



The
British
Psychological
Society

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The Society has offices in Belfast, Cardiff, Glasgow and London, as well as the main office in Leicester. All enquiries should be addressed to the Leicester office (see contents page for address).

The British Psychological Society was founded in 1901, and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1965. Its object is 'to promote the advancement and diffusion of a knowledge of psychology pure and applied and especially to promote the efficiency and usefulness of Members of the Society by setting up a high standard of professional education and knowledge'.

Extract from The Charter

News about Society matters and brief items for News of members are welcome. Please send to *The Psychologist* at the Society's office, or to psychologist@bps.org.uk. Subsystem notices: notices received from elected officers of subsystems of official meetings, events, conferences of Divisions, Sections, Branches and Special Groups of the Society are inserted free of charge. Items should be sent to susepp@bps.org.uk.

Getting psychology into our parliaments

WHEN it comes to providing sound scientific advice to government and parliamentarians, psychology has slowly left its shy corner, tucked away from other scientific disciplines, to become an increasingly attractive source of evidence-based information for a variety of political audiences. This has undoubtedly been helped by increased coverage of psychology in the news, the rise of psychology as a degree subject, and a general fascination with human behaviour. But the Society plays an important role too – for the past seven years we have worked hard at improving the profile of the discipline amongst policy makers. We have quite a wide range of successes under our belt.

The Society's Parliamentary Office was founded in 2000, with the aim of ensuring that psychological evidence informs parliamentarians and policy makers in Westminster and the devolved nations. As the Society's Parliamentary Representative (since April 2006), my role is to work with the Parliamentary Officer to interact more effectively with the parliamentary systems, and in particular to make both ordinary members and chairs of our working parties more aware of our work. The Parliamentary Officer, Dr Ana Padilla, is a member of the Society's staff who advises us on parliamentary issues. Her extensive knowledge of parliamentary processes ensures that our evidence is received in

an appropriate and timely fashion.

The Parliamentary Office works very closely with other policy systems within the Society, such as the Policy Support Unit and the policy advisers to boards and committees. Additionally, close collaboration is also established with the Society's offices in the devolved nations, which will undoubtedly see an increase in

their respective political activity. All this strategic thinking ensures that substantive messages are delivered to a whole range of political audiences in a coordinated and consistent manner, enforcing the strength of the advice at each particular step. A recently formed steering group, comprising representatives from the four Society Boards, the three national branches (Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland) and Peter Border (deputy director of POST, the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology), provides guidance on strategic priorities.

The Parliamentary Office currently has three core activities: coordinating psychological evidence for parliamentarians and policy makers; assisting in managing a Society fellowship in

Parliament (with POST); and organising and hosting occasional seminars.

The law and the parliamentary process

The Parliamentary Office coordinates the submission of evidence related to legislative processes (including Green Papers, White Papers, Bills, Acts, Regulations, amendments of Acts and guidance notes), as well as Select Committee and All-Party Political Group enquires. Recently these have included Acts on gender recognition, gambling, mental capacity, mental health, and the *Choosing Health* White Paper.

In addition to legislative briefings, the Parliamentary Office has undertaken direct work with other government initiatives, such as discussions organised by the Social Exclusion Unit and the Strategy Unit (both at the Cabinet Office), as well as direct submissions to consultations launched by government departments (for example on asylum seeking children, the Police and Criminal Evidence Act, and Pupil Referral Units).

Select Committee submissions have also been wide ranging, from the obvious ones to some that have opened new doors for us, including on risk, science teaching in schools, bullying, electronic health records and human rights.

The Society's Fellowship at POST

Through the Research Board, we fund and manage a Fellowship programme at

POST. In an open competition each autumn, graduate psychologists are invited to apply for a three-month fellowship during which time they will prepare a briefing called a POST-note, to be circulated amongst parliamentarians of both Houses in Westminster. The briefing is extensively researched, and undergoes a process of peer review by external academic professionals in the particular area of expertise. So far, the Society has supported through this scheme the production of briefings, including those on early years learning, managing human error, CCTV, reform of mental health legislation, dyslexia and dyscalculia, binge drinking and public health, science in court, alternatives to custodial sentencing for young adult offenders (in press), and eating disorders (in press). Copies of all these briefings can be downloaded from: www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_offices/post/biology.cfm

Parliamentary seminars

The Parliamentary Office organises seminars of interest to parliamentarians, sometimes to coincide with the publication of POST-notes, and sometimes together with All-Party Parliamentary Groups – special interest groups that bring together internal and external parliamentary audiences on issues of common interest (e.g. mental health, autism, AIDS, refugees, etc.). The Society's Parliamentary Office has staged a number of such events, on issues as diverse as CCTV, the integration of refugee children in the UK, binge drinking, and sustainability. The seminars have been topical and well attended, and have encouraged lively discussions.

The Society is also a regular attendee of the scientific meetings organised by the

Parliamentary and Scientific Committee. The Society has long been a member of this Parliamentary Committee, and has established a constructive work relationship. In November 2003 the Society, together with POST, organised a visit for Parliamentary members of this Committee to the Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience in London.

The Society's Parliamentary Office also has well-established regular contact with other professional and scientific organisations, who are also actively seeking to deliver messages to promote informed, evidence-based policy drafting and implementation – some examples include the Royal Society, the Academy of Medical Sciences, and PolicyNet (a network of individuals from over 30 organisations, mostly working in science, engineering, and technology policy).

What next?

The potential scope for the

Parliamentary Office is enormous and far greater than our limited resources allow. Our primary responsibility is to ensure that the enquiries that seek our expertise receive a response, and that these are prioritised in the most effective way. In addition, we work to promote the value of psychological evidence to those enquiries that do not seek it initially. Currently scores of psychologists each year present evidence to parliamentary committees. While we are aware of much of this activity, we believe that psychology can make even more of a mark if our contributions are coordinated via the Parliamentary Office. With its extraordinary knowledge of parliamentary systems, the Office can help maximise the impact of all our interactions.

What can you contribute?

Psychologists need to be alert to how evidence in their area of expertise could and should be

used to inform the UK parliaments and the devolved assemblies. We plan to extend the information we place on the Society's website, so that you and others can see what is current, together with regular updates through the news column in *The Psychologist*.

One of the key aims in our parliamentary work, as elsewhere, is to convey the message that psychology is the scientific study of behaviour and not just about mental health. This means demonstrating that psychologists have much to contribute to understanding and changing behaviour in diverse contexts whether in relation to health, education, crime or even climate change. With greater involvement from you, the Parliamentary Office will stand a greater chance of achieving this, thereby ensuring that our work as psychologists makes a difference.

*Theresa Marteau
BPS Parliamentary
Representative*

GENERIC GUIDELINES FOR PRACTITIONERS

THE Society's Professional Practice Board has developed a set of generic professional practice guidelines with the following objectives:

- to define good psychological practice for all psychologists
- to strengthen the identity of psychologists
- to benefit the public
- to benefit members
- to provide guidance on legal and regulatory issues.

These practice guidelines were produced by a working group drawn from representatives of the Society's Divisions and Special Groups. They represent agreed guidelines for practice that are shared by applied psychologists across the different areas in which they work.

Applied psychologists help others through the unique application of research-based psychological knowledge and skills in a structured process. This process includes assessment (the identification and analysis of needs and problems of individuals, groups and organisations), formulation of solutions,

intervention or implementation, followed by the evaluation of outcomes. Clear and effective communication skills are integral to all of these.

They give detailed guidance for practice which is consistent with the Society's Code of Ethics and Conduct, and they are subordinate to this Code. Professional practice should also operate within the constraints of current legislation and national policy. These will be reviewed regularly, within a maximum period of five years.

The guidelines have been designed for broad application across by the full range of applied psychology. However, it is recognised that applied psychologists may require more detailed guidance for some particular roles and responsibilities or for particular situations in which they work. More specific guidelines should be consistent with these generic guidelines and, in turn, the Code of Ethics and Conduct.

The Guidelines will be available via www.bps.org.uk/ppb. Feedback on the guidelines is welcomed, particularly if a section needs updating or can be improved. E-mail ppbchair@bps.org.uk.

Expert witness working party

THE Expert Witness Working Party has produced new guidance for psychologists.

Convened in 2006 by the Professional Practice Board and Research Board, the Expert Witness Working Party was cross-Divisional in its representation. It was tasked with updating the Society's guidance *Psychologists as Expert Witness* and

Psychologists and the New Rules of Civil Procedure, produced in 1998 and 1999 respectively.

The reconvening of a working party to assess the content of these guidelines was product of a recognition that psychologists were becoming increasingly involved in all types of witness work (both expert/ professional and witness of fact) and followed some

high-profile cases involving the less-than-positive application of expert witness testimony (e.g. Angela Cannings and Professor Roy Meadows).

In September 2007 the working party produced a single set of guidance entitled *Psychologists as Expert Witnesses: Guidelines and Procedure for England and Wales*. Separate guidance for Scotland is currently under preparation, led by Dr Lorraine Johnstone and Professor David Cooke.

The 2007 guidance has been expanded somewhat from its predecessor and includes the following as core themes:

- Definition of an 'expert' and other types of witnesses;
- The importance of competence and qualification, with a recognition that psychologists need to provide evidence only within their field of expertise. For example, research qualifications alone (e.g. a PhD or MPhil) would not be sufficient to allow a psychologist to provide an applied opinion in court. The guidance outlines the importance of staying within your area of psychological expertise;
- How instructions from others (e.g. advocates) can be managed and responded

to effectively and efficiently;

- The limits and definition of confidentiality;
- The importance of identifying and avoiding potential conflicts of interest. For example, it would be a conflict of interest for a psychologist based within an NHS trust to offer an expert witness opinion on a client who falls under the care of the same trust;
- Managing oral and written testimony, including the etiquette of courts and tribunals and the importance of reducing evidence to issues, facts and opinion;
- Attention to both civil and criminal witness procedure rules and guidelines. The revised guidelines now include reference to the Criminal Prosecution Service's mandatory requirements for use of evidence by experts including the need to reveal, retain and record.

In addition, the working party extended its terms of reference to include;

- The compilation and production of a survey of expert witnesses by Professor Gisli Gudjonsson, due to appear in the Division of Forensic Psychology publication *Forensic Update*.

SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

A Special General Meeting will be held on Friday 7 December 2007, 12 noon, at the University of Greenwich, Queen Anne Court, Room 075 (Edinburgh), Old Royal Naval College, Park Row, Greenwich, London SE10 9LS to:

(a) Agree the Resolution set out below in order for the Society to be compliant with existing Scottish and proposed Northern Ireland legislation. Resolution: To add the following paragraph to the Society's Charter Article 21:

Throughout this our Charter and the Statute of the Board of Trustees, 'charitable' means charitable in accordance with the law of England and Wales provided that it will not include any purpose which is not charitable in accordance with any statutory provision regarding the meaning of the word 'charitable' or the words 'charitable purposes' in force in any part of the United Kingdom. For the avoidance of doubt, the system of law governing the constitution of the charity is the law of England and Wales.

(b) Announce the result of the membership ballot for President 2009/10.

No electoral voting or other business will take place at this meeting.

Professor Ann M. Colley
Honorary General Secretary

YOUR SOCIETY NEEDS YOU www.bps.org.uk/ysny

Vacancy

Person specification

Information (closing date)

Board of Assessors in Clinical

A Practitioner Full Member of BPS Division of

Bethan Carley – bethan.carley@bps.org.uk

Neuropsychology – Registrar and Chief

Neuropsychology for at least five years with experience

0116 252 9933. Or for informal discussion, contact

Supervisor (combined role)

of clinical supervision in clinical neuropsychology and detailed knowledge and understanding of the process of examinations. Attracts payment with travel and subsistence.

Dr Jody Warner-Rogers, Chair of the Board of Assessors – jody@drsrogers.plus.com
(31 January 2008)

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Dr Dave Harper has been appointed Reader in Clinical Psychology at the University of East London.

Robert J. Edelmann has been appointed Professor of Forensic and Clinical Psychology at the University of Roehampton on a part-time basis as Director of the new PsychD in Forensic Psychology. He retains his independent practice and his affiliation with Powell Campbell Edelmann and the Psychologists at Law Group.

Professor Andrew Scholey (Northumbria University) is leaving the UK to take up a chair at the Brain Sciences Institute, Swinburne University, Melbourne Australia.

This will be available in due course on the Society's website;

- A proposal for a more permanent committee within the Society that would focus solely on witness work;
- Representing the Society on the proposals by the Chief Medical Officer for a revision of how experts are used within family proceedings, with the consultation led by Paul Cousins;
- Representing the Society on the consultation response concerning transparency in the family court system;
- Advising the Society's barristers on the complexities concerning the release of psychological test data in open court, including involvement in two appeal hearings and a final court hearing which focused on the practice of psychologists in court.

The working party has made

five specific recommendations to the Professional Practice Board following the ending of its work. These were:

- to convene a permanent committee to deal with expert and ordinary [professional] witness issues;
- to have a system to ensure expert guidance for members is updated every two years;
- to develop formal accreditation of psychologists acting as expert witnesses including ensuring that such witnesses are qualified in content and process and currently practicing applied psychology (there is increasing concern from courts that there are some experts who report an ability to provide 'expert' evidence but who either have never practised – e.g. are researchers and not practitioners – or who have not practised for many

years;

- to promote training opportunities in expert witness work as part of CPD initiatives;
- to develop a system for producing guidance papers on topics of direct relevance to expert witness work which would be of value to members and also to the legal profession.

The Professional Practice Board has considered these proposals favourably and will look towards setting up an 'Experts Advisory Group in mid-2008.

*Professor Jane L. Ireland PhD
Chair, BPS Experts Working
Party 2006–7*

SUBSYSTEM NOTICES

DIVISION OF OCCUPATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

POP Annual Conference 2008
8–9 January, Holiday Inn, Stratford-upon-Avon

A two-day conference aimed at MSc and PhD students in the area of occupational psychology featuring interactive skills workshops and keynote speakers.

For more information, visit www.bps.org.uk/pop2008.

Annual General Meeting 2008
The AGM will be held on Thursday 10 January 2008, 6pm, in the Packwood Room, Stratford Holiday Inn, Stratford-upon-Avon.

SPECIAL GROUP IN COACHING PSYCHOLOGY

Annual General Meeting 2007
The AGM will be held on Monday 17 December 2007, 5pm, in the Oliver Thompson Theatre, City University, London.

2007 Event Programme
17–18 December 2007: 'SGCP 3rd Annual Coaching Psychology Conference', City University, London
An exciting and topical conference with keynote papers, full-day masterclasses, research and case

study presentations, skills-based sessions and roundtable discussions.

Further details of the SGCP 2007 Event Programme are available on the 'News Page' of the SGCP website (www.sgcp.org.uk).

SPECIAL GROUP FOR PSYCHOLOGISTS & SOCIAL SERVICES

AGM and Annual Conference 'Caring for Carers'
Monday 3 December 2007, Birmingham Medical Institute
Book via Vikki Pugh. Tel: 01248 682843 of fax: 01248 68132.

DIVISION OF CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY – PSIGE

National Annual Conference 2008 'Extending the Boundaries' – Call for papers and workshops

2–4 July 2008, University of York
Keynote speaker: Steven Zarit, Professor of Human Development, Penn State University. Others to be confirmed.

Submissions are encouraged in the form of individual poster and oral presentations, symposia, workshops and seminars.

Clinical psychology awards

DR Emily Holmes, a Royal Society Dorothy Hodgkin Fellow at the University of Oxford's Department of Psychiatry, is to receive the May Davidson Award for 2007.

Dr Holmes's work has looked at mental imagery and the impact it has on our emotions. She is interested in the thought processes that underlie distressing intrusive imagery, and seeks to apply this scientific research to develop future treatment innovations to help people involved in traumatic events who later suffer distressing flashback memories.

'I am surprised and honoured to have won this award,' said Dr Holmes. 'I'm currently working in the same

hospital that May Davidson was based in – the Warneford – so it's a particular honour'.

Meanwhile, Nick Tarrier, who is Professor of Clinical Psychology at the University of Manchester as well as managing a psychological trauma outpatient clinic at Wythenshawe Hospital, is to receive the M.B. Shapiro Award for 2007.

Professor Tarrier was among the first researchers to show that cognitive behaviour therapy could benefit patients with severe psychotic conditions like schizophrenia. His work has also helped people with bipolar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder and psychological problems following serious burns.

POLICY SUPPORT UNIT

www.bps.org.uk/consult

The Society responded to 14 external consultations in September. Two of them, from the Health Professions Council, concerned draft guidance for registrants on confidentiality, and proposed standards of conduct, performance and ethics. Both documents were criticised by the President's Negotiating Committee, the Chair of the Ethics Committee and the Regulatory Affairs Manager for a primary focus on clinical relationships, including elements that could cause difficulties for registrants working in relationships other than those involving the direct provision of care to service users. The need to broaden or abandon the use of the term 'service user' in the proposed standards was suggested, together with various other amendments.

The Cabinet Office consultation *Effective Consultation* asked for comments on existing and potential future consultation practices of government departments. The Society's response was prepared by the Consultations Lead for the Division of Forensic Psychology, the Policy Officer of the Division of Clinical Psychology's Faculty for Clinical Health Psychology and both PSU Policy Advisers, and took the view that the current procedure for administering and managing consultations is basically sound. Suggestions were made for the refinement of practice and dissemination of information about consultations and in relation to the need to ensure clarity in relation to the influence of consultation outcomes on policy-making. Concerns were expressed at inadequate recognition of prior and current Society contributions to government consultations.

In responding to the University of Gloucester about the UK HE Disaster Relief Project, the Professional Practice Board's Working Party for Disaster, Trauma and Crisis referred to the psychological impact of disasters as well as the broader issues of how psychology can contribute to disaster relief and the experiences of psychologists in the field.

The remaining consultations responded to during the month were:

- *A Rational Way Forward for the NHS in England* (response to the British Medical Association)
- *Barring Consultation: Implementing the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Northern Ireland Order 2007* (response to the Department for Education and Skills)
- *Delivering for Mental Health: Mental Health and Substance Abuse* (response to the Scottish Executive)
- *Guidance on Nominating a Consultee for Research Involving Adults who Lack Capacity for Consent* (response to the Department of Health)
- *Prostate Cancer Draft Guidance* (response to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence)
- *Raising Standards, Improving Outcomes: Draft Statutory Guidance on Early Years Outcomes Duty* (response to the Department for Children, Schools and Families)
- *Subject Benchmark Statements: Psychology* (response to the Quality Assurance Agency)
- *The Treatment and Management of Depression in Primary and Secondary Care* (response to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence)
- *The Treatment of Depression in People with Chronic Health Problems* (response to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence)
- *Transfer and Development of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services in South Wales* (response to the Welsh Assembly Government)

☐ Contact the Policy Support Unit on 0116 252 9926, or psu@bps.org.uk.

For more information on the conference, submission guidelines and to submit and access the online submission system please see www.psigge.org, www.bps.org.uk/psige2008; contact BPS Conferences at psigeconference@bps.org.uk; or call 0116 252 9555.

DIVISION OF SPORT AND EXERCISE PSYCHOLOGY

Communication with members

The Division has recently established a Communication Operations Group (COG) to enhance communication with members, the public, the press and in response to government policy. Current activities include updating the web, continuing the Sport and Exercise Psychology Review and developing links with the media.

Conference

The first DSEP Conference will be held in London on 11–12 December 2008 and we have confirmed Professor Dave Collins

as a keynote speaker. Watch out for further information soon.

DIVISION OF NEUROPSYCHOLOGY

Post-qualification Training Day 'Encephalitis: Assessment and Rehabilitation Across the Lifespan'

Friday 23 November 2007, 9.30am to 4pm (AGM at lunch), The Resource Centre, 256 Holloway Road, London N7 6PA

For further information contact: Professor Michael Oddy, Brain Injury Rehabilitation Trust, Five Oaks Road, Slinfold nr Horsham, West Sussex RH13 0TP. Tel: 01403 799163; fax: 01403 791738; e-mail: birt@disabilities-trust.org.uk

DEADLINE

Deadline for Society contributions is **30 November** for the January issue