COVID-19 BPC Update for Registrants – 26 March 2020

We will provide regular updates for our Registrants during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure you are kept up to date with information and guidance useful to clinical work. We fully acknowledge the anxiety and concern about the personal, professional and societal response to COVID-19 and how they might impact your practice and contact with clients and patients. During these unprecedented times, there are new challenges for both Registrants and patients.

Following the latest government announcement, our team is now working remotely but we are still operating as usual. Please bear with us if there are some delays in replying to your queries as we adapt to new working arrangements.

We are doing everything we can to make this transition as smooth and fast as possible. To help us during this time, we would be grateful if you would contact us by email in the first instance mail@bpc.org.uk. Please provide your name, contact details including a phone number and your query. We will aim to respond within 48 business hours, Monday to Friday.

Guidance

We have published general guidance and guidance on online/telephone sessions. We will continue to provide the necessary advice to ensure you can deliver treatment informed by the values and principles set out in our professional standards.

We also recommend Registrants read the guidelines published by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) about data protection and coronavirus.

Training and CPD

As clinicians move to online or telephone sessions, they may choose to take specific training on working remotely or access resources that explore the use e-technology in psychotherapy. Courses on how to manage the change of the therapeutic frame, such as the one offered by the Tavistock Relationship are available.

Public Affairs and Policy

We have joined with the UKCP, BACP and other stakeholders to highlight to the government the important contribution counsellors and psychotherapists provide during and after this COVID-19 crisis.

At a time where everyone's physical health is facing an unprecedented threat, we call on the government to recognise the huge impact increased isolation, bereavement, and financial and personal changes will have on people's mental health . All necessary measures should be put in place to enable counsellors and psychotherapists to provide their services to the people who most need it.

We are supporting IPSE's (Association of Independent Professionals and the Self Employed) campaign on Temporary Income Protection for the self-employed and have

signed a joint letter to the Prime Minister calling for an emergency fund for freelancers and the self-employed. At this time of great uncertainty and anxiety, it is essential that counsellors and psychotherapists can continue supporting patients and clients.

If you would like to support the call for a Temporary Income Protection Fund for the Self-employed you can sign the IPSE petition clicking on this link

A similar petition is also open on the Parliament website

The Chancellor is expected to announce measures specific to the self-employed soon. In the meantime, measures announced last week by the Chancellor to support self-employed people and small businesses can be accessed here.

NHS Staff Wellbeing

Voluntary initiatives have been set up to provide front line NHS staff with the psychological support they need. Many of our Registrants are working to coordinate efforts for Frontline Wellbeing support as we move through the next few months and beyond.

NHS Practitioner Health, a free, confidential service for doctors and dentists with mental illness and addiction problems, who are looking to return to clinical practice, are expanding their remit. They have set up a short questionnaire to create a database of practitioners able to give time to support COVID-19 frontline staff. You may want to take part in this initiative by filling in the questionnaire.

We will keep you updated on any other similar initiatives.