

**Educating for wellbeing in professional practice: Interdisciplinary approaches**

**Workshop at City, University of London, The Atkin Building, Gray’s Inn campus, 20 June 2017**

**Programme**

This workshop follows one held at City Law School on 5 April where Australian and UK academics explored the application of recent research in the wellbeing of law students and legal practitioners. This workshop adds an interdisciplinary element. There is no need to have attended the first workshop to benefit from this, although participants on 5 April will be very welcome. The workshop is free to attend but registration is required. It is supported by the Society of Legal Scholars and City Law School.

10.00: Introduction: Caroline Strevens, (Portsmouth) and Nigel Duncan (City)

10.15: Working with mental health nurses: Sarah Campbell (City)

Working with speech and language therapists: Kirsty Harrison and Marie-Therese Worthington (City).

11.30: Coffee

11.45: The interdisciplinary clinic project: Isobel Ryder and Caroline Strevens (Portsmouth)

12.30: Lunch

13.30: Love of money: the root of all evil? Caroline Strevens, (Portsmouth)

14.15: Resilience and positive motivation: The experience of law clinic students working with real clients: Nigel Duncan (City).

15.00: Tea

15.15: How living out ethical values may be linked to the well-being one achieves through legal work: Chris Megone (Leeds) and Leonie Venhoeven (Dijksterhuis & Van Baaren)

16.30: Taking things forward: developing collaborative work, dissemination and publication: Nigel Duncan and Caroline Strevens.

17.00: Close

**Workshop abstracts**

*Working with mental health nurses* (Sarah Campbell)

Currently all mental health nurse students at City, University of London attend a Personal Professional Development group (PPD). It is widely acknowledged that as a mental health nurse there will be an expectation to meet and deal competently with situations that can be chaotic, dangerous, tragic and infuriating as part of a team and at times leading the team and this knowledge forms the rationale for the PPD groups. We know from experience, observation and research that the work of mental health nursing is demanding, usually because of these factors. What we also know from evidence based practice and research is that if Mental Health nurses have no facility to explore the impact their work has on their ability to think critically and make decisions, risk can be increased and clinical decision making may be impeded. Fabricius, J. (1991); Edwards, D. & Burnard, P. (2003); Cameron, D., Kapur, R., & Campbell, P. (2005); Saarikoski, M., Warne, T., Aunio, R., & Leino-Kilpi, H. (2006); Evans, M. (2007); Gorostidi, X. Z., Egilegor, X. H., Erice, M. J. A., Iturriotz, M. J. U., Garate, I. E., Lasa, M. B. et al. (2007); Carver, N., Clibbens, N., Ashmore, R., & Sheldon, J. (2014).

The purpose of the PPD group is multi-faceted and is aimed to address these issues. This closed educational group is held within a regular, consistent and safe environment throughout the mental health nursing students’ training. The groups’ intention is to develop student nurses’ knowledge and understanding of the psychological impact the work has on the individual, the team and the organisation and how this can promote or deplete the quality of service provision and its safe ethical delivery.

This activity here at City, University of London, has been highly commended by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and is a mandatory part of the training.

This presentation will explain the quality and efficacy of these groups from student evaluations and a facilitator perspective.

*Working with speech and language therapists* (Kirsty Harrison and Marie-Therese Worthington)

Perceived stress levels have been found to be high in healthcare students (Pau and Croucher, 2003; Shapiro, Shapiro and Schwartz, 2000). Further to the usual pressures that students experience, healthcare students like speech and language therapists (SLTs) are subjected to additional demands, such as dealing with emotions that may arise from working with sick people or children where there are child protection issues in the home (Gribble et al, 2017; Birks, McKendree and Watts, 2009).

Additionally, SLT students need to develop effective working relationships with a wide range of people and stake holders.  Understandably, many students find placements emotionally challenging.

To support BSc3 SLT students with this, the Student Counselling Service and Speech and Language Therapy academics worked collaboratively to establish professional development groups which first ran in 2015.  The focus of the professional development groups was fluid and determined by the individual participants, in line with a counselling approach.  The groups offered an opportunity to discuss aspects of placements that students found challenging and to consider their responses to these experiences.

*The interdisciplinary clinic project*, (Isobel Ryder and Caroline Strevens)

Caroline Strevens (Head, School of Law), University of Portsmouth and Dr Isobel Ryder (Programme Lead, Adult Nursing, School of Health Sciences & Social Work)

The Law student generalist advice clinic project is well established in the local community setting operating from Johns Pounds and Somerstown Community Hub in Portsmouth. The School of Law and the School of Health Sciences are in the early stages of developing the clinic into an interdisciplinary health justice partnership student clinic.

This presentation will examine and justify how we plan to embed principles of positive psychology into our curriculum. These students are studying nursing, dentistry and law and will work together in a joint learning environment that includes problem solving, relationship-building, communication and collaboration skills in an educational setting which will provide live client legal and public health advice. We will discuss our reasons for including psychological wellbeing in the clinic curriculum, how this is being undertaken, and the challenges of this approach.

*Love of Money: the root of all evil?* Caroline Strevens (Portsmouth)

This presentation will discuss the importance of values in relation to psychological wellbeing (Ryff, 1989). Values are often overlooked but values are important in terms of motivation and meaning. ‘A value is an enduring belief that some goals are preferable to others’ (Peterson, 2006, pg 170). Being able to live one’s life in accordance with one’s own values supports psychological wellbeing. In turn this may affect ethical decision-making and resilience to stress. This can benefit both law students and legal professionals. In contrast, being obstructed from living in accordance with one’s values has a negative impact.

Using the work of Krieger and Sheldon I will discuss the implications of using autonomy support in law school to promote psychological wellbeing in law students (who may be extrinsically motivated to study law).

References:

Peterson, C. (2006). A primer in positive psychology. Oxford University Press.

Ryff, C. D. (1989). Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being. Journal of personality and social psychology, 57(6), 1069.

Sheldon, K. M., & Krieger, L. S. (2007). Understanding the negative effects of legal education on law students: A longitudinal test of self-determination theory. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 33(6), 883-897.

Krieger, L. S., & Sheldon, K. (2015). What makes lawyers happy? Transcending the anecdotes with data from 6200 lawyers. The George Washington University Law Review, 83(2), 554-627.

*Resilience and positive motivation: The experience of law clinic students working with real clients:* Nigel Duncan (City)

Students studying for the Bar Professional Training Course at City Law School may choose to undertake work with real clients as one of their Option modules. Three options are available, each working with an experienced agency in the relevant field: Free Representation Unit (FRU) and National Centre for Domestic Violence (NCDV). Students may represent clients in Employment Tribunals or in Social Security Tribunals, or they may assist victims of domestic violence to prepare their cases and witness statements for court, in order to receive protection from further abuse.

Students were asked to complete a survey which sought their responses to the emotional and other challenges raised by working with these clients and with other professionals who might be opposing them or judging their cases. This survey was followed up by a focus group which explored students’ perceptions of empathy (Duncan, 2011), sought to look critically at the concept of resilience (Webster & Rivers 2017) and addressed the elements (competence, autonomy and relatedness) that are often argued to maximise positive motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000, Sheldon & Krieger (2007).

This session will present initial findings and explore with workshop participants how these insights might best be used to prepare our students for their continuing studies and for practice as lawyers.

*How living out ethical values may be linked to the well-being one achieves through legal work:* Chris Megone (Leeds) and Leonie Venhoeven (Dijksterhuis & Van Baaren)

Chris Megone and Leonie Venhoeven will combine research in the field of Aristotelian ethics and in psychology, to examine how living out ethical values in one’s professional life may lead to well-being or happiness that one achieves through legal work. They will explore two possible links. First, they will examine whether there are certain values such that if you manifest those values in the conduct of your legal work that leads to well-being. Second, they will examine whether people need to see their legal work as aligned with the values they already possess in order for the conduct of legal work to lead to well-being. After short introductions to the Aristotelian context and to Leonie’s work on links between ethical behaviour and well-being in another sphere (environmentally friendly behaviour), we will work in small groups on questions pertaining to these two views on the relationship between values and well-being in legal work. At the end we will summarise, and will sketch a further work-plan for conducting research on this relationship in the legal area.