

Submission re Revisions to the Guidelines on Area of Practice Endorsements

As it affects Clinical Psychologists

I am a Clinical Psychologist . I graduated from the UNSW clinical masters program in 2003, and I have worked i n the public and private sectors doing individual and group therapy for adults.

My concern is that the requirement of only 176 hours of client contact a year does not provide sufficient training for a therapist.

Why this is not enough for therapists in training

The year(s) of supervised practice provide the opportunity for the therapist to develop the craft of being a therapist in long term real world settings under expert supervision. (This is similar to what happens in a range of professions ranging from medicine to accounting).

176 hours a year is equivalent to seeing only 18 clients in year assuming an average of 10 sessions per client . This is unlikely to provide the range of experiences necessary to develop expertise.

It is less than the client contact I experienced during my Masters

Eg over 200 hours in the student clinic

Approximately 130 client hours in each long placement

It is equivalent to a full time placement of 7 weeks assuming that the therapist sees 5 clients a day

Why is this important

Clinical psychologists who work as therapists are seen by GPs and Medicare of having specialist expertise in diagnosis, formulation and treatment so it is important that they do have the expertise.

Other work eg research does not provide the opportunity to develop therapy skills

Individuals completing a Clinical p/g degree who then go on to predominantly do research or teaching are developing their skills in research or teaching which benefits their career but this work does not help them treat clients.

le Would you want your heart surgeon to have spent the majority of his practical training doing research rather than practising operating?

Other

In my UNSW Masters course although all our lecturers had PhD's and some were eminent researchers in their field , all those that taught anything to do with client treatment had also worked full time as clinical or neuropsychologists and drew on this practical experience extensively during the course. Ie their research was not relevant to our training .

It does not make sense to reduce the training level of clients treated to accommodate people whose careers are in other areas. How about a further area of endorsement related to research etc.

Regards

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