

It was also interesting to note that, despite the presence of social workers in both day hospitals, only two respondents cited them as a source of information about benefits. This may be related to people's perception that they did not require further help, and perhaps too an assumption that the DSS would tell them if they were entitled to any other benefits.

At the moment there is no standard system within the DSS for screening those who apply for one benefit to see if they are entitled to another. Our study indicates that there is a need for this, and we are encouraged that the department itself, in a recent report, recommends a client-based, rather than a benefits-based, service (Moodie *et al.*, 1988).

There are several schemes across the country, often involving the Citizens Advice Bureau, where advice agencies have been set up in psychiatric hospitals and units (Davis, 1988). It may be that the DSS

itself should consider going out to psychiatric units once it has developed its client-based service.

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Training Matters

Metanoia

HUGH FREEMAN, Editor, *British Journal of Psychiatry*

Opportunities for training in psychotherapy have become more extensive in Britain over the last decade or so, though the increase – as always – has been seen mainly in London and its satellites. The diversity of these training organisations, most of which are outside the mainstreams of NHS and university courses, does not make it easy for their value to be assessed in conventional terms, as well as raising problematic issues about the interface between the public and private sectors.

One of the most interesting of the newer facilities is to be found in a converted Victorian house in Ealing.

Metanoia – a Greek word meaning transformation of mind or character – is the title of this psychotherapy training institute, established by a group of professionals who left South Africa for political reasons, some 13 years ago. On arrival here, they recreated in a Bayswater flat an idea that had begun in Johannesburg. The founder is a clinical psychologist with a background in psychotherapy and neurophysiology, and there are two other psychologists both with experience in education, as well as two medical/psychiatric consultants. All staff members have worked in psychiatric hospitals at some

time, one having spent many years working as a child psychiatrist within the NHS. Additional tutors visit the training programme to teach topics of special interest.

Since moving into their present premises in October 1987 the core group have lived in flats within the same building, two of them being married to each other. No doubt the degree of commitment shown in this way represents one of the strengths of the organisation.

Metanoia is committed to an integrative approach to psychotherapy training. It conducts two major psychotherapy trainings: in transactional analysis and in Gestalt psychotherapy. Both these are three-year programmes with a hundred enrolled for transactional analysis training and about twice that number for Gestalt training. There is also a counselling course that offers instruction in Rogerian theory and techniques. For those who have completed their training in at least one major approach to psychotherapy, an advanced integrative psychotherapy course offers teaching in psychopathology, classification, and even psychopharmacology – as these are seen by **Metanoia** to be relevant to psychotherapeutic practice. **Metanoia** also offers a diploma in the principles of the theory and practice of supervision. Most courses are based on modules of two to five days at a time and several general practitioners and psychiatrists have undertaken one or more of the trainings.

An important objective of the organisation is further to develop professional standards in humanistic and integrative psychotherapy; in particular, it wishes to negate the myth that values such as professional ethics and an appropriate background for therapists have been abandoned. High standards of this kind are seen as important if humanistic psychotherapy is to gain respect. **Metanoia** is keen to maintain links with the established professions, and undertakes stringent selection for admission to its courses. Most trainees are aged between 30 and 50,

and are already established in some other field of work; they come from all parts of the country. After qualifying, some go into private practice. So far as possible, suitable trainees are not excluded on financial grounds; some are funded by local health authorities, some receive bursaries from the organisation itself, and a few give practical help in repayment. Those working full-time may have to attend modules at weekends or during periods of leave. The programme is structured to accommodate such needs.

Metanoia regards itself as the largest source of training in Britain which is alternative to the mainstream professions, including psychoanalysis. From September 1989, they propose to add a training in child psychotherapy to their list of courses. The founders believe that on the basis of several humanistic and existential theories, together with material from more traditional approaches, they have developed an integrated model of psychotherapeutic change (which can include the use of medication) to cover a very wide field from simple counselling to dealing with severe emotional disturbance. This is seen as contrasting with orthodox training in either psychiatry, psychoanalysis, or any of its derivatives, where there is often a tendency to lose sight of the contributions that can be made by alternative models of psychological disorder.

The home of **Metanoia** is a spacious, rather rambling former house, with a pleasant outlook on to Ealing Common. It is attractively decorated and furnished, with strong Oriental influences, and there is a variety of rooms for either dyadic interviews or groups of differing size. The core group hope that they can not only help individuals to absorb an integrated model of psychotherapy, but also influence the mainstream professions to broaden their training so that some of the special qualities of humanistic techniques can be added. This seems a very legitimate objective, and it would be excellent if more professional trainees could take advantage of opportunities of this kind – particularly outside London.