



ACC REGISTER ADVISORY PANEL (RAP) MEETING

Zoom Meeting
Friday, 10 July 2020
1.00pm – 5.00pm

Minutes of Meeting

Attendees

Independent.

Catherine Clarke, Chair RAP (CC)
Doreen Rowland (DR)
Richard Needle (RN)
Heather Churchill (HC)

ACC

Kathy Spooner, ACC Director of Counselling (KS)
Sue Monckton-Rickett, ACC Chair (SMR)
Dawn Sherry, ACC Registrar (DS)
Gwyn Pritchard (GP)

Apologies

None

Prayer / Talk Dawn Sherry (Matthew Ch 6 vs 34) Do not be anxious

1. Conflicts of interest

HC said that she is on the BACP register as a senior accredited registrant member. HC is also head of training at Waverley Abbey College.

GP is a trustee of The Manna House training organisation which is an ACC affiliate.

2. Notes of last meeting and matters arising

Matters Arising from previous minutes.

1 - Page 5 Query - Duty of Candour - The numbering was out of order. KS changed it on the minutes during the meeting.

2 – Item 7 Complaints document - Date should be December 2019, not 2020 as on document.

Thank you to DR for spotting this.

The minutes of the last meeting (24 April 2020) were accepted as a true record by the chair of the RAP.

3. Actions brought forward from last meeting

- (1) FAC/FAC guidance will now be added to the Terms and conditions of membership. ACC want to revamp the *Find a counsellor / supervisor* facility to include a photo of the registrant and to add different sections such as a speciality etc.
- (2) Audit 2020 – this will now be postponed until September 2020.
- (3) Competencies – In progress. See item number 2 below.
- (4) Tracking -To produce ‘tracking catalogue’ of policies, with status and revision cycles. This is still in progress.
- (5) Practice Break Internal processes - ACC to check internal process in regard to practice breaks following HC experience. This has been completed and approved.

Meeting Notes

1. Organisational Update

SMR introduced Gwyn Pritchard who has come on board to support KS. GP will provide 10 hours of support per week initially to the end of September 2020. This will be reviewed by both parties after that date.

- ACC AGM / Training day – This will be done online due to Covid-19. It will take place on Wednesday July 15, 2020 and will be hosted by Robin (a psychiatrist) and his wife Kay Lawrence (a counsellor). They will deliver training on Despair and Suicide in the morning followed by the AGM in the afternoon.
- Conference - This will now be held from the 18 – 22 February 2022 at the Hayes in Swanwick, Derbyshire.
- Covid-19 response – All ACC staff are working from home since March 23 (lockdown day) and may return in August 2020. The arrangements are going well. ACC had been worried about the risk of losing members at this time, but this does not seem to be happening yet. Some members who were due to retire during 2020 have brought the date forward a little.
- The ACC Board are meeting monthly during the Covid-19 epidemic.
- ACC has issued, on the website or by email, a large amount of information, support, and guidance to members such as working online, going back to face-to-face (f2f) counselling plus lots more information. HC (as an ACC registrant) said the guidance provided had been excellent. SMR thanked KS for all her hard work. HC commented that referrals for counselling seemed higher at present, meaning that counsellors can do online counselling, even if they only had done f2f before. Zoom has proved a helpful application to enable the move to working and meeting on-line. There are, however, some counsellors and affiliations who are struggling with finance as fund raising events have been cancelled and most of them rely on donations as fees alone do not cover operating costs.
- CCSS – Up to today (10/07/20) ACC has had 83 clients accessing the online service and asking for counselling due to Covid-19. This past week it was mostly NHS staff asking for help. SMR reported that Iain Duncan-Smith is going to talk to Matt Hancock about ACC. RN praised ACC for setting the CCSS up.
- The Black Lives Matter movement has brought ACC BAME membership into the forefront. CC’s response has been to invite BAME members to meet together in order for them to have space to explore their experiences and importantly to work with ACC to help us become aware of where we are institutionally racist. The first meeting of the forum has been arranged for today (10/07/20) and Chris Williams (ACC Deputy Chair) will be presenting the Board to ‘listen and learn’ rather than leading the forum or setting the agenda. ACC have encouraged members of colour who may not identify as black (for example with south east Asian identity and heritage) to also be part of the forum.
- Affiliate Support – KS and SMR ran an online forum for ACC affiliates. There were 33 affiliations represented. The impact of Covid-19, risks and general questions were discussed.

Affiliates said this was a positive meeting and ACC were seen to be supporting our affiliates. DR said this was innovative praised the ACC for responding quickly to the needs of affiliates.

- The recruitment of an ACC CEO, which had been put on hold earlier in the year, will now go ahead.

2. Core Competencies Framework

This is in progress. The Core Competencies Framework (CCF), which has not yet been published, is the copyright of Heather Churchill. HC would like to have a focus group established to review and critique the competencies. The proposal is to have a first consultation with Christians and others who have expertise in the field of working with faith and spirituality in counselling and psychotherapy, either as academics or practitioners involved in setting up and delivering training courses. KS / HC will agree who will receive an invitation.

3. Counselling Update

PSA Renewal

The PSA register renewal went well, and ACC was awarded registration for another twelve months. The PSA had one commendation for setting up the Covid-19 Crisis – Counselling Support Service, three recommendations and three suggestions which need to be considered prior to the next renewal. The recommendations are:

1. Update the revised risk register to include certain risks that the PSA wish to see addressed by all counselling registers, for e.g., false memory syndrome.
2. Detail the process by which someone can be removed from the register as a result of 'CPD' audit.
3. Conflict of interest policy to be extended to RAP.

The suggestions are:

1. Update complaints process to include lay involvement in panels and to design and document an appeal hearing process.
2. To progress the competency framework.
3. To consider succession planning for RAP.

As a point of clarification KS explained that ACC's audit process included a check on all practice standards (supervision, insurance, record keeping and CPD) and a confirmation from a Christian sponsor – so there was a matrix of responses that the assessor could recommend in each of these areas for an unsatisfactory audit. Also, it remains an uphill task to make some members understand the importance of completing an audit well and seeing it as a developmental opportunity. RN mentioned that an audit is sometimes called a "revalidation process" in some professions (e.g. the NHS) and this may be a helpful frame within which registrants could view the audit process.

CC commented that ACC appears to have built up a good rapport with the PSA. RAP complimented ACC on the register renewal process and the commendation.

SCoPEd Project

ACC have been invited to attend a meeting with the SCoPEd collaborative (BACP, NCS & UKCP) and the other counselling accredited registers. The National Counselling Society have been putting pressure on the SCoPEd collaborative to open the framework to be owned by all the professional counselling bodies.

The RAP members supported ACC's involvement in meetings exploring the widening of participation in the framework as this is likely to be in the best interests of ACC's registrants. The belief is that SCoPEd will become a de facto standard for training and development within the profession, and due to the relative size of the existing collaborative against the other AR's – it is hard to influence the content and outcome unless everyone is involved.

Returning to f2f working

ACC has produced some guidelines for counsellors if they are returning to f2f counselling. The guidance stipulates that a Risk Assessment must be undertaken, and that counsellors must check with their insurance company about returning to f2f working (and particularly to check that they will be insured if a client sues due to contracting Covid-19). Online and phone counselling has mostly gone well and has had a positive response. There are some counsellors who have not done online / phone counselling, so are keen to return to f2f.

Invitation to review UKCP complaints outcome

KS will join a Complaints review forum hosted by the UKCP which will be helpful in finalising and reviewing ACC's complaints process.

CPD Training

ACC plan to do some CPD training over Zoom in working on-line or by telephone. ACC has decided to continue to offer online training in the future (i.e., post-Covid19) as the cost of delivering online training is lower than f2f training, and it also means that delegates from all parts of the UK, and even abroad, can take part.

4. Audits/Accreditations

5.

DS read out her report on audits and accreditations. Audits due in March and April were postponed to May, because of a desire to lift the pressure from registrants and assessors until we know more about the impact of the virus. Those members who were given an extension have now completed, except for one – who has until August 8, 2020 to submit it in to ACC. Audits for August / September have now been sent out to registrants. Two registrants have asked for an extension to October due to family illness. This has been granted. We have received 4 new accreditation applications since our last meeting in April. These are in progress.

Linda Van Peborgh has retired after many years of service to ACC. LVP will still be a consultant if needed. Piedad Prowting who has been on the Training Development and Accreditation Committee (TDAC) and is an assessor will step down from the committee and from her assessing role after an assessors meeting in August. KS will review the role descriptor to ensure that it is aligned with current responsibilities and will include a request for assessors in the next edition of Accord magazine. **KS to action**

6. Complaints

SMR emailed the updated complaints report to RAP before the meeting. SMR summarised the document: ACC have closed 4 complaints and any actions will be completed from these. ACC are working on 7 potential complaints at present: these are at an early initial resolution stage. In terms of common themes for complaints, ACC have noticed that in several complaints the issue of "dual roles" has come up, so the existence of dual roles is definitely a risk factor which needs to be

considered. Recent complaints have been quite varied. RN asked whether it would be possible to have a list of the number and type of complaint from year to year to see if numbers are increasing or decreasing, and whether any common themes were emerging. It would be helpful if RAP could undertake an annual audit on ACC complaints. **SMR to Action**

7. Risks to ACC / Register

ACC need to address that the RAP Panel needs more members, as most members are coming up for renewal (after 3 years).

ACC also need to look at inviting more assessors to join us, as at present we only have 3. The audit and accreditation workloads are increasing and if ACC wants to provide a good efficient turnaround of applications, it is essential we have more assessors. As mentioned above, an advert will go out in the Accord magazine.

8. Process Issues Change

There have been no new policy or process changes. Those process changes that are in the process of being implemented will be supervised by a board member who will take responsibility for a policy or a process. Individual board members “can own it” from conception to finalisation – and any subsequent change control. This will make the process more efficient and will save time. RN’s idea of having a log of where policies and processes in development are in the development and review cycle has been put in place.

9. RAP – Standing items and Concerns

10.

Terms of Reference of RAP - The RAP looked at the revised TOR document for the RAP. In terms of the relationship between RAP and the ACC Board, RAP may make advisory recommendations to the board and the board makes the final decisions. **KS to action changes.**

RAP selection criteria document: The RAP looked at the revised RAP selection criteria. It was agreed that it should include a reference to potential Conflicts of Interest and include that the person is supportive of the RAP terms of reference and of the ethics of the ACC. It was agreed that the RAP should have a separate “Conflict of interest” policy (similar to that drafted for the ACC Board) alongside the selection criteria policy document. **KS to action changes.**

Induction to RAP – it was agreed that RAP need an induction process for when recruiting new RAP panel member, stating that RAP members have an ongoing responsibility to attend all meetings and other responsibilities. Suggestions were discussed and it was agreed that a person spec is needed. **KS to Action.**

A RAP “succession policy” needs to be put in place. What do we want from members applying for membership of the RAP Panel? Suggestions included:

1. Candidates who are otherwise not known to the panel, to write a brief summary stating why they wish to join the RAP and what relevant expertise and experience they can contribute.
2. A reference will need to be provided.
3. In terms of risk/reputation management it is wise to check any public social media presence and postings, as well as any website a candidate has.
4. Invite prospective candidates to a meeting with the chair of RAP, one RAP panel member and one ‘expert’ in the counselling field and/or to the next scheduled RAP meeting.

Any applicants identified in the near future should preferably be someone who has knowledge of patient or consumer advocacy, as this is an area which the current constitution of RAP does not have expertise in.

RAP agreed that the policy also needed to cover the situation where someone needed to be let go from the RAP Panel – i.e., the policy would need to set out how to terminate the role, who would be responsible for the removal of the member, etc. A suggestion was to have the RAP Chair, an ACC executive member and an ACC board member to approve the decision to remove a member of RAP. RAP will advertise in Accord magazine for new RAP panel members as well as using word of mouth to co-opt members. RAP members to consider who they know who may be suitable. A link to RAP on the ACC website plus the TOR will be added. This may increase interest in joining RAP. **KS to Action**

11. Public Engagement

ACC are increasing their profile in public and getting known. SMR has developed a relationship with NHS Public Health England arising from the CCSS scheme. ACC has had meeting with the BAATN (Black African and Asian Therapy Network) and Harmony (mixed race advocacy charity) in addition to our presence in a forum facility by Place2Be which has a focus diversity and inclusion in counselling. KS has been interviewed by John Wilson from On-Line Events for the On-Line events library (which is a counselling CPD provider). Engagement with the public using social media and zoom allows ACC to promote themselves and offer more. Time, resource, and expertise are limited and currently prevent ACC from gaining the benefits that a greater presence on some on-line platforms including social media, could bring.

12. AOB

1. ACC are to offer the RAP Panel free access to the online CPD training being delivered.
2. CC reiterated that she was impressed with all the work ACC has carried out during Covid-19. DR said ACC had done exceptionally well during the crisis.

13. Date of Next Meeting

25 September 2020. Venue / type of meeting (Zoom) will be confirmed nearer the time, dependent upon lockdown guidelines.

Dates for future meetings: 11 December 2020 and 19 March 2021.