

## Impact case study (REF3)

<b>Institution:</b> York St John University		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> UoA 3 - Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy		
<b>Title of case study:</b> YSJU Counselling & Mental Health Centre		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2016 – present		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Professor Lynne Gabriel	Professor of Counselling & Mental Health; Centre Director	2003 - present
Dr Gary Shepherd	Anger management lead & Centre counsellor	2017 - present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> From 2016 to 2020.		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> N		
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words)		
<p>The York St John Counselling &amp; Mental Health Centre (<a href="https://www.yorks.ac.uk/working-with-the-community/counselling-and-mental-health-centre/">https://www.yorks.ac.uk/working-with-the-community/counselling-and-mental-health-centre/</a>) provides accessible evidence-based wellbeing interventions to citizens. Established in 2016, it develops and delivers practice-based evidence and evidence-based services for citizens of York and North Yorkshire, along with the recent addition of online practice and research due to the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Underpinned by core values of <i>community</i>, <i>collaboration</i>, and <i>creativity</i>, the Centre develops research and practice associated with a range of mental health and wellbeing issues, with specific expertise and research outputs related to domestic violence, bereavement, trauma, and anger management. It offers high quality research, training and placement options for trainee practitioners and students interested in developing skills and knowledge of leadership and management in frontline mental health services.</p> <p>Partnerships forged with regional and local domestic violence organisations (<i>IDAS; York Women's Centre</i>), a local council (<i>City of York</i>), a Coaching Community Interest Company (<i>Coaching York</i>), and a hospice (<i>Teeside Hospice</i>), support delivery of research projects, whilst an active Advisory Board brings strategic expertise from health, public health, business and third sectors <b>[5.3]</b>.</p>		
<b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words)		
<p>As a precursor to opening of the Centre, the Director was part of a team successful in securing £450k funding for a randomised trial (PRaCTICED) from the British Association for Counselling &amp; Psychotherapy <b>[3.6]</b>. The trial examined the efficacy of an NHS <i>Increasing Access to Psychological Therapies</i> (IAPT) intervention, <i>Counselling for Depression</i> (CfD), compared with outcomes from Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). Professor Gabriel secured NHS contracts to commission York St John to deliver (IAPT) training on CfD at York St John University. This is now a thriving NHS commissioned training programme for York St John and contributes to IAPT delivery across Northern England. A paper summarising the RCT outcomes is currently under review with <i>Lancet Psychiatry</i>.</p> <p>Funding of £10k was secured from York Feoffees, to work in partnership with IDAS (Independent Domestic Abuse Services) to research a young person to parent aggression project <b>[3.1]</b> and develop an evidence-based group intervention for children <b>[3.2]</b>. Key findings from the research included recognition of the value of intervening with both the aggressive child and the parent; it was also found that frontline workers (including social workers, police, domestic abuse agency workers, youth workers) could be deeply and negatively impacted by their work experiences <b>[3.1]</b>.</p>		

The pilot group for children found that participants valued the strengths-based approach which provided relationship and behavioural skills to take away from the group experience [3.2]. Additionally, the Centre's Director and Research Fellow (Dr Jeannette Roddy, Salford University) have developed a training curriculum for counsellors working with domestic abuse [3.3].

Dr Gary Shepherd leads on anger management research. Shepherd designed a behavioural modification module, delivered through the Centre, which demonstrated positive impact for participants who were able to make positive adjustments in their self and other perceptions and behaviours [3.5]. Dr Trish Hobman leads on training psychological therapists to deliver IAPT therapy in the NHS and led on delivery of the CfD practitioner training for practitioners involved in the PRaCTICED trial [3.6]. York St John contributed to the outcomes paper from the RCT (under review with *Lancet Psychiatry* at time of case study submission). Dr John Wilson, an Honorary Research Fellow in the Centre, collaborates with Professor Gabriel on bereavement research [3.4]. Teesside Hospice and the Centre are piloting a bereavement measure, AGES, developed through Centre research. A case study paper on the use of AGES is in review with the *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*. Feedback from the Teesside Hospice has been positive, with the measure providing valuable evidence of progress for the bereaved. At the time of the case study submission the research project *Learning from our Losses*, researching bereavement in the Care Home Sector during the Covid-19 pandemic, is being finalised.

In 2018, the York St John University Centre established a *Research and Training Clinic Consortium (RTCC)* involving York St John, Abertay, Newman and Salford Universities. Recent additions to RTCC research projects include the Open University, Roehampton, plus University of East London [5.10]. RTCC's inaugural project involves testing a new outcome measure, ReQoL (recovering quality of life measure, which the Centre is licensed to administer) within the context of humanistic and pluralistic therapies. Additionally, RTCC is undertaking a Prospero registered evidence review of online counselling.

In 2019 the Centre was invited to contribute to the creation of the *Northern Quarter Project*, a City of York Council initiated project in York involving York St John Counselling & Mental Health Centre, Converge, lived experience members of local communities, City of York Council, North Yorkshire Police, TEWV (Tees, Esk & Weir NHS Trust), Clinical Commissioning Group, and Mind. The work involves evidence-based decision-making and researching, and the mapping of current provision for mental health and wellbeing – see <https://www.yorkpress.co.uk/news/18216798.pioneering-project-boost-mental-health-northern-york-launched/>.

### 3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

#### Selected domestic violence references:

[3.1] Gabriel, Lynne, Tizro, Zahra, James, Hazel, Cronin-Davis, Jane, Beetham, Tanya, Corbally, Alice, Lopez-Moreno, Emily and Hill, Sarah (2018) "Give me some space": Exploring young person-to-parent aggression and violence. *Journal of Family Violence*, 33 (2). pp. 161-169. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10896-017-9928-1>

[3.2] Beetham, Tanya, Gabriel, Lynne and James, Hazel (2019) Young Children's Narrations of Relational Recovery: a School-Based Group for Children Who Have Experienced Domestic Violence. *Journal of Family Violence*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-018-0028-7>

[3.3] Roddy, Jeannette and Gabriel, Lynne (2019) A Competency Framework for Domestic Violence Counselling. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 47 (6). pp. 669-681. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03069885.2019.1599322>

#### Bereavement references:

**[3.4]** Wilson, John, **Gabriel, Lynne** and James, Hazel (2016) Making sense of loss and grief: the value of in-depth assessments. *Bereavement Care*, 35 (2). pp. 67-77. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02682621.2016.1218127>

#### Anger management references:

**[3.5]** Shepherd, Gary and Cant, Matthew (2019) Difficult to change? The differences between successful and not-so-successful participation in anger management groups. *Counselling & Psychotherapy Research*, 20 (2). pp 214-223. <https://doi.org/10.1002/capr.12276>

#### Counselling:

**[3.6]** Saxon, D., Ashley, K., Bishop-Edwards, L., Connell, J. Harrison, P., Ohlsen, S., Hardy, G.E., Kellett, S., Mukuria, C., Mank, T., Bower, P., Bradburn, M., Brazier, J., Elliott, R., **Gabriel, L.**, King, M., Pilling, S., Shaw, S., Waller, G., Barkham, M. (2017) A pragmatic randomized controlled trial assessing the non-inferiority of counselling for depression versus cognitive-behaviour therapy for patients in primary care meeting a diagnosis of moderate or severe depression (PRaCTICED): Study protocol for a randomized controlled trial. *Trials*, 18, 93. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13063-017-1834-6>

**Evidence of Quality:** outputs 1-6 are peer-reviewed articles. Peer reviewed grants include: PRaCTICED £450k multi-university RCT, PI Professor Michael Barkham / Professor Gabriel co-I (£22k to York St John) **[3.6]**. A Feoffees' grant of £10k supported research with IDAS **[3.1]**. A research project bid 'Learning from our Losses' on bereavement in the Care Sector is through to a second round for potential NIHR funding.

#### 4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

##### Nature of the Impact: Client Benefit

Generating sustainable practice is core to the Centre's work. The Centre has directly influenced the lives of over 1000 service users: positively impacting their relationships, families, work, and lives. Outcomes compare well with outputs from the Government's *Improving Access to Psychological Therapies* (IAPT) programme with 90% of our clients moving from moderate to minor mental distress across the course of treatment. Reach and significance is amplified through service user and partner networks, plus outcome evidence **[5.2; 5.9]**.

Client testimonies endorse how the services have enhanced their wellbeing and mental health. Reaching clients through health and social care contacts and networks in the wider community and by 'word of mouth', former clients now regularly recommending it to others. Direct impact through provision of research-informed and evidence-based interventions is epitomised in typical client feedback we receive **[5.2; 5.9]** - see examples below:

*"I have used the services of cmhc twice in recent years (for relationship counselling and anger management). Both experiences were of a service run in a professional but compassionate way leading to constructive and positive outcomes".*

*"The counselling has made a significant impact for me. Both in terms of dealing with current issues but also identifying and addressing underlying past issues that were having an impact on my life".*

*"Please keep doing what you're doing, and I know you will continue to make a difference to so many peoples' lives".*

Shepherd's work **[3.5]** proves how clients who access evidence-based anger management groups can support themselves through emotional regulation to move forward effectively and to change previous aggressive behaviour. This is also evidenced in the first client statement above. Gabriel and Wilson's work on bereavement **[3.4]** has led to the development of a grief measure, AGES, which is being tested in Teesside Hospice and the Centre; importantly, the measure provides

evidence for clients of how their counselling work has supported them to recover from their bereavement and loss. The measure has also been used for an online (video) COVID-19 bereavement support group; all members of the group moved from a deeply traumatised state through to acknowledgement of their situation and adjustment to their circumstances. Feedback from participants plus requests from stakeholders indicate the value of access to evidence-based bereavement support [5.8; 5.9], including a bereavement support group (pilot ran September-December 2020) and a closed social media support group (currently 400+ members). The Centre hosted the 2020 1<sup>st</sup> International Online Bereavement Conference, attended by several hundred UK and International delegates, generating interest in further work and events [5.7; 5.10], including being commissioned to provide consultancy to a national bereavement organisation [5.8], plus testimonies from the Hospice sector, epitomised by a 'thank you' letter from St Gemma's Hospice [5.9].

Gabriel et al's work on domestic violence and abuse (DVA) and its impact on young people and adults has drawn attention to the need for early interventions to prevent future mental ill-health or victimisation later in life [3.2]. DVA research highlighted the impact on frontline workers of exposure to violence and abuse [3.1] and influenced development of a research-informed training for frontline practitioners [3.3; 5.5]. The research has informed and supported work at IDAS, a leading UK DVA charity, and we are in the process of evaluating further groups delivered in North Yorkshire. As with many areas of work, Covid-19 has impacted on access to School contexts and pupils/parents/teachers.

### **Building Impact Impetus: Influencing Communities and Professionals**

The Centre's research and training practice not only influences local and national communities, citizens, and practitioners [5.1; 5.2], it also provides life and work-related experiences for new practitioner generations and roles in frontline mental health practice - not least in the form of *real-life and meaningful research and practice at the frontline of mental health services*. Since opening, over 100 trainee practitioner opportunities and research associate roles have created work-related administrative, management and Advisory Board placements for undergraduate and postgraduate students, plus five Graduate Interns furthered their careers. Employment for local students has been generated, with two students currently employed as Office Administrators. All former employees have secured jobs, internships, funded PhDs, or tenured academic Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) posts.

The Centre's research contributes to and informs the International *Pluralistic Practice Network* (<https://pluralisticpractice.weebly.com/links.html>). The network draws international academics and researchers from the field of integrative therapy practice. A 2016 textbook captures research-based and evidence-informed work and research from the network; see <https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/eur/the-handbook-of-pluralistic-counselling-and-psychotherapy/book243250#contents> which includes a chapter from Gabriel (2016, pages 300-313) and is used by UK and European Pluralistic training programmes (including University counsellor training programmes at Queens, Abertay, Roehampton, South Wales, Oslo).

Gabriel's work with the British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy and research-based textbooks on ethics have influenced practice ethics. *Relational Ethics in Practice*, an edited text <https://www.routledge.com/Relational-Ethics-in-Practice-Narratives-from-Counselling-and-Psychotherapy/Gabriel-Casemore/p/book/9780415425919> and *Speaking the Unspeakable* <https://www.routledge.com/Speaking-the-Unspeakable-The-Ethics-of-Dual-Relationships-in-Counselling/Gabriel/p/book/9780203086933> a research-informed exemplar text on dual and multiple role relationships in counselling and psychotherapy, have enhanced the clinical, training and research work in the clinic, as well as the counselling professions more widely, with citations in International journals plus use as resources within counsellor training sites [5.5]. Gabriel Chairs BACP's *Ethics and Good Practice Guidance Committee*, responsible for the development and enhancement of the Associations *Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions*, plus production of ethics resources available through multiple media, including online and print-based [5.1]. The synergies of professional knowledge and evidence derived from the Centre's work and research, concurrent with development work with the BACP Committee, provide a fertile context

and impetus for advancing evidence-informed practice; with updating of the Ethical Framework due in 2021, providing a context to innovate UK and International practice ethics.

Gabriel's ethics research informs BACP good practice guidance resources; her *Good Practice in Action GPIA044* resource is one of the top downloaded documents (*over 900 downloads January-November 2020, plus over 2000 views of an online e-resource on ethical decision-making*), providing research and practice-based informed guidance for counselling professionals. In early 2020, Gabriel worked closely with the Association to identify and provide key online evidence-based resources for upskilling practitioner members [5.1] during the Covid-19 crisis. One resource focussed primarily on safeguarding and managing risk online whilst the other supported supervisors to prepare them for challenges they may encounter when working with supervisees online [5.1]. These online resource events were attended by over 2,000 practitioner members of BACP including International members. Gabriel's work supported BACP to venture into delivering remotely recorded online events to large numbers of Association members [5.1].

Research and practice outputs reached York and North Yorkshire communities through York Mix (a monthly column across 2019) and broadcasts on Radio York. A paper on domestic abuse, published in 2020 in *The Conversation* [5.4], generated an increase in domestic violence referrals to the Centre and the development of a partnership with York Women's Centre.

Arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, to enable access to the research-based Centre services, practitioners were provided with training on working through online video and telephone platforms. We are now seeing increased referrals from across the UK and, to support our practice and research into online therapy, a rapid review is underway with RTCC members (*the review involves Open University plus Abertay, Salford, Newman, Roehampton and York St John Universities*) on the effectiveness of online counselling. The review has an approved *Prospero* registration. A second RTCC research phase will see analyses of its national minimum dataset - with national and international impact for the delivery of humanistic and pluralistic psychological therapies. Additionally, York St John University have invested in growth of the Centre through the provision of bespoke premises at 32-34 Clarence Street, York (due to open Autumn 2021) to enable expansion of research projects, knowledge production and exchange, and evidence-based research and practice placements.

#### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

[5.1] Testimonial: Statement from BACP Professional Body, on member engagement with Professor Gabriel's event for online therapy work.

[5.2] Testimonial: Client statement on the impact of accessing counselling at the Centre.

[5.3] Testimonial: Advisory Board Chair, British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy (BACP) Immediate Past Chair and Associate Professor for the Counselling Professions & Mental Health at Chester University.

[5.4] Article: Domestic abuse paper published in *The Conversation*.

[5.5] Testimonial: Statement from UEL programme tutor on using Gabriel's published evidence/ethics resources.

[5.6] Public News Article: York Press item on the York Northern Quarter Project; the YSJU Counselling & Mental Health Centre is a key player in this novel and innovative project <https://www.yorkpress.co.uk/news/18216798.pioneering-project-boost-mental-health-northern-york-launched/>.

[5.7] The 1st International Online Bereavement Conference – November 2020, co-hosted by York St John Counselling & Mental Health Centre and UK Online Events team.

[5.8] Correspondence: Invitation to undertake bereavement consultancy work.

[5.9] Testimonials: bereavement clients of the mental health centre.

[5.10] Correspondence: Expression of Interest and request to join the York St John founded Research & Training Clinic Consortium (RTCC).