

Louise Blundell

Clearing the cobwebs of misunderstanding about emotional distress : Psycho-educative booklets for Primary Care

Abstract

In these crazy, fast-paced lives we lead with time-pressures, financial pressures and family and community breakdown, demand for psychotherapy services is reaching epidemic levels.

In the current climate of increasing demand for mental health care in the Primary Care setting – encouraged by Government directives promoting the use of psychological therapies and bibliotherapy, we psychotherapists have a responsibility to make the best use of ourselves as a scarce resource by sharing and disseminating our knowledge, skills and expertise to help those individuals experiencing emotional distress (for whom our profession exists), and to aid our primary care colleagues in doing so – in practical, efficient, cost-effective and time-appropriate ways.

Utilising a bricolage of phenomenological, narrative and grounded theory qualitative research approaches, involving meta-analysis, reflection and synthesis of information obtained from the relevant literature, professional training and experience, psychotherapists of varying orientations and individuals experiencing emotional distress, comprehensive booklets on emotional disorders commonly presenting to the Primary Care setting were produced. These include depression, generalised anxiety disorder, panic disorder, post traumatic stress disorder, bereavement and social phobia.

The booklets are intended as a psycho-educational resource for use by psychotherapists, GPs and other Primary Care health professionals, for provision to individuals experiencing emotional distress, and include both psycho-educative and self-help information – describing the symptoms, experience, theoretical understandings, potential psychotherapy encounter, self-management strategies and relevant self-help methodologies.

An experiential and methodological commentary on the process of researching, collating, writing and distributing the booklets is presented.