

The Malaysian Society For Complementary Therapies

Guidelines For The Training Of Psychotherapists

The Accreditation Committee Psychotherapy Chapter

GUIDELINES FOR THE TRAINING OF PSYCHOTHERAPISTS

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 Paragraph 1.0 of the Society's Training Guidelines Objectives is adopted in to herewith.
- 1.2 Additionally, the Chapter seeks to promote and maintain excellence in the practice of Psychotherapy.
- 1.3 A clear understanding of the scientific aspects of Psychotherapy will allow all practitioners to not only reap the benefits of scientific knowledge, but to make scientific contributions to this well-established system of healing thereby contributing to the wealth of the health system in Malaysia.
- 1.4 To inculcate a holistic approach to Psychotherapy.
- 1.5 To ensure that all psychotherapy practitioners by their training can collaborate with other healthcare practitioners, thus enriching the collective experience.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Psychotherapy has a long established history and needs no elaboration here. Readers are referred to several articles contributed by members of the chapter to the association magazine and website for reference.
- 2.2 The Chapter is concern with the Western Psychotherapy model and its application in Malaysia.
- 2.3 The Chapter takes cognisance of the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the clients in Malaysia and where appropriate will adapt aspects of the Western practise of psychotherapy so as to afford the practitioners under our Chapter a macro-perspective of their practice in Malaysia. But the emphasis is on the Western Psychotherapy Model.
- 2.4 There are very few qualified Psychotherapists in Malaysia and at the present moment there are no teaching establishments that provide training of Psychotherapists. However, collaboration has already been established with leading international institutions and organisations to provide such training in the future. The Malaysia Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Association is collaborating with highly reputable institutions to put together a professional training course for candidates wishing to practice psychotherapy in Malaysia.
- 2.5 There is now a trend for some therapists to represent themselves as "psychotherapist" or psychologist in various guise and unless such therapists are in fact trained as Psychotherapists having gone through proper clinical supervision, they will pose a danger to the profession and the public will have a wrong perception as to the training required of a Psychotherapist.
- 2.6 Hence, the Chapter will be very stringent and rigorous in ensuring that only students who are properly trained in the Western Psychotherapy Model with adequate supervised clinical training and therapy will be entitled to practice as Psychotherapists.

3. CURRENT STATUS AND DIRECTIONS

- 3.1 Given the above state of affairs, it is of utmost urgency for the Chapter and the Society to formulate proper guidelines for the training of Psychotherapists.
- 3.2 The Chapter, together with the Malaysia Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Association will endeavour to establish training programmes with reputable institutions of higher learning in Malaysia to fill this void in the profession. The Chapter is confident that with the support of the Ministry of Health, proper training programmes will be established in the not too distant future.
- 3.3 International collaboration referred to earlier will spur the above efforts and will generate public awareness of the opportunities in pursuing a career as a Psychotherapist.

4. TRAINING and PRACTICE GUIDELINES

- 4.1 Paragraph 4 of the Society's Training Guidelines is adopted in toto herewith.
- 4.2 The Psychotherapy Chapter of the Malaysian Society for Complementary Therapy Association recognises three categories of membership: associate member, practitioner member and Fellows.
- 4.3 Only Practitioner Members and Fellows are allowed to practice.
- 4.4 In order to be registered as a Practitioner Member, applicants need to have completed the postgraduate Diploma in Psychotherapy conducted by the Malaysian Psychotherapy Association (MPA) in association with recognised accredited institutions. Alternatively, applicants who have a Master in Psychotherapy degree from an accredited institution of higher learning may apply to be Practitioner Members.
- 4.5 Fellows are conferred by invitation by the association only to senior psychotherapy Practitioner Members.
- 4.6 In order to complete the diploma successfully, applicants need to have completed 50 supervised hours with a MPA accredited supervisor.
- 4.7 The clients seen by the student needs to have come from at least six different areas of therapy to be chosen from: adult psychotherapy, child therapy, adolescent therapy, couple therapy, family therapy, substance abuse therapy, organisational or group therapy, therapy with the elderly and therapy with persons from a minority group.
- 4.8 In order to be eligible to enrol for the postgraduate diploma in Psychotherapy, the candidate must have acquired a psychotherapy or related first degree or its equivalent from a JPA recognised accredited institution.
- 4.9 For those without prerequisite of Section 4.9 MPA offers a bridging Psychotherapy Certificate course.
- 4.10 The certificate course will consists of eight 12 credit hours modules covering various aspects of psychotherapy and psychology.
- 4.11 The postgraduate diploma will consists of part one and part two, four modules of 12 credit hours each module for each part.
- 4.12 On the successful completion of part one of the postgraduate diploma, students will be awarded with a postgraduate certificate in Psychotherapy.
- 4.13 Supervision can start from the start of the postgraduate diploma course.
- 4.14 All Practitioner Members are governed by the Malaysian Psychotherapy Association's Guidelines for Ethics and Professional Conduct.
- 4.15 On obtaining the practitioner status, members are required to seek supervision for their practice for at least one hour supervision session every fortnight from a supervisor accredited by the association.
- 4.16 Practitioner Members are also required to fulfil 20 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training hours per year in order to have their membership renewed.