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Psychology Board of Australia

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Dear Board Members

Re: Public consultation paper 26: Area of practice endorsements

Thank you for this opportunity to provide input on the definition of counselling psychology.

Having read the updated description and list of competency statements provided by the *Association of Counselling Psychologists* and the *APS College of Counselling Psychologists*, I wish to affirm my support for such statements (attached). I believe this revised statement more accurately reflects the nature of our training, research and practice in the specialised domain of counselling psychology.

I have been working in the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) area of counselling for over 10 years. I am currently the clinical coordinator of the service providing advice to the service, and supervision to counsellors. I also have a (small) private practice.

EAP work provides counselling to employees and/or their families. In any one week one might work with people presenting with *relatively* simple issues, such as anxiety, depression, stress and/or workplace conflict, or one might be working with people who have dual diagnoses, emerging psychosis, addictions, family breakdown, or trauma related issues.

As the clinical coordinator I also provide support and advice to organisations in relation to such issues as are affecting the employee in the workplace. A depressed or addicted staff member can have considerable impact on not only themselves, but also on others around them. Employers are frequently uncertain about actions to take to support and manage the employee.

A significant proportion of my clients present with relationship difficulties, on issues such as loss of trust, infidelity (whether sexual or other), or violence, with such frequency that I provide training and supervision to other staff in my organisation on working with couples.

The inclusion of competency statements relating to mental health assessment, case-formulation and appropriate evidence-based care (including couple therapy) more accurately reflects my post-graduate training *and* the clinical reality of my work.

If you have any queries, please feel free to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Kathryn Kirwan

Counselling Psychologist

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