

FHCP update

Since the last issue of *HCPJ*, FHCP and UNISON delivered four Agenda for Change job seminar workshops in Liverpool, Edinburgh, York and London, all of which were well attended in spite of the short lead-in time. UNISON National Officer with the lead for Healthcare and Agenda for Change, Sara Gorton, provided a very detailed overview of the processes involved. It surprised me how many private practitioners attended who were neither FHCP members nor directly employed in the NHS, suggesting to me a large degree of professional isolation. Following on from the development of the counsellor job profiles (which are available on our website) many of you are currently in the process of writing job evaluation descriptions. It would be worth your while trying to find other counsellors in your area so that you can learn from each other. A first contact point might be with the network reps listed on the FHCP web pages. Alternatively, if you are prepared to act as a link person for your area please let us have your details and we can let members know. One of Sara's useful suggestions for counsellors wanting to put together a job description was to keep a diary of every single activity that you are involved in for one month, no matter how insignificant it may seem. This should be useful in presenting as comprehensive picture of your work as possible, particularly as we counsellors are wont to undersell ourselves and to undervalue our services, which will be detrimental at this crucial stage. Do also keep an eye on the FHCP website

– we are working with UNISON on an advice sheet to go with the job profiles, which should be uploaded onto the site some time in April. It is interesting to read the recently published NICE guidance on depression (available at www.nice.org.uk or via 0870 1555 455), in which, due to a lack of level 1 evidence from randomised controlled trials on counselling, we are relegated to a small section in the full document that very few people will read or notice. It's a case of those who can offer CBT being in favour with the NHS, and yet again a case of 'no level 1 evidence infers a lack of effectiveness'. I suspect that your own practice would reveal a very different picture. I think the challenge for us is to find a way of capturing these individual pictures to create a shared landscape.

Shane Buckeridge, FHCP Chair