

APS Riverina Branch Newsletter September 2014

This Riverina Branch communication will be sent out to all members who provided their email address to the branch. In order to reduce the number of emails sent out, most communications for the group will be collated and sent out via this method. If you wish to unsubscribe from all Riv branch emails please contact the editor mpfinnegan@bigpond.com.

Newsletter Information

We plan to have one more issue of the APS Riverina Branch Newsletter in a PDF format for December 2014.

Please email resources like professional local events, narratives of your own professional experience, narratives about a study tour, and any other information you consider relevant for our membership to our Secretary/Editor Mr. Martin Finnegan mpfinnegan@bigpond.com

Chair's Message

By Karl Wiener

Dear APS Riverina Branch Members,

The winter session has been a very busy time for the Riverina Branch Committee for organising two CPD activities and one Student Career Information event. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Riverina Branch committee for their hard work in making these activities a success.

In early June Ass/Professor Time Hannan presented a full day workshop on the diagnosis and treatment of ADHD. This works shop was attended by 27 clinicians. In mid August Ass/Professor Rocco Crino provided an insightful full day workshop on the theoretical models underpinning the treatments of anxiety disorders including OCD and PTSD. Twenty –two clinicians were provided with a fast revision of relevant theoretical models and the practical applications of these models in the treatment of different anxiety conditions. I want to thank the two excellent presenters for the informative and mentally stimulating workshops.

The APS Riverina Branch committee did not forget the local student population in providing information and insights into the challenges of becoming a registered psychologist. This 'Student Career Information Afternoon' co-sponsored by CSU School of Psychology and the APS Riverina Branch was attended by 27 students from La Trobe and Charles Sturt University. A number of local clinicians from various fields of psychology shared their knowledge and experiences. Following an overview of undergraduate training by Dr Gene Hodgins, students also received an overview of the training requirements post 4th year university

training. Kyah Hester, a recent graduate from the provisional training program demonstrated the do-ability of this program, and the need for being very organised and structured, and having the support of both the supervisor and employer. Two current provisional psychologists working for Junee corrections provided additional information of their experiences of the provisional 4+2 program as it is applied to the forensic setting.

Experienced clinicians including Debbie Irons presented from the DoC's perspective while John Dean related his experience working within the Drug & Alcohol and Community Mental Health fields with NSW Health, and John Sheppard shared his forensic experiences. Apart from sharing work specific challenges, all speakers provided valuable information about the recruitment processes for provisional psychologists within their respective services.

Although, the Riverina Branch will not sponsor any workshops for 2014, you may have noticed that the Riverina Branch is working together with the Albury-Wodonga Branch in marketing local CDP activities. We hope that this cooperation will provide greater access to local CPD training.

Annual General Meeting – Save the Date!

Finally, I would like direct your attention to our next AGM on **19th of November 2014 @ 5:30 PM** at the Riverine Club. We have invited Dr Luke Johnson, Consultant Psychiatrist as our speaker. Luke's topic for his talk is 'Medication in Psychotherapy'. Apart from providing this presentation, Luke indicated that he is also very interested in networking with local psychologists.

The AGM is also an opportunity for APS Branch members to get actively involved in formulating the Riverina Branch's direction including representing the local branch, and the planning and organisation of CPD activities.

For the next AGM I invite members to self nominate for a number of vacant positions including:

- Branch Chair position
- Treasurer position
- Committee member positions
- Student representative positions

Further information and self-nomination forms will be posted through the bulk email. Furthermore, I am happy to provide information about any of these positions on an individual basis-just email me on Riverina_branch_chair@yahoo.com

I wish you all a great spring season. Try to take some time out to enjoy the fragrances and colourful blossoming of flowers and blooms the of trees. I look forward seeing you at our AGM on 19th of November 2014.

Dr Karl Wiener
APS Riverina Branch Chair
Riverina_branch_chair@yahoo.com

Treasurer's Report

By Gerald Wurf

The last financial statement from the APS was received on the 14/07/2014. The statement was for the period ending May, 2014. At that time the Branch held a balance of \$679.99. End of financial year processing by the APS has meant statements for June, and July are delayed, however, these should be forwarded in the next week. The Branch has been cautious with the expenditure incurred from our two recent workshops. With the annual allocation from the APS for the 2014/2015 financial year, the Branch budget will be in a stronger position when the next statements arrive.

The APS is enhancing its financial records system. The new system will allow branches to accurately track income and expenditure associated with single events. We look forward to this initiative. After several years in this position I will stand down at the November AGM. I would be very happy to talk with any member of the Branch who is interested in nominating for the position of Treasurer.

Report on Student Information Day held at CSU

On August 13, the APS and Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga held a Student Information Afternoon at the University. Twenty-five students turned up from 1st, 2nd and 3rd year, with students also travelling up from La Trobe University in Albury.

The afternoon was divided into two sections:

The process of becoming a psychologist

- > Gene Hodgins spoke about possible career opportunities for 3 and 4 year graduates and what was required by the University to be accepted into 4th year.
- > Karl Weiner spoke about the pathway to becoming a registered psychologist
- > Kyah Hester spoke of surviving her supervision, what was required to meet those competencies and moving into work as a registered psychologist.

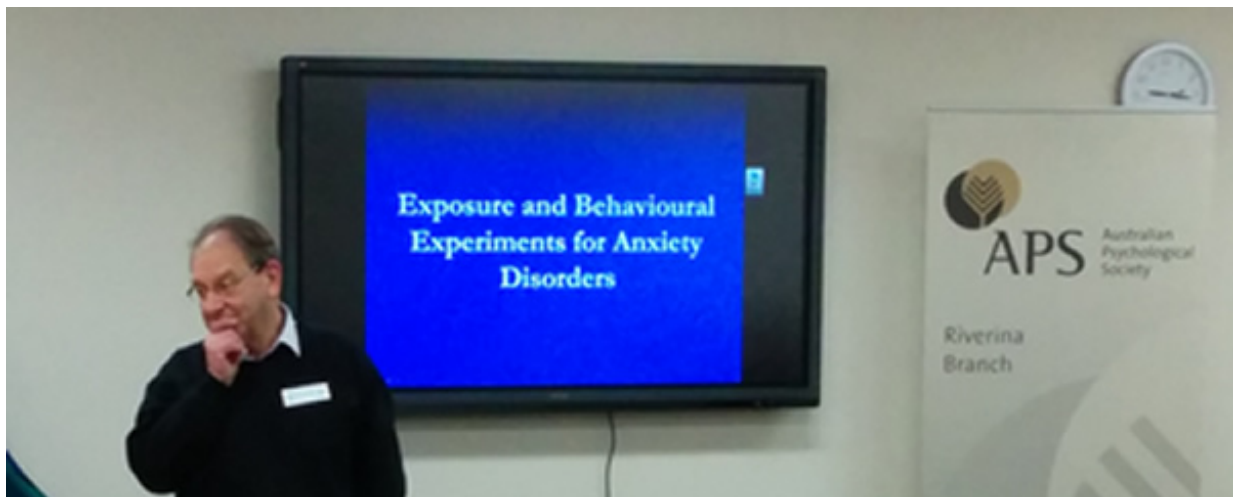
The second part of the afternoon involved psychologists speaking about their area of interest/speciality.

- > John Dean, the Manager of Temora Drug and Alcohol Services and Mental Health Services shared his insights into working in health settings
- > Debbie Irons spoke of working as the Senior Psychologist for FACS, Wagga Wagga
- > John Sheppard, Senior Psychologist at Junee Correctional Centre, brought with him two of his team, a psychologist with 5 years experience and a psychologist under supervision who had just commenced at the Centre. They shared their experiences in working in forensic psychology.

In speaking with attendees afterwards, students felt that it had clarified for them what they needed to achieve at University to enter into the area they wished to work in, and gave them more information about being a psychologist instead of just studying psychology.

Lisa Taylor

Report on Rocco Crino's Workshop:



Overview and Summary

This workshop focussed on the role of Exposure and Behavioural Experiments in the treatment of OCD and Anxiety Disorders, as well as reviewing the essential features of these conditions. Although Exposure has long been viewed as an integral part of the behavioural treatment of OCD and Anxiety Disorders, the role of behavioural experiments has been more closely associated with cognitive interventions. The either/or argument is academic, and of little utility to practising clinicians. The purpose of this workshop was to promote skill acquisition in the

design and implementation of these procedures in an integrated fashion, rather than take a 'wave' driven approach.

“Change the behaviour and the cognitions will follow”

- You can't just 'unthink' anxiety- changing thoughts alone isn't enough
- You don't unlearn existing anxiety behaviours- exposure promotes new learning, not elimination of prior learning (which explains the return of fear in certain situations)
- Successful treatment of anxiety involves learning new adaptive ways AND new adaptive behaviours

Diagnosis & Formulation

- Diagnosis assists in selecting the type of exposure work (eg. Interoceptive for panic disorder), but the formulation provides the foundation for individually tailored treatment.
- Eliciting maintaining factors is essential- “dig until you are satisfied”
- You need to know what the client is doing overtly and covertly to maintain the cycle
- The formulation is flexible and dynamic and is tested out within sessions and homework tasks
- “Providing strategies without a formulation is just a cookbook approach”

An Interactional Model of Anxiety

- 4 elements of this model are interrelated and non-linear: Thoughts (automatic), physiology, behavior and moods/feelings/emotions.
- You can not specify causation from any one factor
- From the behavioural perspective, targeting the beliefs and behaviours collapses the anxiety cycle

Types of Exposure

- In vivo

- Imaginal
- Interoceptive
- Virtual Reality
- Systematic Desensitization
- Behavioural Experiments

Points to remember

1. All need to target the core fear- probability and cost
2. All need to provide the opportunity to disconfirm the fear
3. Exposure can be therapist-directed or self-directed
4. Once decided upon should be done asap so client doesn't have time to overthink

Subjective Units of Distress (SUDs)

- Various ways to measure this –formal and informal
- 0-10, 0-100, ladders, faces
- Efficient way to easily communicate distress levels at a given time
- Need to check in on this regularly throughout exposure work
- Rule of thumb – anxiety should reduce by 50% before moving onto the next step on the hierarchy

The Rationale for exposure work

- Suggested you use the interactional model of anxiety as part of your psychoeducation – “Treatment will target the beliefs and behaviours to collapse the cycle”
- “Don't go down the what if... path” – check in on the clients' experience of anxiety (the costs) and if they would like to change their experience of it. Educate them that change may involve learning to tolerate uncertainty re the 'what if'
- Highlight the evidence base (what research our experience tells us)
- Acknowledge likely temporary discomfort for potential long term benefit

SPECIAL FEATURE: PSYCHOLOGY AT JUNEE CORRECTIONAL CENTRE

The psychology team at Junee Correctional Centre consists of John Sheppard, Senior Psychologist, Samantha Ainsworth, Registered Psychologist, and two Provisional Psychologists, Emma McMahon and Amber Ryan.

It is a very busy work environment with over 850 inmates in a privately owned prison housing both medium and minimum security inmates. Junee Correctional Centre is one of the largest correctional centres in the state.

The psychology roles are very broad in their scope and include mental health assessments, counselling and therapeutic interventions, facilitation of psycho educational and therapeutic training programs, risk of harm assessments, and the administration of a variety of mainly cognitive and personality related psychological assessment tools.

Initial interview assessments are also completed for the referral of inmates to the Violent Offenders Therapeutic Program and Sex Offender Programs held at other correctional centres.

On occasions psychologists can also be required to complete detailed reports for courts or the State Parole Authority regarding issues such as risk of re-offending.

Psychology work is conducted in a variety of settings in which inmates can attend for appointments in the main Education Building or the psychologist may see an inmate in the interview office within the inmate accommodation Units themselves. The roles require a willingness to respond to psychological issues as they arise and to be able to move around the Centre as necessary.

The psychology section is part of the broader Offender Services Department which consists of Offender Development Officers facilitating illicit drug use related training programs, Resettlement, the Learning Resource Centre, a Family Liaison Officer, the Cultural Centre, Case Management, Chaplaincy and a large TAFE Unit.

When I spoke with Samantha, the Registered Psychologist, she said that she finds the workplace interesting with a variety of presenting problems and good scope to apply knowledge in a range of areas. She went on to say that she personally prefers the assessment and report writing parts most of all but enjoys all aspects of the role.

Emma who is in the final six months of her provisional registration feels that it is a fantastic learning environment at the Centre as there is such a wide range of presenting issues. There is an opportunity to provide interventions not only for specific mental health disorders but also around issues of separation, adjustment, and reintegration. She indicated that she has enjoyed being able to provided both

individual and group based interventions and being given an opportunity to confidently build her skills and knowledge in a variety of ways.

John Sheppard

CONSULTING ROOM SUITABLE FOR PSYCHOLOGIST/COUNSELLOR OR OTHER HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL. Modern, clean, furnished room available on an hourly, half day or full day basis. The room is available during business hours, as well as after hours and on weekends. The facilities include waiting area, bathroom and kitchen, as well as access to a meeting room by arrangement. Excellent location in the CBD. Disabled access. Easy access to parking. Rates negotiable. All enquiries to Alexandra Faulkner - 0410 584 942.

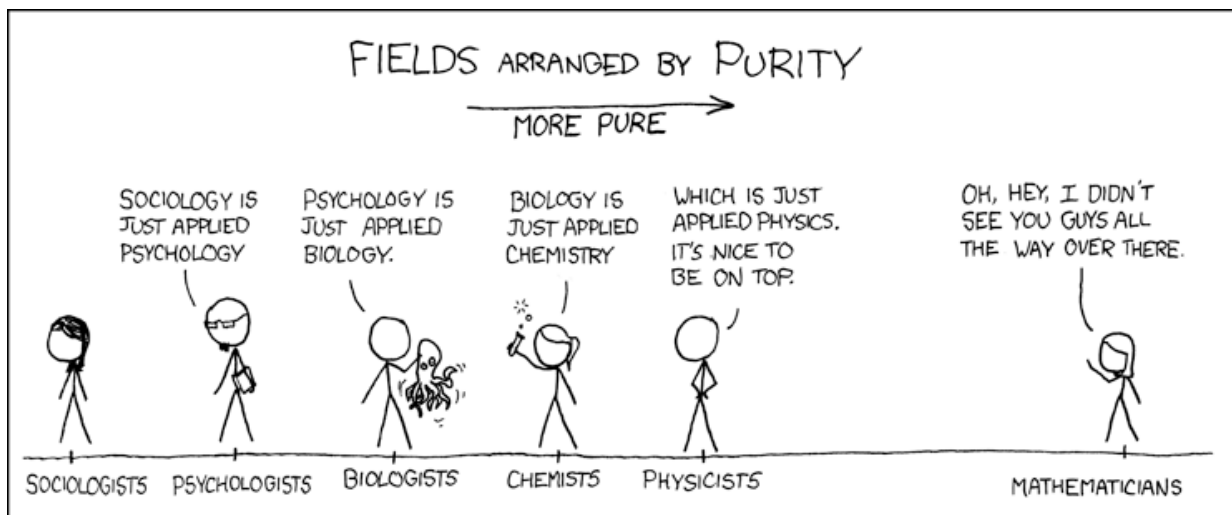


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