Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner (PWP)

What do PWPs do?

PWP's deliver Low Intensity CBT. CBT is based on the principle that your thoughts, emotions, behaviours and physical symptoms are interlinked. CBT looks at giving you tools and strategies to change any thoughts and behaviours that contributing to feeling depressed or anxious.

As a PWP:

- You will conduct Wellbeing Assessments where you will get an overview of the clients presenting problem and decide on the most suitable course of treatment for the client (incl. if the client is more suited to secondary care)

- You will work with a range of presentations such as Depression, GAD, phobias, OCD, health anxiety, stress, sleep difficulties/insomnia and be able to assess for PTSD.

- You will deliver low intensity CBT interventions for depression and anxiety such as: Psychoeducation, Behavioural Activation, Cognitive Restructuring, Graded Exposure and Problem Solving

- You will deliver CBT across a range of modalities including: telephone, online, groups & face to face

- You will be able to conduct accurate risk assessments at every session to determine a patient's level of risk and their ability to keep themselves safe

- You will have regular mandatory supervision including Line Management (monthly), Case Management Supervision (weekly) and Clinical Skills Supervision (biweekly)

- Where appropriate you will liaise and signpost patients to external agencies including housing, police, local authority, employers and employment support workers

How do I train?

You will attend University of Reading (or any other training organisation that offers the course) and complete a Postgraduate/Graduate Certificate in Evidence based Psychological Treatments (IAPT Pathway).

The course will consist of:

- 1 day at university a week learning how to conduct assessments, assess for different presentations, deliver Low intensity interventions and how to conduct risk assessments

- You'll have a range of assessments including role plays, audio recordings of a session with a patient, written case reports & reflections, presentation and Clinical Portfolio Outcomes (CPOs)
- 19 study days across the year
- Course is pass or fail
- Accredited by BPS

You will complete the course along side working in an IAPT service

Entry Requirements/ Previous Experienced Required

- Evidence of further study (essential), degree in related field/training in nursing/psychological therapy/OT, social work (desirable)
- Experience of working with people in community setting with mental health condition for at least 12 months
- Must be able to drive with access to a car
- Understanding of mild-moderate anxiety/depression
- Be able to demonstrate you can actively listen, have empathy, good verbal/non-verbal cues

Career Prospects

As a PWP your main career prospects include:

- Senior PWP – supervising and mentoring team leads
- Team Lead – managing a team of PWP
- Progressing to High Intensity CBT after 2 years of being a qualified PWP

Many PWPs also progress on to the clinical or counselling psychology doctorates (see separate leaflet)

Any other relevant information

Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) services provide evidence-based psychological therapies to adults (17+) with anxiety disorders and depression. IAPT is based on a stepped-care model where patients are offered the least intrusive intervention first, For example, patients with mild to moderate depression or anxiety will be offered treatment at step 2 delivered by a PWP first. Those who do not fully recover can be stepped up to high-intensity treatment. NICE guidance recommends that patients with more severe depression and those with social anxiety disorder or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) should receive high-intensity interventions first.

Useful Texts

Reach Out Manual (https://cedar.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/schoolofpsychology/cedar/documents/Reach_Out_3rd_edition.pdf) – Manual to Support the Delivery of Training for Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners Delivering Low Intensity Interventions

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