Integrating, evolving and maintaining integrity as a dramatherapist in the NHS

A BADth NHS sub-committee sharing practice event

Date: Friday 23rd November 2018 - Time: 9.30 to 16.30

Location: Hatfield, Hertfordshire

Dramatherapists in the NHS are often integrating other therapeutic models into their practice, such as MBT, mindfulness, CAT, systemic, CBT. Other psychological therapists are integrating drama into their practice. Some of us are fortunate to be employed as dramatherapists. Others practice under generic titles or another profession. We face the challenge of not being a “core” profession, and not in most of the NICE guidelines. There are also opportunities to offer something unique and different to the core, to make our mark in new service areas. What makes dramatherapy unique in the NHS? What do we offer service users?

As the NHS celebrates its 70th birthday how do we maintain our creative approach and our integrity as dramatherapists, whilst adapting to new ideas and models of practice?

The event is aimed at BADth members who are currently working in the NHS or in organisations that provide a service to the NHS, student members and members who are considering developing their practice in the NHS.

The day will consist of presentations and workshops led by dramatherapists working in the NHS, and some time for networking, discussion and debate.

Hatfield is approximately 25 minutes by train from Kings Cross or Finsbury Park. The venue is a 10-minute walk from the station. Some trains from the North stop at Stevenage where you can change to Hatfield (15 minutes). The venue is just off the A1M and close to the M25. There is limited parking on site (please ask if you need disabled parking), some parking on nearby streets and a paying car park at the train station.

PRICES:  BADth members: £25  BADth Student/Retired members £15

BOOKING FORM - NHS sub-committee sharing practice event – Friday 23rd November 2018

There are limited places for this event (email: info@badth.org.uk - Tel: 01242 235 515).

In order to secure your place, please send your form and cheque made payable to ‘BADth’ for the total fee to:

BADth, P.O.Box 1257, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL50 9YX or return the form by email and send your payment by bank transfer, ensuring you use your name as a reference to:


Name:..............................................................................................................................................

Phone: ........................................................................................................Email:.................................................................

PRICE INCLUDES REFRESHMENTS BUT LUNCH WILL NOT BE PROVIDED.

BADth member ☐  BADth Student/Retired Member ☐  Membership no:.........................

Please note that we are unable to refund your fee or to transfer your place to another person or another date. A receipt, map, directions and further information will be sent to you when we have processed your booking.
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Programme

9.15-9.45  Registration and coffee
9.45      Introduction to the day
10.00     Embracing the wilderness of the NHS - Steve Mitchell
10.50     Identity as a conversation with the NHS (workshop) - Louise Combes
11.40-12  Break
12.00     May Contain Nuts Theatre Company: Performance, Q and A
12.45-13.30 Lunch
13.30     Choice of session:
1. Pick, Mix, Match: Dramatherapy and DBT – Rachel Dawson OR
2. Drawing on dramatherapy skills while working with patients and staff in physical health wards - Katharine McAuley and Marta Paglioni.
14.20     Choice of session:
1. A new normal: does it matter what you call me if I know who I am? – Sarah Burgin OR
2. The drama and story group - an open approach to dramatherapy - Natasha Broomfield and Helen Broughton.
14.50-15.10 Break
15.10     Table top discussions on clinical areas
16.10-16.30 Closure

INTRODUCTION - The BADth NHS Sub-committee
The sub-committee and conference organisers are Clare Hubbard, Louise Combes and Kim Hardie. The committee all work for the NHS, and volunteer on the committee in their own time. Clare is Dramatherapy Lead in Adult Community Services in Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT), where she has worked for 18 years as a dramatherapist for adults who experience mental health difficulties. Louise works for Aspire, a charity funded organisation that provides the first episode psychosis service to the NHS in Leeds. Kim joined the committee whilst working in an honorary position in CNWL and has recently started in post for Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust (KMPT) working in a Democratic Therapeutic Community for personality disorders.

10.00-10.50 - EMBRACING THE WILDERNESS OF THE NHS - Steve Mitchell
Entering any Wilderness, whether desert, rain forest, mountain range or ocean, is metaphorically similar to working in the NHS, full of unexpected delights and bewildering complexities.

In an institution, behind all the protocols, policies and procedures, it is governed psychologically by what Grotowski in para-theatre named ‘fear’. However, this is the same fear we encounter working in-depth with a client and it is this knowledge that can help to us understanding and respond to managerial hoops in the NHS.

If you choose to sojourn in the wilds, you need an aptitude, as well as the equipment and resources to overcome, protect and guide you through it. This talk will detail how in my twenty-eight years in the wilderness of work in the NHS as a full-time dramatherapist I addressed the adventure.

Steve Mitchell was a full-time dramatherapist in the NHS (for twenty-eight years). Director of Pathfinder Studio (for over thirty years), and was course director at The Institute of Dramatherapy at Roehampton, London, now the University of Roehampton (for nine years). He is widely published and presented work in Europe, Israel the USA and the UK.
10.50-11.40 - IDENTITY AS A CONVERSATION WITH THE NHS - Louise Combes

An experiential workshop to explore our personal and professional identity as dramatherapists in relation to the NHS. We will use creative methods to work out what we really want to say about who we are and what we do.

Louise Combes is a dramatherapist, Creative Arts Supervisor and Systemic Practitioner. For the last 7 years she has provided dramatherapy at Aspire in Leeds (the largest early intervention in psychosis service in the UK) and developed a second post in YORK. She continues to draw on her past life as a Communications professional in Theatre, Film and TV to ensure a steady stream of referrals from staff and funding from commissioners. Louise is on the BADth NHS sub-committee.

12-12.45 - PERFORMANCE – May Contain Nuts Theatre Company

Winner of the 2018 AHA Guardian Award for Innovation in Mental Health, May Contain Nuts was formed in 2012 by dramatherapist Gerald Maiello as part of ongoing support and exploration for service users of HPFT as a follow on from their dramatherapy. The aim of the company was to continue to explore mental illness, to create a production from the exploration, and to then perform it to a wider audience in order to educate people and promote the subject. All members are either current or ex-service users. The company rehearses once-a-week for 2-3hrs. In that time company members improvise scenes based upon discussion of their own personal experiences of mental illness and trauma. These scenes are then re-worked each week until they form a structure and storyline for the play. Our audience base has been theatres, conferences, MDT’s, and schools. We are guest lecturers for the Doctorate in Psychology course at Hertfordshire University, the dramatherapy course at Roehampton University and soon part of St. Mary’s university. Each performance we hold is followed by a workshop, small group work and a Q&A session where we ask students to ask us questions they would hesitate to ask in the clinical setting. We have written and performed pieces for the Pump House Theatre (Blue Pixie) and the Halloween Walks for the Old Town for Hemel Hempstead. Recently we led on ‘The value of Play’ at a community psychology festival.

The next two sessions will run in parallel with a choice of session 1 or session 2


This presentation focuses on how a dramatherapist in a Tier 4 CAMHS unit used DBT techniques within her dramatherapy practice. When DBT training became mandatory for the multi-disciplined team working at the Tier 4 unit back in November 2016, the dramatherapist became a little sceptical. How would this affect her dramatherapy practice she had spent so much time and energy establishing? Instead she learnt to pick and mix, mix and match both strands of therapy with an interesting and creative outcome. Using her work with adolescents diagnosed with emerging personality disorder this presentation seeks to display those outcomes and assess how two therapies became one.

Rachel Dawson trained in dramatherapy at the University of Derby after a decade of teaching GCSE and A Level drama in secondary schools. Having specialised in emotional and behavioural difficulties in adolescents, Rachel provides dramatherapy for Tier 4 CAMHS and runs a practice in two South Yorkshire secondary schools. She is a visiting lecturer at Sheffield Hallam University and trains other professionals in the cathartic nature of drama.

13.30-14.15 - Session 2: DRAWING ON DRAMATHERAPY SKILLS WHILE WORKING WITH PATIENTS AND STAFF IN PHYSICAL HEALTH WARDS - Katharine McAuley and Marta Paglioni

Katharine McAuley and Marta Paglioni, both qualified dramatherapists, are working in physical health wards under different job roles (psychotherapist and researcher). They will share both the opportunities and the challenges they are facing while trying to use dramatherapy in NHS physical health wards.

Katharine McAuley has experience working with children in schools and in adult acute mental health. She started a new role this year working as a therapist on physical health wards in an NHS trust, at patients’ bedside.
Marta Paglioni graduated in Roehampton in 2016. In September 2017, she was granted a match-funded clinical PhD studentship (BU and NHS) to research in the field of Compassionate Communication with older patients in hospital. She is now Postgraduate Researcher for the faculty of Health and Social Sciences of Bournemouth University and as per the clinical part of her studentship she offers her skills as a dramatherapist to Yeovil Hospital NHS trust (Somerset), where she trained as a Schwartz Round facilitator. She has run a workshop on Storytelling for volunteers and on burn-out prevention for the staff. She is also available to visit patients who are referred to her for emotional support.

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14.20-14.50pm - Session 1: “A NEW NORMAL”: DOES IT MATTER WHAT YOU CALL ME IF I KNOW WHO I AM? – Sarah Burgin
Sarah will discuss themes arising from employment as a specialist mental health practitioner (dramatherapist). The role is a pathway into work. HCPC registration allows us as therapists to gain employment in a shrinking resource. But what am I? There is confusion in arts therapy, yet not so much in CAMHS. How important for our identity are names (coveted titles) and roles. What can we and do we offer? Demonstrating at a grass root level what a little bit of creativity can do. For a profession that is built on flexibility and creativity are we holding ourselves back if we don’t adapt?

Sarah Burgin is a dramatherapist working as a CAMHS mental health practitioner.

We will share our experience of using dramatherapy practices to develop an atmosphere of community on an acute psychiatric inpatient ward. The drama and story group that we co-facilitate runs once a week on a female-only ward, and is open to both staff and patients to join. We will talk about our decision to bring myth, movement, song and drama out of a closed space, and into an open, communal area on the ward; as well as discussing our approach to facilitating a group that feels open to everyone. In doing so we hope to provoke questions on the nature and purpose of dramatherapy in acute settings, exploring the needs of the ward as a whole, and practice that sits on the edges of dramatherapy.

Natasha Broomfield and Helen Broughton graduated from MA Drama and Movement Therapy at CSSD in 2017. They currently co-facilitate a drama and story group and a dramatherapy group in acute inpatient care within SLAM, work which evolved out of a training placement. They are also in the process of establishing a new therapeutic arts organisation, Nascent. Through Nascent they have been running a series of workshops titled Mythwork, in which they invite participants to use drama and movement therapy practice to promote wellbeing and develop their creative practice.

15.10-16.10 - Table top discussions:
Topics will be decided based on the clinical areas of interest of delegates. Each table will have a host. There will be an opportunity to move round 2-3 tables during the hour. Hosts will collect discussion points and reflect back to the whole group.

16.10-16.30 - CLOSURE – The BADth NHS sub-committee