

From: Sylvia Johnstone [mailto:sylvia@westleedervillecounselling.com.au]
Sent: Friday, 10 September 2010 1:29 AM
To: NationalBoards
Subject: Redefine PBA's definition of Counselling Psychologists

Dear Brin,

I am writing in response to PBA's recent guidelines and endorsement of counselling psychologist which has omitted counselling psychologists' competencies in mental health disorders.

I am a counselling psychologist registrar in private practice, and I am gravely concern with PBA's definition of counselling psychologist that is inconsistent with the APS Counselling College . APS Counselling College definition of Counselling Psychologist is as follow:

Counselling psychologists are specialists in the provision of psychological therapy. They provide psychological assessment and psychotherapy for individuals, couples, families and groups, and treat a wide range of psychological problems and mental health disorders

In contrast, the description that the Psychology Board of Australia is:

Counselling psychologists are specialists in the provision of psychological therapy. They provide psychological assessment and psychotherapy for individuals, couples, families and groups, and treat a wide range of psychological problems

I would like to speak for myself and on behalf of my counselling psychologist colleagues in private practice. As a private practitioner providing psychological intervention, I receive referrals from General Practitioners requesting treatment to their patients diagnosed with mental health disorders. In addition to providing psychotherapy and psychological intervention, I also provide comprehensive psychological assessments of mental health disorders assisting GPs, in making accurate diagnosis, and providing appropriate treatment plans for their patients. I have attached a letter of endorsement from a GP who has consistently referred his patients with mental health disorder to me as evidence of my competency, along with other counselling psychologists' competency in mental health disorders.

I am confident to say that my training in counselling psychology has fully equipped me the skills and expertise in mental health disorder diagnosis and treatment. I would like to see changes to PBA's definition of counselling psychologist which should be consistent with APS Counselling College's definition as stated above. Please add in the words " and mental health disorders" in the last sentence of your definition of Counselling Psychologists.

Yours sincerely,

Sylvia Johnstone
Counselling Psychologist Registrar