

EHPS NATIONAL REPORT FOR 2011-2012 FROM UNITED KINGDOM

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BPS DIVISION OF HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY ANNUAL REPORT 2011-2012

The Division of Health Psychology (DHP) of the British Psychological Society (BPS) moves from strength to strength, now under the leadership of Dr Neil Coulson (2011-2012) who will be handing over as chair to Professor Tony Cassidy in September 2012. Our membership continues to grow, now with 1,947 members (652 Full; 999 General; 248 In training; 48 under rule 26). This is a rise from 1,676 members in 2011.

One of our key focuses this year is to review the competencies of trainee health psychologists in light of an upcoming review by the Health Professions Council (HPC: the government-run regulatory body of practitioner psychologists in the UK) of the Standards of Proficiency (SOPs) for Registered Psychologists. This competency review is being driven by Neil Coulson and Tony Cassidy and includes a number of health psychologists who are involved in the Health Psychology Competencies Working Group. Requirements for training in Health Psychology in the UK currently stands as a 1 year full-time (or 2 year part-time equivalent) MSc in Health Psychology, which when accredited by the BPS leads to a Stage 1 qualification in Health Psychology. This needs to be followed by a period of 2 years (or part-time equivalent) supervised practice in Health Psychology which must show competency in the key areas of generic professional practice, research, teaching, consultancy and behaviour change for a trainee to be eligible to apply for Full membership of the DHP and Chartered Status with the BPS. The working group mentioned above has 3 sub-groups which will focus on a review of 1) generic skills; 2) clinical and counselling skills and 3) health psychology interventions and models.

Behaviour change continues to be a focus of work within the Division of Health Psychology with the Behaviour Change Working Group continuing its work in the area. Previously led by Alison Wearden, this will now be chaired by Susan Michie. We are grateful to our members with the expertise in behaviour change for moving this agenda forward.

With the aims to support DHP members' continuing professional development (CPD) portfolios, our CPD sub-committee, now chaired by Sarah Dryden is continuing to develop workshops in the area of health psychology. The most recent CPD events have been in areas such as 'Working with qualitative data from the internet'; 'Behaviour change intervention design and evaluation' and 'Acceptance and commitment therapy and mindfulness'.

With regards to research and the 2013/2014 REF (research excellence framework) exercise, our research sub-committee, currently chaired by Joe Chilcott, note that the panels that will assess the REF lack health psychology representation. This issue is at the forefront of the research sub-committee with a review of where health psychologists will be submitting their research portfolios for the REF.

Postgraduate students continue to be supported, with the most recent DHP Postgrad sub-committee event held at the University of Bedfordshire, led by Erica Cook. This 2-day workshop covered all aspects of Health Psychology from training, to intervention design to teaching, publication and dissemination. This was a well attended event and we would like to take this opportunity to thank all the speakers who were involved in its success.

In terms of engaging with the public we continue to work with practitioners in developing a leaflet aimed at GPs and front line health care professionals that aims to explain what health psychology is and what it can offer. We have delivered several career talks around the country and our Twitter account, currently led by Elizabeth Jenkinson is gaining in following, now with over 800 people and organisations keeping informed in DHP activity and issues relevant to health psychology. An article evaluating this initiative will be published in the next edition of the HPU (Health Psychology Update).

Our DHP-edited special edition of *The Psychologist*, celebrating 25 years of Health Psychology in the UK was published in the December 2011 edition and was well received. Many thanks again to all those who contributed to this excellent example of best practice in Health Psychology.

After a necessary change in venue for reasons beyond our control, our forthcoming conference in Liverpool has received a healthy supply of abstracts and delegates and there was a recent discussion over the possibility that the DHP will provide a reduced attendance fee for members of other societies with an interest in health psychology (such as the EHPS). This will be confirmed in due course. The 2013 conference will be held on the 11th-13th Sept 2013 in Brighton, a lovely sea-side town in the South of England. We hope members of the EHPS will join us at our next annual meeting.