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Psychology Board of Australia
GPO Box 9958
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Re: Public Consultation paper 26: Area of practice endorsements

Dear Board member,

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

I wish to give my support for the revised competency statements provided to by the APS College of Counselling psychologist.

Having read their updated description and list of competency statements, it is my opinion that this revision (see attached) more accurately reflects the nature of our training, research and practice in the specialised domain of counselling psychology.

As a private practitioner with over a decade of experience, I can confidently State that seeing people with complex, severe, and chronic mental health problems are a everyday part of my work. In any given week I will see a number of people with acute anxiety and depression, people transitioning out of hospital based psychiatric care, complex trauma, family/relationship breakdown, domestic violence, co-morbid alcohol and drug. In addition to this I see people with diagnosed, bipolar disorder, personality disorder, Asperger disorder, PTSD. I have contracts with VVCS working with current and ex armed service personal and their family members.

Each week I provide couple therapy to a number of couples, often in relation to the issues mentioned above, but also for problems around infidelity, violation of trust, and managing relationships characterised by paranoia, fear, controlling behaviour, and abuse. Being able to offer couple therapy not only assists individuals in their relationship with their own personal issues (which include mental

health conditions), but it also helps protect vulnerable others in our society whose lives are deeply affected by their exposure to dysfunctional relationships and conflicted family dynamics. In addition, couples therapy can assist in reducing the perpetuation of conflicted family dynamics impacting on children, and their future relationships.

The inclusion of competency statements relating to mental health assessment, case-formulation, and appropriate evidence-based care (including couple therapy), is a far better reflection of both the postgraduate training I received and the clinical reality of my work.

If you have any queries please make contact on the details provided above.
Many thanks,

Yours truly,

N McKenna

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