

EHPS National Report For 2019-2020 From United Kingdom

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I) Health Psychology in the UK

The development of Health Psychology in the UK continues to be led by the British Psychological Society's (BPS) Division of Health Psychology (DHP). Professor Angel Chater is the Chair of the DHP until June 2021, and Professor Lucie Byrne-Davis is Chair Elect.

There are currently 2279 members of the DHP - an increase of about 100 over the previous year. (753 chartered; 1,071 general members; 176 in training members). 278 of our members are from outside the UK.

II) Education, training & professionalisation

1. Promotion of Health Psychology

The DHP, the Health Psychology Qualifications Board and the DHP Training Committee continue to oversee education, training, professionalisation and promotion of Health Psychology in the UK. The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), regulates the discipline of Health Psychology (and other areas of applied psychology). Training must also confer to HCPC Standards of Proficiency <https://www.hcpc-uk.org> to enable the future practice of Health Psychology. Advertising of jobs for health psychologists working in the NHS continues to be an issue but we have some recent increases in eligibility of health psychologists to apply for NHS roles. Professional insurance and indemnity remains to be through either the employer (i.e. Higher Education/ NHS) or private indemnity through companies such as Howdens and Towergate. Practitioners, supervisors and trainees must ensure they have appropriate cover for their work.

2. Education and Training Initiatives/Programmes

Training requirements are an undergraduate psychology degree (usually 3 years full-time equating to 360 UK credits/ 180 ECTS points) which offers Graduate Basis for Chartership (GBC) with the British Psychological Society (BPS), followed by a 1 year full-time (or part-time equivalent) BPS accredited MSc in Health Psychology (180 UK credits at M level/ 90 ECTS points) leading to the Stage 1 qualification in Health psychology. Followed by a period of 2 years of Doctoral level supervised practice in Health Psychology (Stage 2), equating to 37.5/40 hours per week for 46 weeks per year or part-time equivalent. During this time, candidates must show competency in the key areas of generic professional practice, research, teaching/training, consultancy and psychological interventions/behaviour change. Stage 2 can be achieved via either a university-route doctorate, or via the British Psychological Society's independent training route. Through the independent route, trainees are independently supervised by a suitably qualified Health Psychologist to gain the competencies through a BPS agreed training plan. For this, supervisors must be registered on the Register of Applied Practice Psychology Supervisors (RAPPS) and students can study alongside a PhD. There are currently 34 MSc Health Psychology courses accredited by the British Psychological Society and 7 accredited Doctoral level Stage 2 training programmes (Glasgow Caledonian, Liverpool John Moores, Southampton, Staffordshire, Stirling, Surrey, University of West of England).

The DHP has started regular 'conversation cafes' with Stage 2 trainees each month, with a specific focus.

III) Activities

1. Conferences and meetings

The June 2020 conference was cancelled and replaced by a webinar and social alongside the (virtual) Annual General Meeting. The webinar was focused on two areas – Covid-19 related work and changed ways of working as a result of Covid-19. Both webinar/social and AGM proved to be very popular and there are plans to continue with a virtual AGM in order to enable more members to attend.

The 2021 conference is scheduled for 29-30 June 2021 in Bristol, with pre-conference workshops on the 28th June.

There are also annual AGMs with associated academic meetings from the Devolved Nations for DHP Scotland (February) which are well attended and DHP Northern Ireland (May) which was cancelled this year.

2. Publications

The DHP produces a regular divisional peer-reviewed publication called Health Psychology Update (HPU), which goes out to all members of the DHP, plus periodic newsletters, for example for August 2020:

<https://www.bps.org.uk/sites/www.bps.org.uk/files/Member%20Networks/Divisions/DHP/DHP%20Newsletter%20-%20August%202020.pdf> . The British Psychological Society also support the British Journal of Health Psychology (BJHP). This journal has an impact factor of 2.917 (an increase from 2.472) is published by Wiley and currently led by DHP members Professor Maddy Arden and Dr Joe Chilcot.

The BPS has some great reads that are available to all – <https://www.bps.org.uk/news-and-policy/listing> and <https://digest.bps.org.uk>

3. Working groups

The DHP national committee have leads for research, practice, policy, communications, trainees, education & training and conference, to ensure that the diverse needs of health psychologists and trainees are met.

4. Other activities

The DHP Twitter account is growing year on year and in August 2019 has 7,725 followers, an increase of around 900 on the previous year. All welcome to follow on @divhealthpsych

5. Planned/future activities and initiatives

More information on the DHP, along with activities, events and targeted leaflets that give details about Health Psychology to the general public, employers, employees, GPs, Directors of Public Health and commissioners can be found on the website through the following link: <https://www1.bps.org.uk/networks-and-communities/member-microsite/division-health-psychology>

6. Other issues/news

Covid-19 work.

Behavioural science has had a prominent profile in discussions and policy around Covid-19 in the UK.

A number of health psychologists have been part of Government advisory groups SPI-B and SAGE <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scientific-advisory-group-for-emergencies-sage-coronavirus-covid-19-response-membership/list-of-participants-of-sage-and-related-sub-groups> , and more recently Independent SAGE <https://www.independentsage.org> . There have been frequent media appearances from health psychologists, making very clear and articulate points about the role of behaviour in reducing virus transmission.

The BPS set up a number of steering groups, including one in behavioural science and disease prevention. These groups have produced many resources for policy makers, professionals and the public <https://www.bps.org.uk/coronavirus-resources>

A group of psychologists set up the Health Psychology Exchange, which has over 140 collaborators. The Exchange has been working with 20 health and care organisations, advising on a range of issues related to public health campaigns and staff psychological wellbeing, including messages to include in food boxes distributed to people shielding, wording for messages on traffic signs and ways of supporting care home managers to reduce staff risk of psychological injury. The group has produced 3 rapid reviews and have further reviews in progress.

The group is now thinking about what they have learnt through being part of working a collaborative way, including about the value of collective action, the need for support across organisations and stages of career and the feeling of belonging that arises from working to a common goal.

Celebrating Health Psychologists

We were delighted that a number of health psychologists in the UK have been recognised for their contributions in the last year.

- Rona Moss-Morris, won the 2020 BPS award for Distinguished Contribution to Practice, in recognition of her amazing work in integrated care for people with long term conditions <https://www.bps.org.uk/news-and-policy/pioneers-and-innovators-honoured-bps-practice-board>
- Susan Michie was awarded the 2019 BPS Research Board's Lifetime Achievement Award <https://thepsychologist.bps.org.uk/volume-32/october-2019/pioneer-behaviour-change-recognised>
- Lucie Byrne-Davis, Eleanor Bull & Jo Hart won the 2020 BPS Innovation in Practice Award for their Cards for Change.

Jo Hart, August 2020

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