What do Clinical Psychologists do and how can I train to be one?

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Description

- Aim to reduce the distress and improve the psychological wellbeing of people.
- Maybe through research in academia, maybe through clinical work in NHS
- I will describe NHS/clinical aspects mostly
- Use methods derived from psychological theory and evaluated through research
- Support their clients to make positive changes to their lives
Key aspects -

• Applied Psychology - theory-practice linking

• Scientist-practitioner –
  • Evidence based practice
  • Practice based evidence

• Reflective Practice –
  • A mode that integrates or links thought and action with reflection/critical analysis.
  • With the goal of improving one’s professional practice

• Mental Health is dimensional, importance of social context (vs medical model for example)

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Where do Clinical Psychologists work?

• In a wide variety of places..
• Mostly in the NHS, although some are in Universities
• In the NHS
  • In psychology departments, hospitals, health centres, GP surgeries, residential care homes, out-patient clinics, mental health wards, physical health wards, schools...
• With other psychologists
• In teams with other healthcare professionals eg nurses, doctors, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, psychological therapists, social workers...
Who do Clinical Psychologists work with?

- A huge variety of people
- Adults, older people, children, adolescents, people with learning disabilities, people with physical health problems....
- People with mental health difficulties – anxiety (OCD, PTSD, panic, social anxiety..), depression, eating disorders, trauma, psychosis
- People with physical health difficulties – cancer, chronic pain, diabetes, cardiac rehab, adjustment to physical illness,
- People with neurological difficulties - autistic spectrum disorders, ADHD, stroke, head injury, dementia
- People with addictions
- People with challenging behaviours
- Individuals, couples, groups, families, staff teams, carers...
What do Clinical Psychologists do?

- A massive variety of activities
- Individual Assessments
- Formulation
- Interventions
- Spread psychological perspective/influencing
- Training other staff
- Supervise other CP, trainees, other staff
- Research – develop new theories, interventions and evaluate them
- Leadership, management
- Service development
- Policy development and delivery
Policy achievements 1 – The Matrix (Scotland)

- Sent to all NHS Boards in Scotland (and used in Wales and NZ too)
- Describes the evidence to guide services in what therapies to offer and how to deliver them
- To deliver the Scottish Gov 18 week referral to treatment target
Policy achievements 2 – IAPT (UK)

- Increasing Access to Psychological Therapies
- In first 3 years –
  - 4,000 new practitioners trained
  - 1,000,000 more people seen
How can I train to be one?

• Doctorate in Clinical Psychology – accredited by the BPS, approved by the HCPC

OR

• Masters in Applied Psychology – not a Clinical Psychologist but similar in one area of work (adult, older people or child)
What’s it like being a trainee clinical psychologist?
What do I need to get on to the Doctorate?

• **Amongst** our criteria are...

• Undergraduate degree in psychology (or conversion) Graduate Basis for Chartership with BPS (GBC)

• Usually a 2:1

• Some relevant experience
  • “Application of psychological models”
  • Research
  • Healthcare
  • Support work
  • Teaching
  • Social work

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Resources

• **www.bps.org.uk** the BPS website – look for Careers section, Division of Clinical Psychology (DCP) and DCP Pre-qualification group

• **www.clinpsy.org.uk/forum** - look for the wiki with lots and lots of information/FAQs/resources and links

• **www.prospects.ac.uk** – look for job profiles on clinical psychology

• Edinburgh Uni Careers service – Janet Forsyth has lots of information on getting relevant experience, applying for clinical training at [http://www.ed.ac.uk/ppls/psychology/current/undergraduate/careers](http://www.ed.ac.uk/ppls/psychology/current/undergraduate/careers)

• Books
  • “What is clinical psychology? Llewelyn and Murphy 2014
  • “Clinical Psychology in Practice” Beinart 2009
  • “Clinical Psychology: An Introduction” Carr 2012