

Dr Suzanne Conboy-Hill
Consultant Psychologist for People with Learning Disabilities

Brighton College of Art 1967 – 68, student. Led to work designing packaging for Mary Quant cosmetics and later as PA/designer with Music Hire Group, Leeds.

North Middlesex Hospital 1971-74. Student nurse. Founded Student and Pupil Nurses' Association.

Guys hospital 1974 post registration student to undertake fast track RMN course leaving to focus on university application.

Kings College Hospital 1975 initially as agency staff nurse then as full time member of intensive care team. Continued part time (nights and vacations) while an undergraduate/doctoral candidate. Often in charge of unit.

Nursing Agency 1978-82. Specialist intensive care.

University of London Goldsmiths' College undergraduate 1975-78. Secretary of the Psychology Society during 1976-77 Awarded a BA (2:1) in Psychology. Dissertation: 'Early handling and adult behaviour in the rat'.

University College London 1978-81 MRC funded Doctoral research in Psychology (neurosciences and animal behaviour) with Henry Plotkin. PhD awarded 1982. Dissertation: 'Early Experience and Adult Behaviour in the Rat'. Declined to publish due to increasing concerns about animal rights issues.

Institute of Psychiatry/Bethlem-Maudsley Hospitals 1982-84. Clinical trainee funded by the Bethlem-Maudsley Scholarship. Awarded MPhil in 1984. Dissertation: 'Patterns of Behaviour in the Care of Terminal and Non Terminal Patients: an examination of nurses' death anxiety and its relationship to social and task directed behaviour'

Interpolated Work.

- Ø nursing part-time as above

- Ø Tutor/Lecturer ULGC 1978-81

- Ø Captain, Territorial Army, QARANC 1979-80

- Ø Tutor/Examiner University of London Diploma in Psychology between 1978-1986

- Ø Tutor WEA between 1978-86

- Ø Lisa Sainsbury Foundation 1984-88. workshop training for nurses in terminal care including listening skills, breaking bad news, caring for the carer, sexuality and disability

Dr Suzanne Conboy-Hill
Consultant Psychologist for People with Learning Disabilities

- Ø University of Sussex locum lecturer to MSW course and supervisor to four dissertation candidates 1993/4.
- Ø Field Supervisor to MA/PhD candidate from University of Surrey.
- Ø Supervisor to Doctoral Dissertation candidates with Salomons Clinical Training course
- Ø Expert Witness. Regular and relatively frequent assessments and testimony for both Family and Crown Courts relating to parenting potential, false confession, veracity of claims (to have learning disability/literacy problems) amongst others. Organised training day on learning disabilities for judges, solicitors and barristers.

Clinical Psychologist, learning disabilities service, Bromley, Kent 1984-88. With Alexis Waitman, established psychotherapy and counselling as legitimate therapies for people with learning disabilities. This may have been the first such community service in the UK outside the Tavistock Centre. Led to publication of 'Psychotherapy and Mental Handicap' (Waitman and Conboy-Hill 1992, Sage) and a number of subsequent workshops and presentations nationally, including to the then Counselling Section of the BPS of which I had been a member for some years, supporting its move to Divisional status.

Mid Downs learning Disability Service 1988-89. Principal Psychologist.

Brighton Health Authority, then South Downs Health NHS Trust, now Sussex Partnership Trust 1989 - present, as Top Grade then Consultant Psychologist. Brought the principal of counselling and psychotherapy for clients to both posts, successfully establishing this in Brighton and taking counsellors in training from local courses.

Further Training

- Ø Advanced certificate in Counselling Skills: Crawley College 1995. Taken to support chartership in counselling psychology and to offer appropriate supervision to clinical and counselling trainees.
- Ø
- Ø MSc Forensic and Legal Psychology University of Leicester. Awarded with Distinction 1998. Dissertation: 'The Cognitive Interview and Adults with Learning Disabilities'. This training supported assessment and treatment of offenders and victims referred to the service. The research in particular has had far reaching effects in underpinning our approach to consent and leading to the development of an interview assessment protocol for evaluating capacity.
- Ø

Dr Suzanne Conboy-Hill
Consultant Psychologist for People with Learning Disabilities

- Ø Diploma in Web Design (The Learning Library) and membership of the Association of IT Professionals 2005. (one year p/t). Taken following an earlier course with the National Distance Learning College in IT skills (Word, Access and Excel to NVQ level 4) to expand on capabilities with a view to developing easy access web material for people with learning disabilities and to support communication across a larger integrated service.

- Ø Diploma in Professional Management 2005. One hundred hour course recommended by the CBI for working managers. Taken to develop and improve management skills in the light of an expanding psychology team membership.

- Ø I have also attended day and half day courses on clinical supervision (Salomon's, Roehampton), research methodology (RDSU), research supervision (Salomon's) , new ways of working (Salomon's), psychotherapy (SPT local), and others. All gave certificate of attendance.

I am the author of more than 30 papers and presentations, including the assessment of parenting potential, cognitive interviewing and assessment for legal purposes and I co-edited the book 'Psychotherapy and Mental Handicap' (Sage 1992). I have also written for magazines on animal behaviour with reference to disability issues and recently reviewed selected research contributing to the debate on vaccinations.

I authored the CLDT response to the Mental Capacity Bill Scrutiny committee and since 2000, have provided training in the assessment of capacity to multidisciplinary staff in East Sussex. Training for psychologists in Brighton & Hove took place in January 2007 and further sessions are planned with other staff groups.

I am co-author with Professor Jane Ireland of the BPS response to the government consultation on human trafficking.

Present Post

Within a multi disciplinary team, my present responsibilities include the training of Doctoral clinical trainees and trainee counsellors from courses such as the Institute of Psychiatry, Salomons Centre and local College based counselling diploma courses in addition to management of a team of clinicians and behaviour support specialists. While therapy is a key provision, the service works to offer preventative strategies, employing psychological theory as an investigative tool for evaluating and alleviating environments leading to or maintaining dysfunction.

We aim to use our skills creatively and flexibly to provide a supportive and therapeutic service to clients but, more than that, we recognise our role in providing

Dr Suzanne Conboy-Hill
Consultant Psychologist for People with Learning Disabilities

care and continuity to people whose lives can be fragmented and unhappy. This challenges notions of boundaries and professional positioning so that ethics and consent are at the centre of our practice.

I have established a small research group which aims to generate interest in research activity among clinicians by encouraging questions and demonstrating ways in which these can become survey, audit, evaluation or research projects. This has generated a number of service-user focus groups, a paper describing the paucity of rehabilitative and palliative care provision for our client group, and projects designed to examine preventative care services and the use of virtual reality in both recovery/well-being and capacity consent issues.