

Report to NZAP Council from the NZAP Advanced Clinical Practice (ACP) Committee

From: John O'Connor, ACP Chairperson on behalf of the ACP committee.

Date: 19 February 2022

Introduction

The period since the November 2021 NZAP Council meeting has been a time of productivity and renewal for the ACP committee.

Committee Membership Changes

Alisa Hirschfeld continues to develop the role of registrar as well as continuing as secretary, Sue Morrison has continued as the receiver and coordinator of initial applications to the ACP. I remain as chair, and Diane Zwimpfer remains as a committee member. Sadly, we farewelled David Cartwright as a committee member. We thank David for his thoughtful contributions and hope he may one day return. We are delighted that Verity Armstrong and Catriona Cairns have accepted our invitation to join the committee and look forward to their contributions. Welcome Verity and Catriona.

New ACP applicants

The ACP continues to receive increasingly frequent enquiries regarding training within the ACP pathway. Sue Morrison has fielded these many enquiries, with four new candidates to be interviewed in late February, March, and April 2022. We are confident that the ACP will continue to receive regular enquiries. We currently have 19 candidates in training, an increase of one from November. In addition, one candidate is scheduled to sit their final ACP panel interview on 27 February.

Consequences of the pandemic for the ACP

The pandemic has had two significant consequences for the ACP. The first is that with some regret, we have decided, that for the next few months, panel interviews for the ACP (both initial interviews, and final panels) will need to be held online. This has increased the workload for ACP members in organising these panels but has been a necessary outcome as a consequence of the pandemic. In addition, following an enquiry from an ACP candidate, and one person preparing to be interviewed, we have made the decision to advise applicants, that in entering the ACP, they need to be aware that there is a new requirement that during the time the ACP, 60% of their clinical work needs to be undertaken face-to-face with clients. The rationale for this being that, whilst we want to be flexible, and accept the need for candidates to undertake a significant amount of online work during the pandemic, as an ACP committee we also believe that to develop as a psychotherapist, candidates need to undertake a significant amount of in-person work with clients.

National ACP supervisors' group via zoom

The ACP are very pleased that we have now initiated a new National ACP supervisors' group via zoom, to which all ACP supervisors are welcome to attend. This is intended not to replace, but to supplement the regional ACP supervisors' groups and to provide additional guidance and support for ACP supervisors and their work. This appears to have been very well received. We had very good attendance for our first meeting earlier in February this year, and the group will be meeting once every two months throughout the year, facilitated by Diane Zwimpfer and John O'Connor with the support of the rest of the ACP committee.

ACP and the Psychotherapy Board of Aotearoa New Zealand (PBANZ)

As reported in my November 2021 report, PBANZ have released its finalised accreditation standards for psychotherapy training providers in September 2021. These standards are the standards that will be applied to the process of accreditation of training providers such as the ACP. Overall, the accreditation standards appear at first reading to place significant additional demands, particularly administrative demands, on the ACP as a small training provider. We are hopeful of being able to meet the requirements of these accreditation standards but recognise this will require considerable work and there will be challenges. We have therefore liaised with PBANZ and are pleased that PBANZ have offered to meet with representatives of the ACP to explore the requirements of the accreditation standards for the ACP. The Board also offered to meet with representatives of He Ara Māori ACP. However, Waka Oranga, in consultation with John O'Connor, decided not to take up this invitation, but have agreed that John will communicate with Waka Oranga about the meeting with PBANZ. The meeting is tentatively scheduled for Monday 21 March, 3 PM to 5 PM via zoom.

Conclusion

The ACP committee remains dedicated to maintaining the integrity and standard of the ACP training pathway. The regularity of enquiries regarding this training pathway, and the quality of candidates demonstrated in final panels and in initial interviews, is very satisfying. We are therefore aiming to ensure that the ACP will continue to be a rich and valuable learning process for psychotherapists in Aotearoa New Zealand