

19/02/2016

Psychology Board of Australia

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psychconsultation@ahpra.gov.au

Re: Public consultation paper 26: Area of practice endorsements

Dear Board members,

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

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

After reading their current/updated description and list of competency statements (please find attached to this email), it is in my opinion that this update is a more true and accurate reflection of the nature of our training, research, and practice in the specialised domain of counselling psychology.

As a provisional psychologist and practicing for just over three years, I am able to state that I have seen a range of individuals that have presented with a range of complex, severe, and chronic mental health issues. Currently working in a school setting as a provisional psychologist, I see a range of young people who have come out of hospital-based psychiatric care (PMH/Bentley), are suffering from eating disorders, family breakdown/separation, domestic violence, bipolar disorder, anxiety, depression, post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), gender dysphoria, sexual abuse, as well as a range of other mental health illnesses. It is important to state that when working with a young population, the skills taught through the Masters of Psychology (Counselling) course, such as those around eating disorders, bipolar disorder, and PTSD have been most beneficial to myself as the clinician, the school, and to the clients. Many young people are on a range of medication (related to mental illnesses), which was also covered in the Masters of Psychology (Counselling) degree. This knowledge has allowed myself a greater understanding of what the client is suffering from as well as potential side effects of this medication.

In my work I also do group therapy and family therapy. It is very common for there to be issues between students and/or siblings that are attending the same school. Family and group therapy has been a necessary skill and luckily was taught to me in my Masters of Psychology (Counselling) course. By being able to engage clients in group therapy, it allows these individuals to build the necessary skills to assist themselves in their own personal issues and to know that they are not alone.

Therefore, the inclusion of competency statements relating to mental health assessment, case- formulation, and appropriate evidence-based care (including group therapy), is a far better reflection of both the degree I am completing and the reality of my work. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me at

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Jonathan Marginis

Provisionally Registered Psychologist

BSc(Psych) and Currently undertaking: MPsych(Counselling Psychology)