



PERTH PSYCHOLOGISTS

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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. I wish to give my support for the revised competency statements provided to you by the *Association of Counselling Psychologists* and the *APS College of Counselling Psychologists*.

Attached please find the ACP's updated description and list of competency statements, which I think more accurately reflects the nature of our training, research, and practice in the specialised domain of counselling psychology.

As both a private practitioner and NGO agency employee with considerable experience, I can confidently state that seeing people with complex, severe, and chronic mental health problems, are an everyday part of my therapeutic work. In any given week I will see a number of people who are dealing with family breakdown, violence, complex trauma, and co-morbid drug and alcohol problems. Many people I work with have diagnoses such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, PTSD, and/or personality disorders.

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.

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 do not hesitate to contact me on the details provided above.

Yours sincerely,

Shelley Ranger

Registered Psychologist

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