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I confirm that this paper has not been published elsewhere and is not under consideration elsewhere.

UK counselling psychology training placements: where are we now?

Abstract

Background: Quality training placements are crucial to producing professional practitioner psychologists. However, as in other professions, accessing high-quality placements remains a struggle for trainee counselling psychologists. There is also a lack of information regarding where UK counselling psychology trainees typically work on placement and the level of support provided to students. This project attempted to gather data on programme placement support and placement / training mapping.

Method: A confidential, anonymous online survey was created to gather quantitative and qualitative data, broadly based on the annual US survey, and each BPS accredited counselling psychology programme was invited to complete one questionnaire. Data was collated and reported descriptively; thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2008) was used to organise the qualitative data.

Findings: 9 of the 13 programmes took part. The average FTE of academic staff allocated to placement support across the participating programmes was 0.5. There was no correspondence between the number of placement contacts per programme and the number of students enrolled on the programme. CBT was the most commonly taught approach on these programmes. For six of the surveyed programmes, there was a strong correspondence between the approaches taught and the number of placement contacts held where students could practice those approaches. NHS placements are now prevalent, but variety in placement settings remains. The qualitative data gathered in this study could be summarised by four themes: '*Placement problems*', '*Counselling psychology and clinical psychology*', '*An improving profile*', and '*National issues*.'

Discussion: The results suggest that there may be a good level of correspondence between the therapeutic approaches taught on UK counselling psychology training programmes and training placements offered. They also illustrate the range of experience offered by graduates, gained from a variety of placement settings. Some suggestions are offered for future national surveys of counselling psychology programmes based on this pilot.

Key words:

Counselling psychology, UK, training, placements

A brief history

Counselling psychology emerged as a profession in the UK in the late 1970s, consisting of practitioners who had trained as counsellors or psychotherapists after studying psychology as undergraduates (Strawbridge & Woolfe, 2010). They argued that their practice was strongly informed by psychological theory and research and that it differed significantly from existing professions, such as clinical psychology, as it focused on personal development and well-being when working with those in distress, eschewing the language of mental health (Orlans and Van Scoyoc, 2009). Counselling psychology in the US provides a useful comparison and benchmark from which to examine counselling psychology in the UK. Both emerged years after clinical psychology established itself as a profession, although counselling psychology in the US dates back to the 1950s (Munley et al., 2004).

In keeping with the profession's ethos, UK counselling psychologists largely worked in private practice initially (Van Scoyoc, 2005). Now, it is estimated that between 40% - 50% of all counselling psychologists in the UK work in the National Health Service (NHS), where they try to influence the medical language and mechanistic approach of psychiatry and mental health from within (Walsh et al., 2004). Growth in the employment of counselling psychologists in hospital settings has also been documented in the US (Neimeyer et al., 2001). Comparable debates regarding the amalgamation of the professions of clinical and counselling psychology have taken place in the US and the UK as a result (Neimeyer et al., 2001; Van Scoyoc, 2005).

In the mid-90s, the Division of Counselling Psychology within the British Psychological Society (BPS) was incorporated, with powers to approve training routes leading to Chartered Counselling Psychologist status (Hemsley, 2013). As of 2014, 13 universities or training institutions offer such programmes in the UK, as compared to around 75 programmes in the US (Neimeyer & Keilin, 2007). The programmes have changed considerably in this period. Initially offered as post-graduate diplomas, they evolved through master's level programmes to their current form of three-year, full-time (or part-time equivalent) professional doctorates (Walsh et al., 2004). This change occurred in response to BPS moves to ensure all chartered psychologist trainings in the UK were at doctoral level, and brings UK training programmes into line with US programmes (Munley

et al., 2004). One result of this change, as experienced by at least some programme directors, is an increase in monitoring and management from the institution, along national guidelines for doctoral degrees (Orlans & Van Scoyoc, 2009), at an already difficult time for Higher Education (HE) in the UK. Rizq (2007, p. 287) testifies to the shift in culture in HE over the 90s and 00s to one of “increasing standardisation, competition, new regulatory procedures, quality assurance mechanisms and audit systems.” These pressures have made it more difficult to ensure that the practical aspects of therapeutic training are properly supported and overseen by training programmes.

Counselling psychology programmes focus on developing students’ theory and practice in one main approach to psychotherapy to registration standard, with at least a working knowledge of another model, through the accrument of a total of 450 face-to-face hours of logged client work (Walsh et al., 2004; Orlans & Van Scoyoc, 2009)¹. Students gain practical experience working with clients on their training placements. Most UK programmes manage their training placements similarly to the counselling and psychotherapy training programmes undertaken by its first practitioners, in that placements are undertaken in external settings without any formal affiliation to the university (Martin, 2010). Placements are largely sought, applied for and secured independently by individual trainees. A minority of UK counselling psychology programmes have more formal arrangements or ties with local placement providers and/or allocate placements to students directly (Crawford-Wright & Hart, 1997).

Overall, UK counselling psychology programmes stand in strong contrast to American counselling psychology programmes, where students undertake a one-year pre-doctoral internship after their academic study and research to complete their training, and internships are allocated through a national matching system (Neimeyer et al., 2001; Munley et al., 2004). Like nursing, social work and counselling in the UK, there is a greater emphasis on practical training on placements in counselling psychology in the UK (Doel, 2010; Levett-Jones and Bourgeois, 2009). Also, both US and UK training institutions are experiencing a growing gap between the number of placements or internships required to support existing trainees and the number of practice opportunities available, (Milton, 2001; Niemeyer and Keilin, 2007; Martin, 2010; Doel, 2010; Levett-Jones

¹ This was correct as of 2013-14. New training standards are currently being rolled out by the BPS which will change this emphasis.

and Bourgeois, 2009; Midwinter and Whatmore, 2011), which would constrain trainers' abilities to ensure that each placement is matched to the students' learning needs. For example, post-graduate teacher training placements in the UK, while largely allocated by the training university and usually in school settings, are now found in a wide variety of settings (Shilvock & Pope, 2008), perhaps in response to high demand for placements in some areas (Midwinter and Whatmore, 2011). While undergraduate social work placements used to be allocated on a 'grace and favour' basis (Doel, 2010, p. 225), similar to counselling psychology, this became contractual between training institutions and local councils in the 1990s. However, this has not removed the need for more placements to meet growing student numbers, which has also resulted in students working in less traditional and possibly less supported and structured environments (Doel, 2010).

The problem

An annual national survey of counselling psychology training program directors was established by the Council of Counselling Psychology Training Programs in 1974 (Neimeyer et al., 2001), about 20 years after the emergence of counselling psychology in the US (Munley et al., 2004). In 2001, Neimeyer, Bowman and Stewart produced a 26-year retrospective on counselling psychology internships using this data. While survey response rates varied over time from 40 – 91%, averaging 72% overall, the data allowed them to make meaningful links between trainee internships and the identity of the profession in the US. For example, most students did their training placements in university counselling services. As counselling psychology in the US historically has a strong focus on life-span development, personal growth and career counselling, this shows a good match between professional ethos and training experiences (Martin, 2010). Hospitals that exclusively served ex-military personnel were the second most frequent placement setting, which again corresponded with strong professional ties between veterans' support and counselling psychology in the US (Munley et al., 2004). The authors could therefore argue for the distinctive identity of American counselling psychology as a profession on the basis of the typical internship experiences of its trainees (Neimeyer et al., 2001).

Sadly, there is no robust UK dataset which could enable comparable arguments (Martin, 2010). Just as there is some evidence that training placements in

professions such as social work and teaching are now being sourced from non-traditional settings in order to meet rising demand (Doel, 2010; Shilvock & Pope, 2008; Midwinter & Whatmore, 2011), there is anecdotal evidence of difficulties in sourcing placements suited to the inter-subjective, phenomenological and reflexive ethos of UK counselling psychology (Van Scoyoc, 2005; Martin, 2010; Milton, 2001). Most programmes now at least encourage trainees to secure a minimum of one placement in the NHS (Van Scoyoc, 2005; Crawford-Wright & Hart, 1997; Walsh et al., 2004). The shift to greater employment in the NHS would lead to an expected increase in health sector placements (Walsh et al., 2004), but the overall mix of placement settings where trainee counselling psychologists work, and the effect of such a shift, simply is not known.

Considering the agreement in the literature on the importance of training placement issues (Milton, 2001; Martin, 2010), the lack of research into this aspect of counselling psychology education is unacceptable. It is also, perhaps, understandable, given the size and age of the profession in the UK. As US counselling psychologists initiated annual national surveys of training programmes around 20 years after the establishment of the profession, and as 20 years of HE counselling psychology training programmes in the UK approaches, the time is ripe to take stock. A comparable dataset to the US studies (Neimeyer et al., 2001; Neimeyer & Keilin, 2007), in terms of the types of settings in which trainee counselling psychologists work on placement, would enable interesting implications to be drawn around the differences between clinical and counselling psychology in the US and the UK. It would also be interesting to explore how well these placements map onto the theoretical orientations taught on UK programmes (Neimeyer et al., 2001) and the ethos and identity of the profession (Martin, 2010).

The questions

This study, therefore, addressed three research questions.

1) Are UK counselling psychology trainees well supported regarding placement issues?

While there are many ways in which this question could be explored, this investigation attempted to gather statistical data on the number of potential

placement contacts held, nationally and on average, by counselling psychology programmes, as well as the total number of students enrolled. Like link lecturers in nursing and mentors for trainees in teaching (Shilvock & Pope, 2008; Levett-Jones & Bourgeois, 2009), placement coordinators are key members of staff supporting trainee counselling psychologists with placement issues. Therefore, the survey also asked programmes what FTE of academic or clinical staff is allocated to placement coordination work, in order to establish a national average which could inform professional guidelines and/or training programmes.

2) How well do UK counselling psychology placements map onto their training programmes?

Programmes were asked to report the types of settings in which their trainees work, as well as the kinds of therapeutic approaches which they practice there, to explore how these map onto the approaches taught on the programmes nationally.

Placements can, of course, permit several approaches to be used in their settings. Some do not stipulate which approach trainees must use; others require students to work in only one model. The level of match, then, between the approaches taught and the placements to which students are directed is of interest.

3) What are the primary challenges faced by UK counselling psychology training programmes around placements?

The survey also requested some written qualitative data from UK counselling psychology teachers and trainers regarding the barriers they experience while supporting trainees to find suitable placements and how these have changed over time. They were also asked for their perceptions as to the reasons behind these barriers and how they may relate to wider issues faced by the profession.

Overall, this investigation aimed to begin to establish what UK counselling psychology training placements indicate about the current state of the profession and its identity.

Methodology

Recruitment

Each BPS accredited counselling psychology training course in 2013 was invited to take part in this study. Due to the size of the population being surveyed in this study, nonresponse error was an anticipated issue. A proposal for this investigation was shared and discussed with committee members of the Division of Counselling Psychology of the BPS, to gain the support of the professional body. The 12 other UK training programmes were contacted before the study was launched to inform them of the investigation and to discuss any reservations or concerns. As the counselling psychology placement coordinator for my training programme, with unique access to the data required, I also completed one survey for my institution. To preserve the anonymity of those who took part, commitments were given to participants that results would be reported at the national level only, with specific detail about the sample remaining confidential.

While all 13 programmes accessed the survey, only 9 of the 13 accredited UK training institutions took part, yielding a unit response level of 69.2%. This response level is comparable to levels experienced on the annual surveys of training programmes in the US (Neimeyer et al., 2001). The sample size, however, accentuated the impact of item nonresponse. All nine participants completed the first three survey questions. However, only six participants completed questions four and five, and only five participants completed the last five survey items. This strongly limits the implications that can be derived from this data.

Data collection

To enable the prompt collection of this information from the UK accredited programmes, an online questionnaire was devised (Sue and Ritter, 2007). One completed survey was requested from each course, collecting self-report data from either the programme leader or placement coordinator. Such academic staff would be well used to collating and supplying programme information as accurately as possible (Neimeyer and Keilin, 2007).

The survey design has two components. The first was broadly modelled on the questions from the annual US survey (Neimeyer and Keilin, 2007), and collected descriptive statistics regarding counselling psychology training programmes to

explore how UK counselling psychology placements reflect the ethos of the profession here generally.

Participants were then asked to categorise the placement contacts on their database according to given service headings, selecting the single most appropriate category for each contact, with space to list their own alternative categories. While the categories were not mutually exclusive, the headings were selected as a way of categorising trainee placement settings as inclusively as possible, in order to gather information on where trainees are working.

Participants were also asked to select which therapeutic approaches are taught on their programmes from a list of options, again with space to list their own alternatives. They were then asked to estimate the percentage of placements on their database where each of these approaches could be practiced.

In the second component of the questionnaire, qualitative, open-ended questions were asked to gain more detailed, subjective data regarding the primary challenges faced by training institutions around placements. Participants were asked the following questions:

- What are the main issues experienced by your programme when supporting trainees to find suitable placements?
- Why do you think these are the main problems?
- What changes have you observed in these issues over time?
- Do you think these issues relate to wider issues faced by the profession as a whole? Why / why not?

Method

Due to the size of the dataset, descriptive, summary statistics were run on the quantitative data at the national level, as has been done in the reporting of the US data (Neimeyer and Keilin, 2007). Replies to the short-answer questions were consistently brief and lacking in detail, precluding any in-depth analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). However, Braun and Clarke's method of thematic analysis was still used to organise the data into themes, at a descriptive level. This involved several stages or phases (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Initially, each response in the data set was allocated an initial code or codes. These codes were analysed for thematic relationships, from which was constructed an initial

thematic map. These themes were then reviewed and refined, by referring back to the original qualitative data and to the data set as a whole to check coherence, from which a more developed thematic map was produced. The resulting themes were then defined and described in order to capture the essence of the underlying data.

Ethics

Some of the data collected in this study may be particularly sensitive to the participants. For example, publicly reporting the level of support provided to students around placements could affect recruitment and the perceived quality of the programme. This implies that there is a case for greater transparency and/or collaboration between training programmes around these issues, as well as for clearer standards or benchmarks regarding placement support. Also, great variety exists between UK counselling psychology training programmes, in terms of philosophy, structure, location and student profile, rendering comparisons at programme level inexact (Bor et al., 1997).

Therefore, to facilitate participation in this study, data was collected confidentially via Qualtrics and stored and analysed anonymously. Respondents were not asked to identify their training institution. Participants were given assurances via the information sheet that trends would be reported on a national level only, and that individual programmes would not be identifiable from the data at any stage, even to the researcher. Participants were informed that the results of the survey would be published or presented at conference or both. Consent was also requested for the use of anonymised quotes in future publications. The project was designed in accordance with the British Educational Research Association's Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (2011), and received ethical approval from the Department of Education at the University of the West of England.

Results

Table 1 shows the results to the first three survey questions, regarding the level of support around placement issues provided to UK counselling psychology trainees at the nine participating programmes. In order to maintain earlier commitments to maintain anonymity, generic totals and averages only are reported, as opposed to, for example, ranges.

TABLE 1: Placement support

<i>Total number of placement contacts on programme placement databases</i>	1744
<i>Average number of placement contacts per programme placement database</i>	193.8
<i>Total number of students currently enrolled</i>	736
<i>Average number of students currently enrolled per programme</i>	81.8
<i>Average FTE currently allocated to placement coordination per programme</i>	0.5

Table 2 depicts the results which relate to the level of match between the therapeutic approaches taught on UK counselling psychology programmes and the placements where trainees practice.

Firstly, programmes were asked to indicate which therapeutic approaches they taught on their programmes. Each programme selected between one and four approaches. Cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) was the most common therapeutic approach selected by the participants, taught on five of the six, or 56%, of the participating counselling psychology programmes.

Each programme was then asked to estimate the percentage of their placement contacts at which students were permitted to practice each approach. The final column of Table 3 shows the average of the percentages provided. So, for example, while overall, the six participating programmes estimated that CBT could be practiced at between 10% and 74% of their placement contacts, the average of all the estimates given by the six programmes for CBT was 45.2%. However, due to the size of this project, no further details were requested, such as how CBT placements were defined (i.e. CBT placements which require students to work to published protocols under the supervision of a CBT therapist to CTS-R standards versus placements where students could deliver CBT relationally under integrative supervision).

TABLE 2: Programme / placement mapping

<i>Therapeutic approach</i>	<i>Total number of programmes that teach this approach</i>	<i>Percentage of programmes that teach this approach</i>	<i>Ave estimated % of potential placement contacts where approach can be practiced, nationally</i>
Cognitive-behavioural	5	56%	45.2%
Psychodynamic / Relational	4	44%	20.2%
Person-centred / Humanistic	3	33%	27.8%
Integrative	2	22%	28.3%
Emotion-focused therapy	1	11%	11.7%
Existential-phenomenological	1	11%	8.0%
Systemic	0	0%	0.7%

More counselling psychology placement contacts permitted the practice of CBT, the most commonly taught model, than any other approach. This was followed by integrative placements, and then by person-centred placements. As many integrative placements permit the practice of either psychodynamic, person-centred, existential or integrative approaches, this potentially shows a good level of fit between the approaches taught on the six participating programmes and the practice placement opportunities to which these programmes can direct their students. Charts 1 and 2 visually display this good level of match.

CHART 1: Therapeutic approaches taught on UK counselling psychology programmes

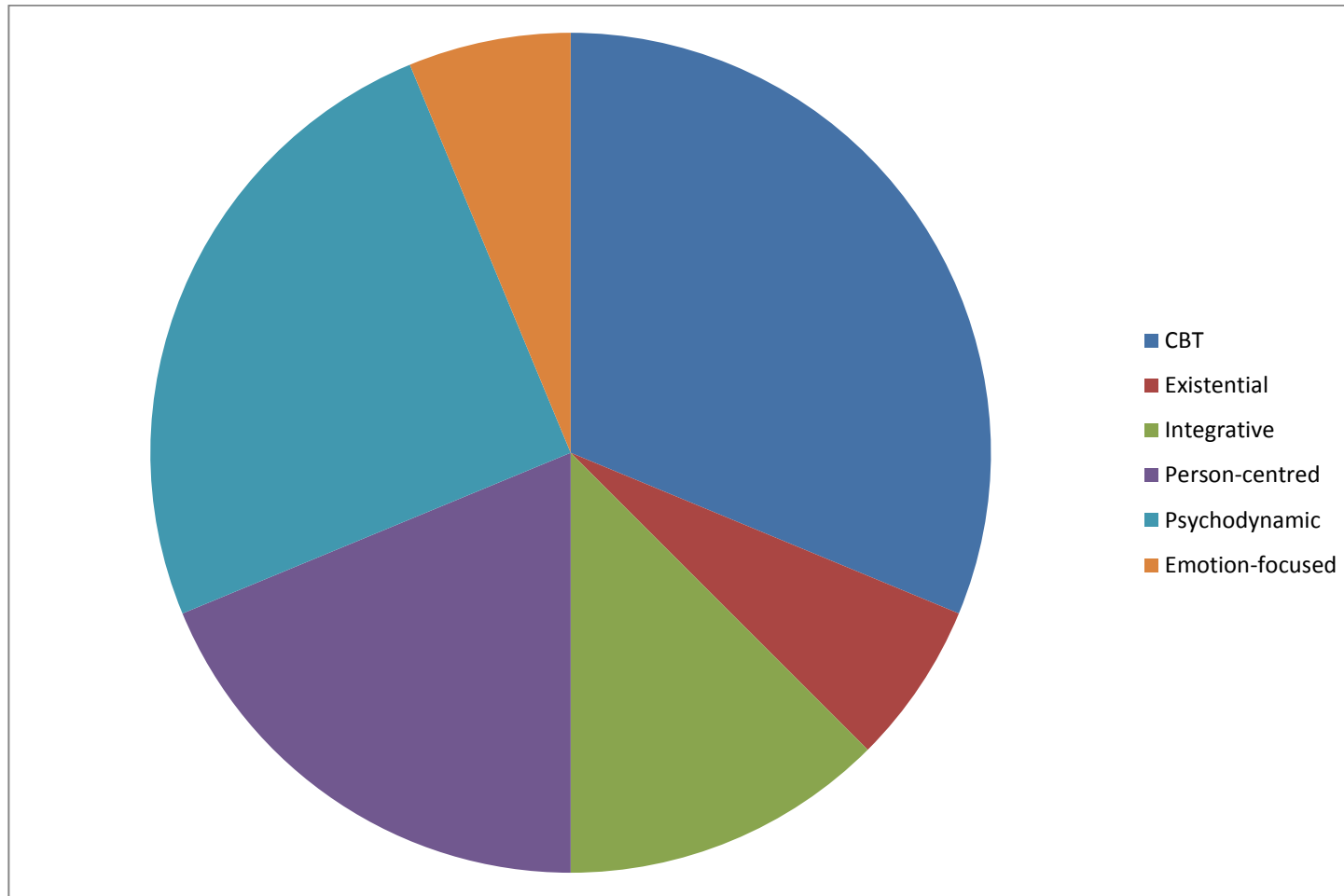
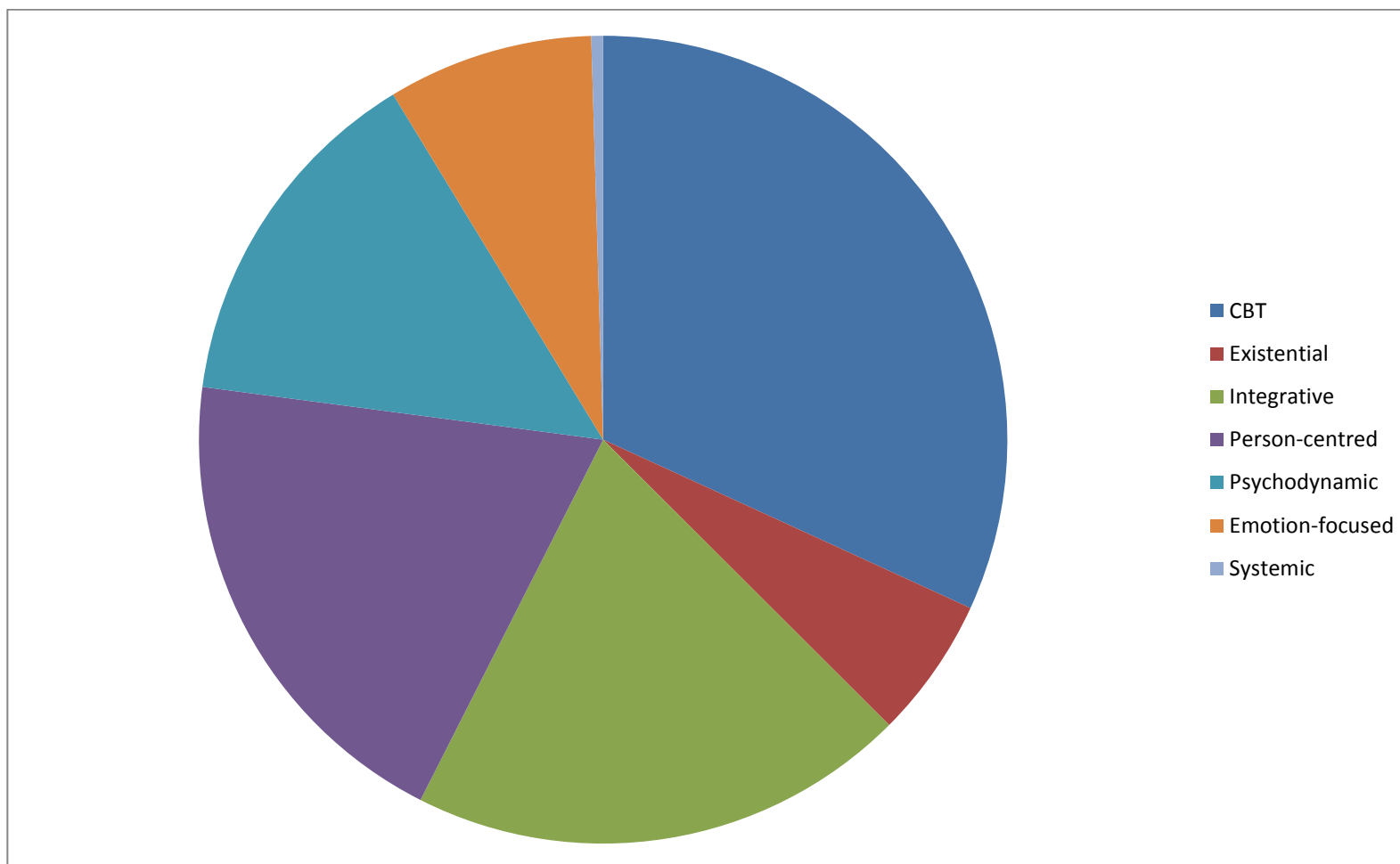


CHART 2: Placement contacts by approach



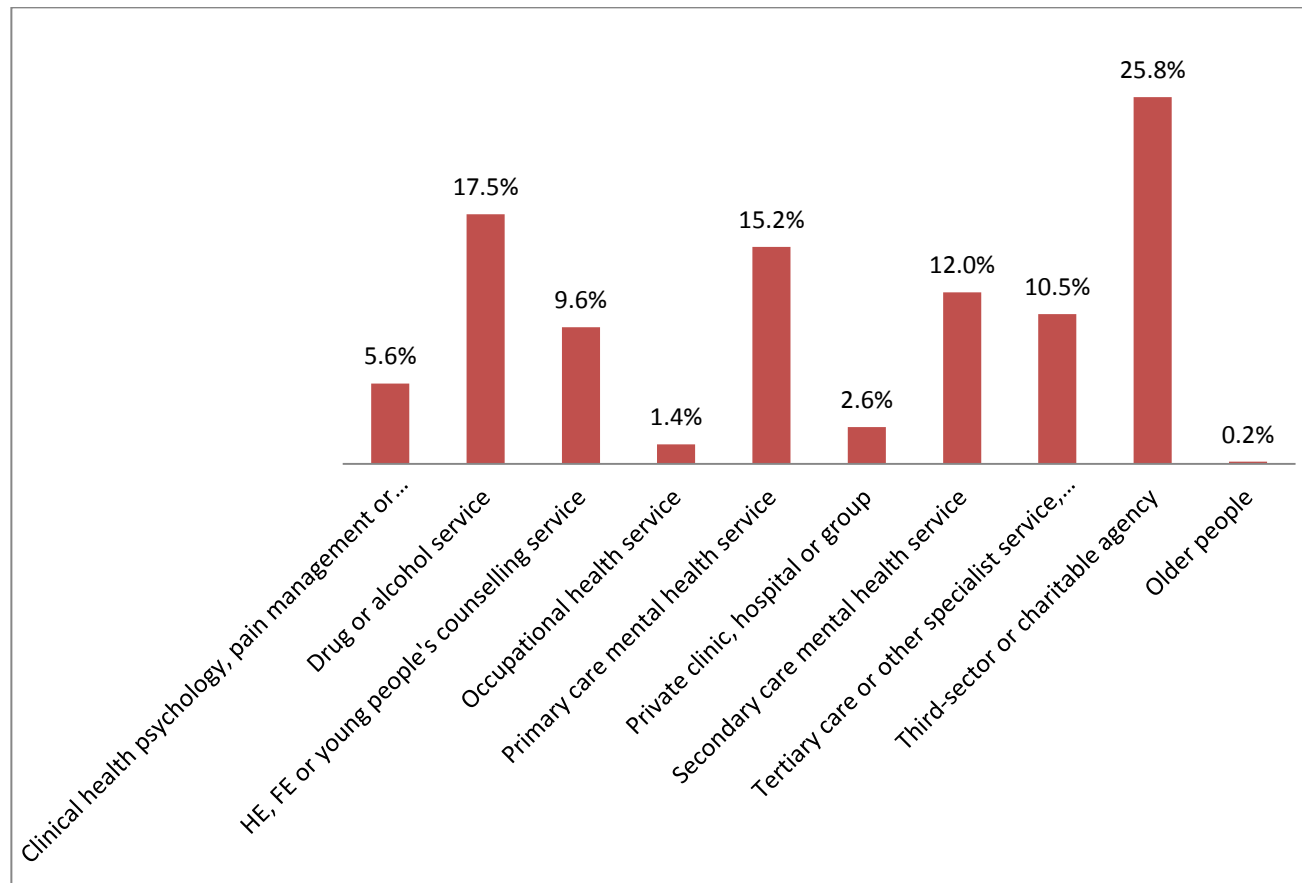
In Question 6, participants were asked to categorise their placement contacts according to setting. Table 3 displays the total number and the percentage of counselling psychology training placements in different settings reported by the five participants in answer to this question. Results reveal the continuing predominance of traditional placement settings for counsellors or psychotherapists in counselling psychology training – namely, third sector or charitable counselling agencies. HE, FE, and young people’s counselling services only accounted for 9.6% of the placement contacts of the five participating programmes, in contrast with US counselling psychology internships (Niemeyer et al., 2001).

Chart 3 displays these percentages visually.

TABLE 3: Settings for training placements

	<i>Clinical health psychology, pain management or neuropsychology</i>	<i>Drug or alcohol service</i>	<i>HE, FE or young people's counselling service</i>	<i>Occupational health service</i>	<i>Older people</i>	<i>Primary care mental health service</i>	<i>Private clinic, hospital or group</i>	<i>Secondary care mental health service</i>	<i>Tertiary care or other specialist service, including eating disorders, CAMHS and LD</i>	<i>Third- sector or charitable agency</i>
Total	37	115	63	9	1	100	17	79	69	169
Percentage	5.6%	17.5%	9.6%	1.4%	0.2%	15.2%	2.6%	12.0%	10.5%	25.8%

CHART 3: Placement settings



Only five of the 13 UK programmes took part in the qualitative component of the survey, and answers were very thin and lacking in detail. Some quotes from each theme are included anonymously for illustrative purposes.

Placement problems

“Most placement providers are only interested in trainees that have already gained clinical experience”

“Many potential placements demand experience, therefore first year students have particular difficulties.”

“Funding of charitable organisations has been reduced”

The most common challenge identified by the five participating programmes was sourcing appropriate placements for first-year students, who may have little previous counselling experience. A further issue identified by several participants was the impact of the current financial climate on the third sector. Due to budget cuts to statutory and charitable funding, some training programmes are experiencing reducing opportunities for placement students in this sector.

Counselling psychology and clinical psychology

“Slow movement towards more acceptance of the clinical skill of counselling psychologists rivalling clinical psychologists.”

“Being seen as the 'poor relation' compared with e.g. clinical psychology.”

Some training programmes still experience difficulties placing students who wish to work in the NHS in statutory settings where clinical psychologists dominate. However, some programmes also reported a slow improvement in this area, as the clinical skills of counselling psychologists are increasingly recognised.

An improving profile

“As more placements become aware of our programme and take our students, it is getting easier to find places. The students' work and the high level of their training speak for itself.”

“As the overall profile of counselling psychology improves, more trusts and organisations are willing to consider 2nd and 3rd year trainees.”

There are indications in this dataset of possible improvements occurring in the profile of counselling psychology and its training programmes in the UK, leading in some instances to easier access to placement opportunities.

National issues

“Difficulty finding specific counselling psychology placements with counselling psychologist supervision.”

“Insufficient number of placements for students in the local area.”

“Visibility is an issue. [...] Greater visibility would help open doors in a wider range of settings, such as forensic settings.”

“It is about our identity being defined and valued.”

“The identity of the profession is not as clear as the clinical psychology hence placements and jobs are not as available.”

Some participants felt that the further promotion of a clear professional identity could enhance the visibility of counselling psychology across the UK, which would in turn facilitate greater access to training placement opportunities. Other broader issues such as the difficulties in placing students who needed placements geographically distant from their training programme, and in accessing counselling psychologist supervisors, were also noted.

Discussion

One of the most striking features of this data is the lack of correspondence between the number of placement contacts per programme and the number of students enrolled on the programme. One could surmise that the size of a programme's placement contact list is more strongly correlated with the age of the programme. In any event, this lack of match questions how well UK counselling psychology programmes are supporting their students with placement issues.

The stronger correspondence between the approaches taught on UK counselling psychology programmes and the number of placement contacts held where students can practice those approaches supports the claim that students are well supported regarding placement issues. This shows a good level of mapping between the therapeutic approaches taught and the training placement opportunities facilitated by the programmes, the importance of which is recognised in other professions and in other countries (Levett-Jones and Bourgeois, 2009; Neimeyer et al, 2001). It is interesting to note, however, the predominance of CBT on UK counselling psychology programmes. Those who view CBT as a restrictive, short-term 'treatment' (Hemsley, 2013) may see this as a shift or departure from its historically phenomenological, inter-subjective and reflexive ethos (Milton, 2010; Orlans and Van Scoyoc, 2009; Strawbridge and Woolfe, 2010).

It is reasonable to assume that placement contacts categorised as primary care, secondary care, tertiary care or specialist, or health psychology services are all provided largely within the NHS in the UK. On the basis of this assumption, the combined percentage of NHS placements reported by the five participating programmes rises to 43.4%. This matches indications in the literature of increasing levels of NHS training placements and increasing levels of employment in the NHS (Crawford-Wright & Hart, 1997; Walsh et al., 2004). The data, however, also indicates the diverse skill set of counselling psychologists. While health sector placements are the largest type of placement, they are not the majority, and many trainee counselling psychologists choose to develop their skills in other settings, such as third sector or charitable counselling agencies, which often work from a humanistic or psychodynamic perspective.

In the past, some authors have warned against greater homogenization of placement opportunities, particularly as medical settings lend themselves to discourses which portray counselling psychologists as technicians (Van Scoyoc, 2005). They argue that the freedom to seek out and secure one's own training opportunities can empower trainees to carve out new opportunities (Kahr, 1999), affords trainees a degree of independence and autonomy which makes for a healthily diverse profession (Van Scoyoc, 2005) and facilitates trainees' access to a wide range of employment settings (Walsh et al., 2004). The variety of placement settings found in this data reflects this position.

And yet, such freedom is not without its costs. In Kumary and Baker's (2008) study, trainee counselling psychologists cited finding their own placements as one of the key stressors of their training. Bor, Watts and Parker (1997) also described the stress of sourcing placements, due to competition for places and the lack of payment for clinical work provided by trainees. The participating programmes in this study raise the stressful issue of sourcing appropriate placements for first-year students with limited counselling experience, particularly in the face of a reducing third sector.

Future improvements

The increasing unit nonresponse levels over the course of this survey suggest that some questions were overly complex. For example, requesting estimated percentages of placements by approach is imprecise. Future surveys could simply request the number of placements where an approach can be practiced. Further future improvements to the survey include asking programmes to indicate the main approach taught on their programme, followed by secondary approaches. This would give a better indication of how far counselling psychology training programmes have actually shifted away from more explicitly relational or phenomenological approaches towards CBT. In response to a workshop at the 2012 Division of Counselling Psychology workshop, which produced an action point around national guidance for training placement standards as well as for levels of placement support within training teams, a decision was taken to focus on staffing levels for placement support in this study. Future alternative questions which could have probed how well students are supported with placement issues include whether placements are allocated formally by the course or sourced independently by students, whether the size of

the programme database of placement providers is more related to the age of the programme than its size, and the issues underlying difficulties placing first-year students.

An annual survey of counselling psychology training programmes, along the lines of the US model (Niemeyer et al., 2001) could be built from this investigation, incorporating these suggestions for improvement. This would enable the profession to gather much-needed longitudinal data.

Limitations of study

This investigation relied on self-report data collected through a survey, which can be open to reporting biases (Sue and Ritter, 2007; Kreuter et al., 2008). While some of the information could in principle be checked, no effort was made to independently verify its accuracy, as in the US surveys (Niemeyer et al, 2001) – a further issue for consideration for future survey designs.

Due to commitments made to participants to report data in a way that preserved anonymity, the data was reported generically. This precluded sharing arguably more relevant details, such as any relationship between course approach and placement approach, and the range of student numbers across programmes. Also, categories such as types of placement settings were set broadly by the author based on her experience of placement coordination. Future survey designs could be improved by revisiting these attempts to enable better data collection and reporting of results by promoting specificity (i.e. defining CBT placements), while encouraging participation. A national survey of UK counselling psychology training programmes, on placement and other issues, devised, issued and collated by the BPS, may also have better levels of response in the future.

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