

COVID-19 BPC Update: 09 April 2020

Campaign to Maximise the Role of Counselling and Psychotherapy in Response to Covid-19

15 organisations and over 8,000 people have now signed our letter to Matt Hancock, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, and joined our campaign. The letter highlights the critical role of counselling and psychotherapy play in supporting the nation during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. Our three key policy proposals are:

1. Putting in place measures to ensure there is a workforce to deliver a comprehensive mental health response to the Covid-19 crisis
2. Tackling labour market barriers - counsellors and psychotherapists can only work to support others if they themselves are supported
3. Signposting the public to the very best mental health support through a partnership with government and other mental health stakeholders

Thank you to those of you who have signed the petition. There is still time to sign, so if you have not already done so, [please click here and add your name](#). Over 7,000 people have already joined, but we still need your support.

If you are a Member Institution or a provider of counselling and psychotherapy services and would like to support the campaign, please [contact Eva, our Public Affairs and Policy Manager](#).

40 MPs and Peers also wrote to Matt Hancock to call for clear action to safeguard people's mental health. Munira Wilson MP, the Liberal Democrat spokesperson for Health coordinated the signing of the letter that calls for government to acknowledge that mental health is "inextricably linked" to physical wellbeing and to launch a government backed public campaign to signpost the public to appropriate mental health support. The MPs ask that this is matched by a significant government commitment to support mental health charities and front line NHS staff.

Guidance

- We have circulated to all our Member Institutions general guidance about how to facilitate ongoing training during these exceptional times. We have also issued [general guidance and guidance on online/telephone sessions](#)
- The NHS Psychological Professions Network with the BPC and other professional organisations has produced guidance for NHS staff and training organisations. The guidance is complementary to our specific guidance and [can be accessed here](#)
- You can also join the Psychological Professions into Action and their second national online workshop to generate insights on how the psychological professions can respond to the Covid-19 crisis collectively. This platform is open to psychological professionals but also to anyone who wishes to influence psychological healthcare commissioned by the NHS. The online conversation is open until noon on Tuesday 14 April. To join in [please follow this link](#)

Resources

- If registrants wish to share brief psychoanalytically informed reflections about Covid-19, please [email Eva, our Public Affairs and Policy Manager](#). We will collate them and aim to publish them on our website during this difficult time as a way to provide a psychoanalytic thinking space amongst the collective anxiety and uncertainty
- Registrants may find it useful to read Covid-19 reflections and advice/guidance from other psychoanalytic associations. Some are listed below, please get in touch if you would like to add more to the list:
 - [American Psychoanalytic Association](#)
 - [Italian Psychoanalytic Society](#)
 - [Paris Psychoanalytic Association](#)
 - [International Psychoanalytic Association](#)
- Registrants who work within institutions and are now working remotely may find it useful to access [free online CORE measures](#), although Registrants in private practice are unlikely to use of them routinely or at all

NHS Staff Wellbeing

- Matt Hancock, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, has announced a set of new measures aimed at providing mental health support for NHS staff, including formal psychological assessments for staff on the front line, access to counselling sessions and peer support groups. This will be managed by NHS Practitioner Health. Our Registrants with colleagues from other professional organisations are involved and are working to provide support to NHS staff, patients and their families as well as supervision to therapists as we move through the next few months and beyond.

How to Contact Us

Our team is now working remotely. We are operating as usual but, as we adapt to the new working arrangements, please bear with us if there are any delays in replying to your queries.

We are doing everything we can to make this transition as smooth as possible and, to help us, we would be grateful if you would [contact us by email in the first instance](#). Please provide your name, contact details including a phone number and your query. We will aim to respond within 48 business hours, Monday to Friday (except public holidays, 10 and 13 April).

This is the latest in our regular updates to support you during the Covid-19 crisis. Previous updates are [available on our website](#).