

The NES Health Psychology Stage 2 Training Programme

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1. Introduction: What is a health psychologist, and what do they do?

Health psychologists are experts in applying psychological knowledge, research and interventions to promote and improve health and the health care system and to inform health policy. They work with patients, carers/family members, communities and health care professionals, in groups, with individuals and organisations. They can play an important role in helping to meet targets and policy initiatives. This includes expertise in health behaviour change. Promoting effective health behaviour change is a crucial part of the Scottish government's strategy to support people's efforts to improve health and lifestyles.

2. What can health psychologists contribute?

A Health Psychologist has high level competencies in research, delivery of interventions, consultancy, teaching and training, and generic professional skills.

These competencies are acquired during **Stage 2** training, including:

- **Practice:** Developing professional practice, designing healthcare policy and practice.
- **Implement interventions for behaviour change and maintenance;** for example, improve self-efficacy, set realistic goals, cope with barriers to change.
- **Research:** designing, implementing and evaluating research on issues relevant to managing health and health behaviour.
- **Consultancy:** planning, implementing, evaluating, healthcare projects for clients.
- **Teaching and training:** providing theory-driven, evidence-based training for health professionals, others delivering health care and patients.
- Presenting accessible and meaningful **health related information** so that people can make better informed choices.

3. Supply of high quality trainees: NES Training Programme.

NES recognises the importance of adding Health Psychology to the NHS skill mix in Scotland by supporting training posts. Since 2007 NES has jointly funded (with NHS Health Boards) 2 year training posts for 35 trainee health psychologists in NHS Health Boards in Scotland. The boxes below summarise the diverse areas of work these trainees have covered.

4. Assessing Impact: Outputs from the NES Stage 2 Programme

The programme outputs have exceeded expectations and been of high quality. This includes over 30 journal publications (including systematic reviews), national and international conference presentations, topic specific reports – and other outputs such as training materials, and videos.

Example: Health Psychologists have trained over 800 home support workers in **psychological approaches to promoting independence and self management of ones health and wellbeing**, with North Lanarkshire Council and NHS Lanarkshire. The Health Psychology Service won the Glasgow Herald 2015 Health and Social Care Integration award for the work. A Video: 'Outcomes and Health Psychology Service' presented at North Lanarkshire Council Social work roadshows.

Examples of work:

Health Improvement/Inequalities/Prevention

- Working with residents and partners in a local community establish a co-production approach to improving health in the area (NHS Ayrshire & Arran)
- Redesigning generic health behavior change training for health professionals (NHS Ayrshire & Arran)
- Behaviour change in keep well health checks (NHS Dumfries & Galloway)
- Behaviour change intervention for looked after young people (NHS Fife)
- Review of behaviour change techniques in relation to Keep Well projects (NHS Fife)
- Community pharmacy public health service: attitudes to behaviour change (NHS Forth Valley)
- Supporting the implementation of the Keep Well Programme (NHS Grampian)
- Assessment of Health Behaviour change competencies (NHS Grampian)
- Health coaching in primary care, supporting healthy eating, drinking, smoking, physical activity (NHS Grampian)
- Automaticity of health practitioner habits in delivering health behaviour change practice (NHS Grampian)
- Physical activity interventions in areas of social disadvantage (NHS Lothian)
- Oral health among pre-school nursery children in deprived areas (NHS Tayside)
- Developing and evaluating bowel cancer screening interventions in hard-to-reach groups (NHS Grampian)
- Smoking cessation in a mental health in-patient population (NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde)
- Developing strengths based approaches to working with families around parenting (NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde)
- Developing behaviour change interventions as part of a broader service to promote returning to work (NHS Grampian)

Long Term Conditions/Physical Health

- Developing and Evaluating Distress Management System training for Specialist Nurses in Heart Failure (NHS Ayrshire & Arran)
- Working with the Medical Paediatric Psychology Service to validate the Paediatric Index of Emotional Distress (PI-ED) (NHS Ayrshire & Arran)
- Self-management for long term conditions in deprived areas (NHS Borders)
- Developing a motivational intervention for lifestyle change in diabetes patients (NHS Borders)
- Assessing the psychosocial and behaviour change needs of men with cancer (NHS Fife)
- Supporting lifestyle change in long-term conditions (NHS Fife)
- Psychological intervention to manage COPD symptoms and reduce hospital admissions (NHS Grampian)
- Supporting patients requiring dental treatment to manage their dental anxiety (NHS Grampian)
- Promoting footcare health for people with diabetes (NHS Lothian)
- Sexual health in adolescents, preventing teenage pregnancy (NHS Tayside)
- Developing an intervention to prevent re-infection of Hepatitis C after treatment (NHS Tayside)

Drugs and Alcohol

- Exploring the predictors of binge drinking in 18-24 year olds (Ayrshire and Arran)
- Integrated care programme in drug and alcohol services (NHS Fife)
- Alcohol brief interventions in A&E departments (NHS Fife)
- Alcohol brief intervention project in community pharmacies (NHS Forth Valley)
- Alcohol brief interventions in hard-to-reach groups (NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde)

Healthy Eating/Activity/Weight Management

- Systematic review and development of an intervention for overweight and obese children in relation to the Child Healthy Weight Strategy (NHS Dumfries & Galloway)
- Development of a group pilot weight management intervention for people prior to bariatric surgery (NHS Fife)
- Developing a weight management intervention for young adults with psychosis (NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde)

Frailty and dementia

- Evaluating programmes for falls prevention in older people (NHS Tayside)
- Assessing the needs of carers accessing dementia services (NHS Tayside)
- Development of a Health Psychology Consultancy Service for re-enablement in older people (NHS Lanarkshire)
- Psychosocial barriers training to health and social care staff working with older people (NHS Lanarkshire)
- Communication skills training to health and social care staff working with older people (NHS Lanarkshire)

Antenatal and Postnatal

- Breastfeeding practices in teenage mothers in socially deprived areas (NHS Ayrshire Arran)
- Scoping and literature review to inform a structured approach for promoting infant mental health to fathers (NHS Ayrshire Arran)
- Exploring the factors associated with smoking cessation relapse among postnatal women (NHS Ayrshire & Arran)
- Developing postnatal smoking relapse prevention intervention for local smoking cessation services (NHS Ayrshire & Arran)
- Exploring midwives attitudes to discussing maternal weight with pregnant women who are obese (NHS Ayrshire & Arran)
- Antenatal and postnatal health inequalities (NHS Borders)
- Attitudes to breastfeeding among health professionals (NHS Dumfries & Galloway)
- Understanding breastfeeding maintenance in new mothers (NHS Dumfries & Galloway)
- Midwifery: Antenatal assessment and screening for alcohol consumption (NHS Tayside)