Group of Trainers in Clinical Psychology is holding its [annual conference](#) on 15 and 16 November.

The annual BPS [Careers in Psychology](#) event for students and aspiring psychologists is being held online on 20 November.

Our East Midlands Branch is hosting a [webinar](#) on developing compassionate leadership in psychology on 25 November.

