



# Division of Health Psychology

## Newsletter – Dec 2020

### Message from the chair

This has been the year of zoom meetings and familiar phrases like: 'You're on mute' or 'We can hear you but can't see you'. We've had online webinars, conferences and quizzes and getting used to seeing a health psychologist or two on the weekly news.

As the year draws to a close, it is a good time for reflection. 2020 has been a year like no other, underpinned by both loss and uncertainty. My heart goes out to all those who have been affected by the pandemic, and I pray that globally, 2021 will bring with it healing, hope and joy.

The compassion expressed across the world has been heart-warming and it is undeniable that through adversity we have seen resilience, gratitude and growth. People now more than I ever recall, ask how you are, with genuine warmth and affection. Many have endured great sacrifice to protect others, both loved ones and strangers, brought together by a common goal to keep each other safe. The importance of psychology, both for physical and mental health has been brought to the forefront of conversation, and the psychological 'divisions', networks and professions have come together like never before.

I couldn't be prouder of what DHP and the health psychology community has achieved during this time. From our special DHP 2020 conference, to the webinars that we have hosted, editions of the Health Psychology Update and British Journal of Health Psychology, the Health Psychology Exchange, the Covid-19 Behavioural Science and Disease Prevention Taskforce work, our contributions to policy and practice, and the Health Psychology Trainee Network conversation cafes; we have brought people together for the common good.

Although we thought this newsletter was going to be brief, it is packed with the amazing work of our members. Supporting others in the discipline with CPD events, the development of health psychology case studies, continued networking opportunities and

representing health psychology to other professions. If you want to get involved in any of our activities, please do get in touch.

It was with a heavy heart that we decided to move our 2021 conference to an online format, but we hope that in making the decision early, we would both keep people safe and avoid delegates losing money on travel or accommodation should we have had to cancel later on due to the pandemic. This way, we can put all our efforts into planning a fantastic conference for you.

Submissions are now open, so be sure to get your abstracts in!

It seems strange not having a physical conference in my whole term as chair, but we'll make this year a huge celebration of all the amazing work going on in health psychology and I'll hold out for hugs until it is safe!

Joking aside, I do miss a welcome and/or goodbye hug. It has been a tough time for many, both professionally and personally. To this end, the BPS has recently published a report on the impact of Covid-19 on the wellbeing of psychologists and I encourage you to have a read. I want to thank Dr Amy Baraniak, our honorary secretary, who agreed to help represent health psychology in this work and surveyed a number of members to gather data to go in to this report.

A take home message is, take care of you. It is okay to not be okay. Many of us have hit a wall or felt overwhelmed. But we are in this together, navigating the same storm, albeit in different boats. So, don't be afraid to reach out if you need help.

There are many times where a kind word from a health psychology friend has helped me to overcome one of those walls. The family nature of the DHP has been a huge comfort to me ever since I was a student, built by the warmth and encouragement of generations of health psychologists. One of my aims as DHP

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## Message from the chair cont.

chair was to continue that feeling of family among our members and those who wish to join us.

I hope the DHP can be seen as the home for everyone who has an interest in health psychology, and for each of us to look out for each other, offering support, guidance, opportunities and encouragement.

One of the many positive comments that followed the recent health psychology consultancy webinar was the sense of confidence having the spirit of others behind you can bring. We open our arms to everyone who wishes to be part of such a welcoming discipline.

As a community, I hope that when I stand down

next year, the sense of belonging, family and the support and empowerment we bring to each other is something.

#WeAreHealthPsychology

A final huge thanks to the DHP committees of 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 xxx

Until next time, I wish you all a restful festive period and a positive start to the New Year!

Angel

**Professor Angel Chater** (Chair DHP)



## European Health Psychology Society Opportunity

The EHPS are looking for a national delegate to represent the UK to take over from Jo Hart. It would be ideal if this was one of our DHP members.

We need someone who:

- Understands health psychology in the UK
- Is a member of the EHPS
- Regularly attends the EHPS conference, will attend the national delegate meeting there and contribute

to email discussions (and joint working groups where relevant)

- Would liaise and link with the DHP UK committee
- Is either a health psychology practitioner, academic or both, with an understanding of health psychology breadth, structure, training and function in the UK.

If you are interested [please email Jo Hart](#) by 5 January 2021 to find out more about the role or self-nominate.

## Update from our Practice Lead

### Career case studies

Thank you very much to everyone who submitted a health psychology career case study.

We had a fantastic response to this with a wonderful variety of careers showcased and are now collating and formatting them.

We cannot wait for them to become a shareable resource in Spring 2021 and we will let you know when they're available.

**Eleanor Bull** (Practice Lead)

**Lauren Rockliffe** (PsychPag Representative)

### BPS guidelines on fair recruiting of psychologists

Thank you to everyone who responded to the consultation on the new BPS guidelines regarding fair recruiting of psychologists.

The long-awaited revised guidelines have now been agreed by divisional representatives from the BPS Workforce Committee and practice board and will be imminently published.

Key recommendations are;

- 1) advertisements for applied psychologist posts should normally use an inclusive title such as applied psychologist/practitioner psychologist/registered psychologist;
- 2) advertised jobs specify the context of the role (e.g. diabetes service); and
- 3) person specifications should be reviewed so as not to inadvertently exclude HCPC registered practitioner

psychologists whose skills, knowledge and training would be appropriate for the advertised job role/s.

One further development will be a multi-division BPS implementation group to support application of the guidelines in practice.

Albeit only one small step, but we hope this updated guidance and its implementation will ultimately help increase parity of opportunity for practitioner health psychologists.

Please could we ask all who recruit applied psychologists to continue to model good practice by following these guidelines and share with colleagues e.g. heads of service and HR staff.

**Eleanor Bull** (Practice Board representative)

**Hannah Dale** (Workforce committee representative)

### Practitioner health psychologist supervision best practice guidance/resources

In 2021 we will be starting work aiming to develop DHP best practice guidance/ resources to support high quality supervision for practitioner health psychologists.

If you would be interested to contribute to this work,

whether it is to let us know what you think or to contribute a small amount of time to helping co-develop resources, [please email me](#).

**Eleanor Bull** (Practice Lead)

## Upcoming events

### DHP Prize Winning Research Seminar: Awarded to Dr Debbie Smith

The theoretical conceptualisation of pregnancy and motherhood as an opportunity for health behaviour

change: a patient and public collaboration - Friday 18 December.

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This two-hour webinar will bring together experience and knowledge of behaviour change in pregnancy.

The webinar aims to share expertise and research on the theoretical conceptualisation of behaviour change and the opportunity that pregnancy presents.

Several people including academics, health professionals, pregnant and postnatal women and commissioners will share their thoughts, experience and research around the idea of pregnancy being a teachable moment.

The webinar will end with time for questions and a

network of people interested in working further on this idea for future work will be formed.

An interactive session with structured activities will be organised in early 2021 to further discuss plans for a research grant application, peer reviewed publication and public engagement event.

[Find out more and book your place](#) online.

## Digital Technologies and Weight Management

Please register for a joint event between DHPNI and the Association for the Study of Obesity NI Network on Tuesday 19 January 2021, 10:00am – 12:00pm via Zoom.

There are excellent speakers including Dr Jane Walsh, NUI Galway; Dr Anne Moorhead, Ulster University;

and Professor Michelle McKinley, Queen's University Belfast and more – alongside the patient perspective.

This event is likely to interest researchers, practitioners, students, healthcare workers or those involved in public health and policy.

[Register your place online.](#)

## DHP Annual Conference 2021 - Celebrating Health Psychology and Connecting Communities

Our DHP Annual Conference theme for 2021 is Celebrating Health Psychology and Connecting Communities.

The conference will be an exciting two-day online event across 29 - 30 June 2021. Submissions are open and we welcome a range of abstracts (including oral and poster presentations, symposia and workshops) across all health psychology topics and methodologies.

Our online conference will include a varied and exciting scientific programme, including top keynote speakers

(Professor Victoria Tischler and Professor Maddy Arden). We will also have a really exciting and inclusive virtual social programme with plenty of opportunities to meet and chat with delegates!

This is a great opportunity to come together with colleagues to present your research and listen to the most recent cutting edge science.

Abstracts are coming in thick and fast - **be sure to get yours in by the 18 Jan 2021 deadline!**

[Find out how to submit on the conference website.](#)

## Feedback on recent events

### Psychological Professions Network (PPN)

The PPN was established in the North West of England in 2013 and has since been launched in other regions of England, and nationally. It is funded by Health

Education England and free to members. Its purpose is to advise on the expansion of psychological professions for health and care, as a ground-up member

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organisation, connecting the psychological professions current and future with the decision makers about health and care workforce.

The psychological professions represented within the PPN are clinical, counselling, forensic and health psychologists, cognitive behavioural therapists, counsellors, child and adolescent psychotherapists, adult psychotherapists, systemic family therapists, psychological wellbeing practitioners, children's wellbeing practitioners and education mental health practitioners.

I became the health psychology representative on the workforce council of the PPN in the North West as it was becoming established. The workforce council is the place where the many professions under the banner of 'psychological professions' are represented, discussing policies relating to psychological workforce. It is the direct connection with Health Education England that makes the PPN a good network for health psychology professionals to be a part of.

The work done by the PPN in the North West has included developing a community of practice for Schwartz Rounds, authoring position papers in response to developments like the long term plan

## PPN week

PPN week was a virtual conference held across 5 days, 16-20 November 2020. Each session had a focus on specific areas of the [new PPN vision document](#) with discussion about next steps for the PPN (A vision for the psychological professions).

Nearly 3,000 people registered for the week – either to watch online, live, or to be able to access the talks afterwards.

As part of this week, we were invited to contribute to a session on 'Helping our communities to thrive'. Jo talked about 'Supporting our communities through psychological expertise', discussing examples of work from the Health Psychology Exchange and the BPS Behavioural Science and Disease Prevention.

Atiya then talked about 'Developing and sustaining healthy communities through psychological expertise' discussing examples of recent work to support the Covid-19 response.

We concluded by making two key calls to action for our psychological professions' colleagues:

for mental health, developing and piloting new psychological professions and supporting education and training initiatives to expand the psychological literacy of the health and care workforce.

For health psychology, it is very important for us to engage with the PPN. The network, being funded by Health Education England, is well connected both there and within NHS E and I. This is a good way for health psychology to gain higher profile.

There is a tendency, that I am sure many of us will notice, to conflate psychology with mental health or psychological wellbeing, when talking about psychology's role in health and care.

For this reason, it is easy to overlook the role of psychology in prevention of physical health conditions, self-management of long-term conditions, quality and safety of health care services and the many other health psychology areas of work.

For this reason, I would advocate for health psychology professionals, who are working in, or applying their research to, health and care systems in England to join the PPN and amplify the voice of health psychology.

**Lucie Byrne-Davis**, Chair Elect DHP

- To collectivise, collaborate and invest to do something different as a whole system to optimise outcomes.
- To include community members as active partners in the health system to co-create solutions and develop locally feasible strategies to promote health.

Questions submitted by attendees led to really interesting discussion, and feedback below showed that we had achieved our objectives, including:

- Inspiring points around participation approach towards research, planning and implementing interventions (engaging community members and adapting interventions)
- Thank you - that was such an inspiring talk and resonates with so much I've been wanting to do and to advocate my role 'beyond the consulting room'
- Clearly it has been incredibly collaborative - really hope you all (and others) continue to work so well together as it is so life enhancing clearly! Well done
- Really interesting to hear about the fantastic work of

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health psychologists - they aren't mainstream in the NHS should they be and what would they do?

Post-session evaluation results indicate it was informative and relevant to the role of attendees (4.45/5), stimulated people to think about their work and how PP as a workforce can influence and lead change (4.6/5) and encouraged them take an action back into their own practice/service (4.5/5).

The PPN vision includes the statement 'Be flexible, brave and open minded in adapting our methods to meet changing needs' – we feel that health psychologists have been brave, flexible and adapted the way we have worked, particularly during 2020 – and we hope that we will continue to be all of these things.

**Jo Hart** (previous DHP committee member)

**Atiya Kamal** (DHP conference lead)

## Using Infographics and Animation for Health Psychology Research

DHP Scotland organised a very successful webinar on exploring the use of infographics and animation for health psychology research, teaching, and practice on 25 November 2020.

Infographics and animation are gaining prominence in our field as the need to communicate and disseminate our knowledge in accessible formats increases.

This two-hour webinar was delivered by Dr Ailsa Niven and Dr Shaun Phillips, both from University of Edinburgh. Dr Niven is a senior lecturer in physical activity and health, is a member of DHP and also HCPC registered sport and exercise psychologist. Dr Shaun Phillips is a senior lecturer in sport and exercise physiology.

Between two of them they have vast experience in using infographics and animation in their teaching and also communicating their research findings.

They walked the attendees through various examples they worked on with their collaborators and students and solicited input from the attendees as to what works in the examples and what could be improved.

It was very useful to see a variety of examples from different projects that served diverse purposes and the attendees were able to see different approaches and do's and don'ts of preparing infographics and animation.

One of the best parts of the webinar was the introduction of different softwares and their pros and cons to our attendees and giving them encouragement to try it for themselves.

We look forward to seeing what they produce and hope this was a confidence building experience too.

**Gozde Ozakinci**, chair DHPS

## Consultancy in Health Psychology: Webinar 1

The first of a series of webinars considering the role of consultancy in health psychology was delivered with very positive reception on Thursday 26 November by the Health Psychology Exchange, supported by the DHP.

Speakers included a combination of qualified and trainee health psychologists who drew on their experiences of practice to showcase the opportunities for consultancy in health psychology.

The webinar was chaired by our own chair Professor Angel Chater and speakers included Dr Roseanna Brady, Dr Sian Armstrong, Dr Jemma Byrne, Daniella Watson and Judit Varkonyi-Sepp.

Thanks to them for a fantastic agenda, as well as Niall Anderson and Professor Lucie Byrne-Davis for organising the event.

We are looking forward to the second webinar early in 2021 – watch this space!

## Outstanding MSc Health Psychology Research award

Programme leaders for stage 1 courses are now able to nominate an outstanding project from students who

show the potential to share their research with a health psychology scientific audience for the MSc Health

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Psychology Research Project Prize.

The prize will be offered a place as a “prize winner” oral presentation at the DHP conference, an award and certificate. We will provide a bursary to register and present at the online DHP conference in June 2021.

We also expect the winner to write a brief overview of their work for the Health Psychology Update.

We encourage you to help us celebrate health psychology research by [submitting your nominations online](#) by 5pm on 4 January 2020.

Please note that this year we ask you to include the full project on the nomination form to facilitate an efficient review process.

## BPSLearn launches

BPS Learn is the new home of psychology learning online. This new site will help you to develop your skills and knowledge at a time and place that suits you – we hope you’re as excited about it as we are!

You’ll find an evolving range of continuing professional development opportunities and qualifications from the BPS.

Keep your eyes peeled for new courses and webinars which will be going live, along with a new online home for our qualifications. Start learning today!

Make sure you [log in to access](#) your best price.

