

Division of Clinical Psychology
Irish Psychologist, February 2007

Due to job changes for me and a consequently reduced capacity to attend properly to IP deadlines, I missed the last date an update for the DCP. I wish to apologise for this, particularly because there was no acknowledgement of the very fruitful Division events at the Society's Annual Conference. Significant thanks are due to Aisling White, Sarah Jamieson and Elaine Martin for their well-received workshop on Cognitive Analytic Therapy. This pre-conference workshop was very well attended which was a great achievement for the very first day of the conference.

Our conference meeting of the Division was well attended and some very important matters were raised for discussion. Among them were some robust requests that the Division continue to advocate for clinical psychologists and to actively campaign for issues that are of relevance to us professionally. It was suggested that the division organise workshops along two broad themes: one being about professional development and opening new areas to members; and the other was to offer practitioner workshops on areas like new tests or specific topics where members may feel less skilled. Some ideas were offered and if you have ideas please send them to the committee. It is planned to have a calendar of events ready for the division AGM in March. The concern about the implications of statutory registration remained a live topic and the Division was asked to ensure that our professional integrity, as clinical psychologists, is not diminished.

The meeting was well attended by a number of psychologists in clinical training and a larger number of assistant psychologists. This latter group have been seeking to have greater recognition and representation within the society and within the DCP, in particular. Over the last several months, discussions about this have taken place between the division and representatives of assistant psychologists. At this stage, the division has, with the support of PSI Council, undertaken to establish a working party that will clarify the needs of assistant psychologists and how these may be best addressed from within the division. The same criteria for affiliate membership as applies to other psychologists will hold but the assistants have raised several points that are unique to them. The basic issue is that this group want to seek to formally find a way that supports their quest to use the short time as assistants, as a means to maximising their experience and knowledge base before embarking on clinical training. The BPS Clinical Division has already put a very clear policy in place and this is reported to be working extremely well. While our concern is to give good support to those who are new to the profession, we want to do it right from the outset. We are also mindful that other divisions of the society may take up any new structure for aspirants to their own specialist areas within the profession. The committee wish to involve the membership in this discussion. You are invited to explore the documents that have been posted on the DCP webpage in the society's website and to e mail your responses to us. If you do not have access to the internet, please contact PSI office and I will ensure that copies are sent to you. Meanwhile, all assistant psychologists who fulfil the criteria laid down for affiliate membership are reminded that they are welcome to apply for this category of membership.

It is hoped to have clarity about these matters at the Division AGM which takes place on March 23rd 2007. Jonathan Egan, committee member and Director of Counselling will facilitate a pre-conference workshop on self care. This is also a time to advertise that the

committee needs some extra members. An events co-ordinator is badly needed as are willing hands to take up the officer posts. However, contrary to perception, attendance at a conference does not mean you end up with a job. Please attend, voice your concerns and ideas for the development of our profession at this normally sociable as well as informative event. Details of the AGM will be posted to members of the Division during February. Details will also be placed on the Division Webpage on www.psihq.ie.

To ensure that members interests are represented, please keep in touch with the committee either through e mail or direct contact with a committee member.

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