

## Arts Therapists

This document details suggested changes to the profession-specific standards for arts therapists.

The PLG has considered the following information with specific reference to arts therapists:

- (i) Registration Assessors' questionnaires (one assessor responded, page 4)
- (ii) Visitors' questionnaires (PLG papers, 7<sup>th</sup> March 2006)
- (iii) Professional bodies' questionnaires (the responses of the British Association of Art therapists and British Association of Dramatherapists, pages 9 and 10)
- (iv) Education providers questionnaires (page 3)

This document incorporates the suggestions made in relation to the arts therapists standards (where possible) and makes recommendations to the PLG for changes, where appropriate.

The profession-specific standards are shown in italics. Where the PLG is required to make a decision in relation to a standard, this is shown in the grey shaded areas.

The suggestions detailed previously for the generic standards are included in this draft.

### **1a: Professional autonomy and accountability**

Registrant arts therapists must:

1a.1 be able to practise within the legal and ethical boundaries of their profession

- understand what is required of them by the Health Professions Council
- understand the need to respect, and so far as possible uphold, the rights, dignity and autonomy of every patient including their role in the **preventative**, diagnostic and therapeutic process

*- understand the role of the art, music or drama therapist in different settings*

1a.2 be able to practise in a non-discriminatory manner

a.3 be able to maintain confidentiality and obtain informed consent

*- be aware that the concepts of confidentiality and informed consent extend to illustrative records such as video and audio recordings, paintings, digital images and other art work*

1a.4 be able to exercise a professional duty of care

**1a.5: be able to practise as an autonomous professional, exercising their own professional judgement**

- be able to assess a situation, determine the nature and severity of the problem and call upon the required knowledge and experience to deal with the problem
- be able to initiate resolution of problems and be able to exercise personal initiative
- **know the limits of their practice and when to seek advice or refer to another professional**
- **recognise that they are personally responsible for and must be able to justify their decisions**

1a.6 recognise the need for effective self-management of workload **and resources** and be able to practise accordingly

*- understand the value of therapy in developing insight and self-awareness through their own personal experience*

1a.7 understand the obligation to maintain fitness to practise

- understand the importance of maintaining health and care for themselves

*- recognise that the obligation to maintain fitness for practice includes engagement in their own arts-based process*

1a.8 understand the need for career-long self-directed learning

**1b: Professional relationships**

Registrant arts therapists must:

1b.1 know the professional and personal scope of their practice and be able to make referrals

1b.2 be able to work, where appropriate, with other professionals, support staff, patients, clients and users, and their relatives and carers

- understand the need to build and sustain professional relationships as both an independent practitioner and collaboratively as a member of a team
- understand the need to engage patients, clients, users and carers in planning and evaluating diagnostics, treatments and interventions to meet their needs and goals

*- recognise the role of arts therapists and the contribution they can make to health and social care*

1b.3 be able to contribute effectively to work undertaken as part of a multi-disciplinary team

1b.4 be able to demonstrate effective and appropriate skills in communicating information, advice, instruction and professional opinion to colleagues, patients, clients, users, their relatives and carers

- be able to communicate in English to the standard equivalent to level 7 of the International English Language Testing System, with no element below 6.5
  - understand how communications skills affect the assessment of patients, clients and users, and how the means of communication should be modified to address potential barriers such as age, physical and learning disability
  - be able to select, move between and use appropriate forms of verbal and non-verbal communication with patients, clients, users and others
  - be aware of the characteristics and consequences of non-verbal communication and how this can be affected by culture, age, ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs and socio-economic status
  - understand the need to provide patients, clients and users (or people acting on their behalf) with the information necessary to enable them to make informed decisions
  - understand the need to use an appropriate interpreter to assist patients whose first language is not English, wherever possible
  - recognise that relationships with patients, clients and users should be based on mutual respect and trust, and be able to maintain high standards of care even in situations of personal incompatibility
- be able to explain the nature, purpose and techniques of therapy to clients and carers*
- understand the need to establish and sustain a therapeutic relationship within a creative and containing environment*

1b.5 understand the need for effective communication throughout the care of the patient, client or user

- recognise the need to use interpersonal skills to encourage the active participation of patients, clients and users

## **The skills required for the application of practice**

### **2a: Identification and assessment of health and social care needs**

Registrant arts therapists must:

2a.1 be able to gather appropriate information

- understand the need to take account of psychological, social, cultural, economic and other factors when collecting case histories and other appropriate information

2a.2 be able to use appropriate assessment techniques

- be able to undertake and record a thorough, sensitive and detailed assessment, using appropriate techniques and equipment

2a.3 be able to undertake or arrange clinical **or scientific** investigations as appropriate

- be able to observe and record clients' responses and assess the implication for diagnosis and intervention
- be able to undertake or arrange investigations, for example setting up an assessment period, in order to ascertain the appropriateness of an intervention

2a.4 be able to analyse and evaluate the information collected

### **2b: Formulation and delivery of plans and strategies for meeting health and social care needs**

Registrant arts therapists must:

2b.1 be able to use research, **clinical** reasoning and problem solving skills to determine appropriate actions

- recognise the value of research to the systematic evaluation of practice
- be able to conduct evidence-based practice, evaluate practice systematically, and participate in audit procedures
- be aware of methods commonly used in health care research
- be able to demonstrate a logical and systematic approach to problem solving
- be able to evaluate research and other evidence to inform their own practice

2b.2 be able to draw on appropriate knowledge and skills in order to make professional judgements

- be able to change their practice as needed to take account of new developments
- demonstrate a level of skill in the use of information technology appropriate to their profession

2b.3 be able to formulate specific and appropriate management plans including the setting of timescales

- understand the requirement to adapt practice to meet the needs of different client groups distinguished by, for example, physical, physiological, environmental, cultural or socio-economic factors

2b.4 be able to conduct appropriate diagnostic or monitoring procedures, treatment, therapy or other actions safely, skilfully and **effectively**

- understand the need to maintain the safety of both patients, clients and users, and those involved in their care

- *be able to work with clients both to define a clear end for the therapy, and to evaluate the therapy's strengths, benefits and limitations*

Art therapist only

- *be able to use a range of art and art-making techniques competently and be able to help a client to work with these*

Dramatherapist only

- *be able to use a range of dramatic concepts, techniques and procedures (including games, activities, styles and structures) competently*

Music therapist only

- *be able to use a range of music and music-making techniques competently and be able to help a client to work with these*

2b.5 be able to maintain records appropriately

- be able to keep accurate, legible records and recognise the need to handle these records and all other [] information in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines

- understand the need to use only accepted terminology (which includes abbreviations) in making [] records

## 2c: Critical evaluation of the impact of, or response to, the registrant's actions

Registrant arts therapists must:

2c.1 be able to monitor and review the ongoing effectiveness of planned activity and modify it accordingly

- be able to gather information, including qualitative and quantitative data, that helps to evaluate the responses of patients, clients and users to their care
- be able to evaluate management plans against treatment milestones using recognised health outcome measures and revise the plans as necessary in conjunction with the patient, client or user
- recognise the need to monitor and evaluate the quality of practice and the value of contributing to the generation of data for quality assurance and improvement programmes
- be able to make reasoned decisions to initiate, continue, modify, **inform** or cease treatment or the use of techniques or procedures, and record the decisions and reasoning appropriately
- understand that outcomes may not always conform to expectations but may still meet the needs of patients, clients or users

2c.2 be able to audit, reflect on and review practice

- understand the principles of quality control and quality assurance
- be aware of the role of audit and review in quality management, including quality control, quality assurance and the use of appropriate outcome measures
- be able to maintain an effective audit trail and work towards continual improvement
- participate in quality assurance programmes, where appropriate
- understand the value of reflection on clinical practice and the need to record the outcome of such reflection
- recognise the value of case conferences and other methods of review

## Knowledge, understanding and skills

3a:

Registrant arts therapists must:

### Suggestion:

understand the need for and maintain regulator sessions of clinical supervision with an appropriately qualified clinical supervisor (BADT; BAAT; Registration Assessors paper, page 4; Education providers paper, page 3. Also see summary of feedback paper)

### Decision:

The PLG is invited to consider whether a standard relating to supervision is necessary and to discuss whether appropriate wording is possible (professional bodies paper, page 9).

3a.1 know the key concepts of the biological, physical, social, psychological and clinical sciences which are relevant to their profession-specific practice

- understand the structure and function of the human body, relevant to their practice, together with a knowledge of health, disease, disorder and dysfunction
- be aware of the principles and applications of scientific enquiry, including the evaluation of treatment efficacy and the research process
- recognise the role of other professions in health and social care
- understand the theoretical basis of, and the variety of approaches to, assessment and intervention

- *understand the psychological and cultural background to health, and be aware of influences on the client-therapist relationship*
- *understand core processes in therapeutic practice, such as the therapeutic frame, transference and counter-transference and concepts from other therapeutic models, and be able to engage these to achieve productive therapeutic outcomes*
- *understand the therapeutic relationship, including its limitations*
- *be able to employ a coherent approach to the therapeutic process*
- *understand how uses of the arts in arts therapy differs from uses of the arts for other purposes*
- *know theories of group work and the management of group process*
- *know theories relevant to work with an individual*
- *know about normal human development; normal and abnormal psychology; normal and abnormal human communication and language development; mental illness, psychiatric assessment and treatment; congenital and acquired disability; disorders of social functioning; the principal psychotherapeutic interventions and their theoretical bases; the nature and application of other major interventions*
- *recognise methods of distinguishing between human health and sickness, including diagnosis, symptoms and treatment, particularly of mental health disorders and*

*learning disabilities and be able to critique these systems of knowledge from different socio-cultural perspectives*

#### Art therapist only

*- understand that while art therapy has a number of frames of reference, they must adopt a coherent approach to their therapy, including the relationship between theory and practice and the relevant aspects of connected disciplines including visual arts, aesthetics, anthropology, psychology, psychiatry, sociology, psychotherapy and medicine*

#### **Suggestion:**

Comments made in registration assessors, professional bodies and education providers papers regarding 'remodelling' standard 3a. It is suggested that: 'The art therapists only section should be remodelled to include the other arts therapists'.

This seems to refer to the above standard which is listed as only applicable to art therapists. The consequence of this becoming applicable for all arts therapists is that there would be no separate profession-specific standard for art therapists.

#### **Decision:**

The PLG is invited to discuss the above suggested change.

#### Dramatherapist only

*- understand core processes and forms of creativity, movement, play and dramatic representation pertinent to practice with a range of client groups*  
*- understand both the symbolic value and intent inherent in drama as an art form, and with more explicit forms of enactment and re-enactment of imagined or lived experience*  
*- know a range of theatrical representation techniques and be able to engage clients in a variety of performance-derived roles*  
*- recognise that dramatherapy is a unique form of psychotherapy in which creativity, play, movement, voice, storytelling, dramatisation and the performance arts have a central position within the therapeutic relationship*  
*- recognise that different approaches to the discipline have developed from different histories in Eastern and Western Europe and the Americas*  
*- recognise that the discipline has deep foundations within the many cultural traditions that use ritual, play, drama and performance for the enhancement of health*  
*- know the key principles of influential theatre practitioners and their relevance to the therapeutic setting*

#### Music therapist only

*- be able to improvise music in a variety of styles and idioms*  
*- be able to use musical improvisation to interact and communicate with the patient/client*

- *know a broad range of musical styles and be aware of their cultural contexts*
- *be able to play at least one musical instrument to a high level*

3a.2 know how professional principles are expressed and translated into action through a number of different assessment, treatment and management approaches and how to select or modify approaches to meet the needs of an individual, **groups or communities**

3a.3 understand the need for, and be able to establish and maintain, a safe practice Environment

- be aware of applicable health and safety legislation, and any relevant safety policies and procedures in force at the workplace, such as incident reporting, and be able to act in accordance with these
- be able to work safely, including being able to select appropriate hazard control and risk management, reduction or elimination techniques in a safe manner in accordance with health and safety legislation
- be able to select appropriate personal protective equipment and use it correctly
- be able to establish safe environments for clinical practice, which minimise risks to patients, clients and users, those treating them, and others, including the use of hazard control and particularly infection control