

March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2016

**Psychology Board of Australia**

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**Re: Public consultation paper 26: Area of practice endorsements**

Dear Board members,

Thank you for allowing me to contribute my perspective to the definition of Counselling Psychology in Australia.

I would like 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*. After reading their updated description and list of competency statements I believe that this revision accurately reflects the nature of our training, research, and practice in the endorsed area of counselling psychology.

Having recently completed the Master of Psychology (Counselling Psychology) degree at Curtin University I believe that I have an excellent understanding of what entails Counselling Psychology and what is expected from those who are practicing as a Counselling Psychologist.

With two years of training, research, and practice throughout my degree I can confidently state that Counselling Psychologists are trained to provide treatment to people with complex, severe and chronic mental health problems. Counselling Psychologists are required to have a thorough understanding of a range of evidence based models, and to be competent in determining which model/s of treatment to implement based on the individual client.

In my own therapeutic work, I have provided counselling and treatment to people with a diverse range of presentations and diagnoses. The most common presentations among these are people with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Complex PTSD, severe Depression, Personality disorders, Social Anxiety and Bipolar Disorder. A large chunk of my therapeutic work has also been with victims of domestic violence, victims of childhood sexual assault, recent sexual assault and ongoing sexual abuse. Understandably many of these clients' lives are deeply affected by their diagnosis/diagnoses, leaving them extremely vulnerable.

Working with this clientele requires a high level of clinical knowledge, not only about therapeutic skills and psychological treatment, but also mental health assessment, and the relevant interpersonal skills for effective therapy to take place. I find myself implementing elements of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Dialectical Behaviour Therapy, Schema Therapy, Acceptance Commitment Therapy and Psychodynamic Therapy, whilst always keeping in mind interpersonal processes and risk management.

I pride myself on my career, and especially my passion for Counselling Psychology. I believe it takes an extremely empathic, patient, persistent and strong person to undergo the Counselling Psychology degree, and pursue their career in Counselling Psychology. I am grateful for the component of the degree that required deep, honest and sometimes painful self-reflection in order to fully prepare us for a personally challenging career. I endeavour to become endorsed in Counselling Psychology as soon as possible. I am so looking forward to pursuing such a challenging and rewarding career.

Thanks so much for your time,

Kind regards

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