

25 June 2015

For immediate release

'COERCIVE' THERAPY PROPOSALS FOR JOBCENTRES - STATEMENT FROM BABCP BOARD

We note recent suggestions in various articles that the proposal to site 350 IAPT therapists in job centres might lead to a coercive approach to unemployed claimants and an attempt to attribute joblessness to the individual attitudes of claimants. It is also noted that claimants will be offered online CBT to increase their 'employability'. Subsequent communications on Twitter have asked what BABCP's view of these issues might be.

BABCP is not aware of the specifics of how CBT is to be offered in these settings. However, the position of BABCP's Board of Trustees is that BABCP is against any offer of any treatment (including CBT) based on coercion or associated with unfair or disproportionate inducements. This applies to whether CBT interventions are offered as part of therapy, research, or in any other context (for example, corporate training/development). Coercion is defined by BABCP as the threat of punishment, and unfair and disproportionate inducements are defined by us as rewards for participation which are such that an individual is pressurised by the extent or form of the inducement to accept an offer which they would otherwise refuse.

BABCP does not have a blanket policy on the offer of CBT in any particular setting, including Job Centres, nor with any reasonable aim, such as increasing people's fitness for work or any other activity. However, it is BABCP's view that such an offer must be made in response to an identified need for intervention where the person involved freely expresses a desire for such intervention.

BABCP recognises that individuals may have personal needs which will hinder them in finding jobs and for which CBT may be useful. Naturally, BABCP expects such interventions to be evidence based and offered by a delivery method which is likewise supported by evidence of success. Such interventions should be based on the needs of the individual. BABCP supports the rights of people to have adequate access to effective interventions which will help them live all aspects of their lives, including employment. Similarly, people have the right to adequate and appropriate assessment of their personal needs in helping them find work, including psychological assessment. Results of any assessment, including psychological assessment and assessment for suitability for CBT should not be used coercively. BABCP does not recognise the validity or applicability of generalised psychological explanations of social issues such as joblessness.

Unfortunately, the evidence so far gathered by the Department of Health in partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions published in *An Evaluation of the 'IPS in IAPT' Psychological Wellbeing and Work Feasibility pilot* clearly indicates that much more work in the form of a larger pilot is required before the programme is rolled out. Furthermore, there is currently insufficient evidence to indicate whether it is effective and such evidence as there is indicates significant problems with the structure and implementation of the programme.

(Ends)

Widely Recognised Accreditation | High Quality CPD | CBT Register UK