

COUPLE THERAPY FOR DEPRESSION

REVISIONS TO TRAINING ENTRY CRITERIA

May 2015

Background:

The **Couple Therapy for Depression Practitioner Training** was originally commissioned in 2010 by the NHS as a short CPD top-up for qualified couple therapists of specific evidence-based techniques to treat depression in the context of relationship distress or where there were clear advantages in including the depressed person's partner in the treatment.

It is a competency-based training which assumes both Generic and Basic Couple Therapy competencies have been achieved and assessed prior to joining the training. It comprises 5 days of teaching and 24 sessions of supervision of 2, 20-session training cases usually extending over 9 months. Assessment is based on progression over the course of supervision with participants submitting 3 recordings of sessions per case (6 in total) which are rated against the competence framework for specific techniques identified for treating depression through couple therapy. The competency framework is available on the UCL CORE website: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/clinical-psychology/CORE/Couple-Therapy-for-Depression_framework.htm

In response to concerns from commissioners and IAPT teams that there were insufficient qualified couple therapists (or equivalent) available to train to meet workforce demands, TCCR developed the **Foundation Course** in 2012 which follows the Basic Couple Therapy competencies. This course provides a route to entry into the 5 day Practitioner course and is a 10 day taught course over 4 months enabling staff to develop confidence in seeing couples. It is assessed by a portfolio of evidence of learning and a statement by an NHS couple work supervisor that the practitioner has completed 50 hours of clinical work with couples and is ready to undertake the Practitioner Training.

Despite the provision of the Foundation Course there appears to be ongoing concerns about workforce provision and access to the Couple Therapy for Depression Practitioner Training. In order to address these concerns the following proposal for revisions is made which should enable wider access to the training:

1. FOUNDATION COURSE

The proposal is to restructure and shorten this training to deliver it over 8 days rather than 10. The course would now run across 4 months and portfolio requirements would remain the same.

There should be funding from HEE for practitioners to take up this Foundation training together with the "backfilling" of staff time to allow them to attend and to undertake the clinical and supervision requirements of the course without detrimentally affecting their work place.

2. COUPLE THERAPY FOR DEPRESSION PRACTITIONER TRAINING

The proposal is to widen access to this training by enabling therapists who do not hold a couple therapy qualification but who are able to evidence training and/or demonstrable experience of working with more than one patient in the room (for example, those who have done group or family work, or who have done partner-assisted CBT). Applicants will be considered on a case-by-case basis by training staff at TCCR, based on their clinical experience and training. Ideally they would have had some core learning about couples eg attended training days or workshops, but this would not be essential. As these practitioners will not have passed the Foundation course there will need to be some assessment of their Basic Couple Therapy competence alongside the existing course assessment requirements.

Next Foundation Courses:

September – December 2015, London

TBC 2015-16, Leeds

Next Couple Therapy for Depression trainings: 20th September, 1st, 2nd, 7th & 8th October 2015, London.

7th, 8th, 9th, 16th, & 17th December 2015, London.

Early 2016, Leeds.

In addition there are:

Couple Therapy for Depression Supervisor Trainings (1 day plus 8-9 months consultation to peer supervision groups) and **Couple Therapy for Depression ‘top-up’** days offered on a rolling schedule and on-demand region by region. Supervisor training is open to therapists who have successfully completed the practitioner training and who are already qualified as supervisors in another modality or who have extensive supervisory experience. The ‘top-up’ days are further CPD days on specific aspects of the Couple Therapy for Depression model and are available to any practitioner or supervisor accredited in the model. Places may be available for trainees at the end of their practitioner training.

3. TRAINING IN COUPLE RELATIONSHIPS FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING PRACTITIONERS

We propose a 1-day course to enable PWP's to better assess people presenting with a diagnosis of depression where they have a couple relationship that might be precipitating or maintaining the illness, and to have a better understanding of the therapy for which they are referring them. This will add to understanding of how couple therapy fits into the range of therapies on offer in IAPT, their potential suitability for partners, and make for more appropriate and successful referrals. In addition, this day would help PWP's to better understand the links between mental ill-health and family relationship stresses. This CPD course would be available across the country.