

ALLIANCE

For Counselling and Psychotherapy

Against State Regulation
<http://www.allianceforcandp.org/>

Many psychotherapists and counsellors are disturbed and unconvinced by current proposals for state regulation through the Health Professions Council (HPC). Nearly 1300 have already signed a petition to that effect. Many feel that, for the sake of the profession and of their clients, they will be unable to comply with such regulation and will not join the proposed register. This is a message to the entire profession, inviting you to join with us in a cross-modality alliance to fight these plans.

These are three of the ten points made in the full statement on our website.

- The argument for regulation by a state-sponsored body has never been made, but is simply assumed. No research demonstrates widespread abuse by practitioners; neither research nor argument shows that regulation lessens abuse. Although the demand for regulation emphasises 'evidence-based practice', it is itself not evidence-based.

- HPC regulation cannot be separated from the creation of National Occupational Standards; Skills for Health definitions of 'competences'; NICE clinical guidelines privileging a single 'evidence-based' therapy; and the so-called Improved Access to Psychological Therapies scheme. All these developments will

reduce access to long-term, relationally oriented therapy and counselling; reduce client choice; medicalise the field; rigidify training and inflate its cost, and hence the cost of therapy, making access even harder for the economically disadvantaged. HPC regulation is also likely to exclude many part-timers and volunteers, and make it harder for counselling services using volunteers to survive.

- HPC regulation would only be justifiable if the benefits outweigh the drawbacks. We believe that the damage will be profound, and the benefits dubious and minor. There are clear alternatives available – some of them already operating in the USA and Australia - which avoid the problems, but no effort has been made to examine them.

In this situation we are unable to stay silent. Our political, professional and personal conscience compels us to become guardians of the diversity and independence of psychotherapy and counselling, and to speak out on behalf of our own right to practise ethically and according to our best judgement; of the rich traditions of the discipline and of future generations of practitioners; and also of the clients who might seek to use our services now and in the future – their right of choice and their autonomy and responsibility.

We will therefore do everything we can to oppose HPC regulation, and to alert others to the dangers involved. If these proposals become a reality, we do not expect to be able to consent, and are considering a position of principled non-compliance.

To state your agreement with this document, or to find out more about the Alliance for Counselling and Psychotherapy and the active steps we are taking to oppose HPC regulation, contact info@allianceforcandp.org

A Conference organised by the Alliance for Counselling and Psychotherapy

AGAINST STATE REGULATION : THE NEXT STEPS

Sunday April 5th 2009 11am-5pm
University of London Union (Upper Hall), Malet Street, WC1 (by Waterstones).

with **Brian Thorne, Haya Oakley and Andrew Samuels**

Collection to cover expenses (suggested minimum £10, trainees, students and unwaged free).

Please bring food and drink for the day - we can't consume it on the premises but there are many parks and eating places nearby.

Contact us at conference@allianceforcandp.org to let us know that you are coming.

Alliance web-site:
<http://www.allianceforcandp.org/>