



Health Psychology in Action

Edited by
Mark Forshaw
David Sheffield

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About the Editors

Mark Forshaw is a Chartered and Registered Health Psychologist and Chartered Scientist. He has worked variously at the University of Manchester, Coventry University, Leeds Metropolitan University and Staffordshire University. He has a specific leadership role in external liaison and consultancy, holds some national positions in professional body work, and is the author of a number of books and articles across a wide range of psychological research themes and issues. Outside work, he is a film 'buff', an avid traveller, a poet, a painter of 'semi-abstract' work, and a number of other things he doesn't have enough time for. He tries very hard not to take things seriously, most of all himself.

David Sheffield is the Associate Head of the Centre for Psychological Research at the University of Derby. He is a Health Psychologist with the UK Health Professions Council and a Chartered Psychologist with the British Psychological Society Division of Health Psychology. Following a PhD at Glasgow Caledonian University, he worked in the United States for 6 years in cardiology divisions; there he was supported by grants by the National Institutes of Health to examine the role of psychological factors in the perception of pain in cardiac patients and the effects of mental stress on ischaemia. Returning to lecture at Staffordshire University in 2001, he helped to develop the first Professional Doctorate in Health Psychology in the United Kingdom that provided Stage 2 training. As well as contributing to doctorate, masters and degree programmes, he has supervised 13 doctoral students to completion. He moved to the University of Derby where his research extends to stress and cardiovascular responses, positive psychological interventions to improve well-being, pain and mathematics anxiety.

List of Contributors

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Sheila Bonas works in private practice as a Health Psychologist and Counsellor, and also has a part-time academic post in Clinical Psychology at the University of

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Neil Coulson is a Chartered and Registered Health Psychologist. He has worked previously at the University of Exeter, University of Plymouth, University of Derby and University of Nottingham. He is currently based at the Institute of Work, Health & Organisations (IWHO) at the University of Nottingham where he has been the Deputy Director of IWHO for the past four years. He is currently the Course Director for the Professional Doctorate in Health Psychology programme. He has held and continues to hold a number of positions on committees and boards of professional bodies such as the British Psychological Society. His research interests focus on the role of online support communities in helping patients manage long-term illness.

Lorna Dodd is a Health Psychologist working as a Senior Lecturer in Psychology at Newman University College, Birmingham. Lorna lectures on a number of undergraduate and postgraduate psychology modules, is involved in developing new and exciting programmes to align with current psychology trends and engages in scholarly work and health psychology research. Lorna has a Doctorate in Health Psychology from Staffordshire University and is a member of several professional bodies. Lorna's area of research falls within the umbrella of health behaviours and health-related lifestyles of young adults, in particular, a student population.

Darren Flynn is a Chartered Psychologist. His PhD investigated the psychological aspects of idiopathic scoliosis. He was previously a Research Fellow, a Lecturer in Psychology and a Senior Lecturer in Research Methods. Currently he is a Senior Research Associate with the Decision Making and Organisation of Care Group in the Institute of Health and Society at Newcastle University, working on the development of decision support for thrombolytic treatment in acute stroke care. He has co-authored a book on the influence of nonmedical factors on medical decision making and articles on subjects such as prostate cancer, dementia, gastrointestinal disorders and idiopathic scoliosis.

Claire Hallas is a Practitioner Psychologist with the UK Health Professions Council and a chartered psychologist with the British Psychological Society Division of Health Psychology. She has a PhD from the University of Liverpool, and postgraduate training in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy from the Oxford Cognitive Therapy Centre. She has spent the last 15 years delivering psychology services in a variety of UK National Health Service trusts specializing in the psychological care of cardiothoracic and oncology patients. She held a Consultant Health Psychologist post and was the Deputy Director of Rehabilitation & Therapies Services from 2004 to 2008 in a London tertiary care trust. She has worked as a Consultant Health Psychologist at

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Tim Moss is a Reader in Health Psychology at the University of the West of England (UWE), Bristol. He is registered with the Health Professions Council, the regulatory body for psychology in the United Kingdom. He leads the MSc Health Psychology programme, and is former programme director of the professional doctorate in health psychology programme at UWE, as well as contributing to other MSc and undergraduate programmes. He is the supervisor of several PhD students in the field of psychosocial adjustment to differences of appearance. Tim is the co-ordinator of the Derriford Appearance Scales project (www.derriford.info), providing measurement tools, advice and consultancy in the field of appearance and visible difference in the United Kingdom, Europe, Japan and the United States, amongst others. Tim is a member of the BPS Health Psychology Training Committee, and a BPS Assessor for the Stage 2 qualification in health psychology. He is a former Visitor for the Health Professions Council, involved in the evaluation of professional training programmes in psychology. From 2010, Tim has represented professional psychology training on the Advisory Board of the Psychology Network. He is also a fellow of the Royal Society for Public Health, and maintains an interest in public health applications of psychology. In 2011, Tim was appointed as Associate Head of Department of Psychology at UWE, with the Research/Knowledge Exchange portfolio.

Michael Murray is Professor of Social and Health Psychology and Head of the School of Psychology at Keele University, Staffordshire. Prior to that, he held appointments at other universities in England, Northern Ireland and Canada. He has published over 100 journal articles and chapters and (co-)authored and edited several books

and collections on critical and qualitative approaches to health psychology including *Qualitative Health Psychology: Theories and Methods* (with Chamberlain, Sage 1999), *Critical Health Psychology* (Palgrave, 2004) and *Health Psychology: Theory, Research & Practice* (with Marks, Sage 2010). He is the Associate Editor of the *Journal of Health Psychology* and of *Psychology & Health* and sits on the editorial boards of several other journals including *Health, Psychology & Medicine*, *Health Psychology Review*, *Arts & Health* and *Subjectivity*. His current research interests include the use of participatory methods to engage communities in various forms of collective action.

Felix Naughton completed his PhD and Health Psychology BPS Stage 2 training at the University of Cambridge in 2010. His general research interest is in changing health behaviours, particularly smoking, and he is specifically interested in the use of new technologies in health care and health promotion.

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Preface

Mark Forshaw and David Sheffield

What is health psychology? One early and oft-used definition comes from Matarazzo (1982); 'Health Psychology is the aggregate of the specific educational, scientific and professional contributions of the discipline of psychology to the promotion and maintenance of health, the prevention and treatment of illness, the identification of etiologic and diagnostic correlates of health, illness and related dysfunction, and the analysis and improvement of the health care system and health policy formation' (p. 4). However, nearly every book on the subject seems to have a slightly different definition, something discussed in some detail, for example, in Forshaw (2002). Not much has changed since then, except that we probably have even more definitions than we had before. Of course, developments come in two ways: top-down and bottom-up. Proclaiming that health psychology is X, Y and Z, and then expecting all health psychologists to devote themselves to X, Y and Z, is a top-down approach, and is very valuable at times, especially, we would argue, in the middle stages of a profession. We believe we are moving out of the middle stages. The bottom-up approach involves looking to see what people who view themselves as health psychologists are getting up to, and defining the subject based on that. Health psychology is what health psychologists do. In our view, this is what happens in the earliest stages of the development of a profession, and again in the latter stages, to allow for some rejigging before the formula is mostly complete. In the earliest days of health psychology, groups of people were doing certain kinds of work, and they saw that they had things in common, and that those things weren't adequately captured by the professions in existence. Health psychology thus emerged, from the work of those people, defined organically. That set of topic areas rapidly became what health psychology was defined as, for sensible reasons. It was a guide to new generations of health psychologists and other interested parties. Division 38 of the American Psychological Association formed in 1978, after many years of hard work setting up and lobbying by numerous individuals, notably Stephen Weiss. It took the health psychologists in the United Kingdom a little longer to convince the British

Psychological Society of a need for a Section, which became a full-fledged Division in 1997, after being in existence as a Section from 1986. In BPS structures, Sections are groups of people with academic or political interests, and Divisions are reserved for recognized professions. Once a Division was inaugurated, a training model was needed, and this was first established in 2001. Benchmarked around postgraduate-level descriptors, and competence based, it rolled out firstly in the form of BPS-run Qualifications and shortly thereafter as courses in higher education institutions. Stage 1 of the qualifications is the MSc-level component of the training focusing on knowledge, which is then followed by Stage 2, at D-level, which is practice oriented. At the time of writing, we are currently experiencing the second version of this Stage 2 training, revised and streamlined following extensive consultation. Although British health psychologists lagged a little behind their US counterparts in the earlier days, there has been a tremendous rush forward in recent years. We, as a professional community, are very proud of our achievements in the last 25 years, and equally proud of the trainees who have made their way through the system in the last decade, some of whom have contributed to this volume. We have an eminent past, a vibrant present and an assured future. At times of global uncertainty, and academic unrest in the United Kingdom, it is comforting to know some things are in good hands.

However, we are always open to change, which is precisely what should happen in a relatively modern, developing profession. It is time to take stock, and to reconfigure somewhat. New people, with new ideas, new theories and new ways of working, have entered our profession, and started to stretch the boundaries, and to toy with the emphasis. We welcome that, just as one welcomes a child outgrowing its clothes. Our view is that it is time to ask what health psychology is, all over again, and this book is that very survey laid bare. This book is the new bottom-up. If you want to know where the latest research is heading, we have journals for that. It is much more difficult to discover where real health psychologists themselves are heading, in their careers, in their thinking and in their views on the profession itself. You can talk to some of them at conferences, perhaps, but that is by no means an ideal way to get opinions, reflect on them and compare them to a range of other ideas from diverse professionals. We have done our best, in this book, to draw together that diversity and present a version of reality that we believe captures modern health psychology, mainly from a UK standpoint.

You will find, in this book, those who mostly regard themselves as ‘academics’, those who primarily regard themselves as ‘practitioners’ and everything in between. To some extent, this distinction is disingenuous, since most people take an academic, evidence-based approach to their work, and most academics are practitioners in that they teach and train and help to build the theories than underpin the practice. There’s more to academia than the ivory tower, and there’s more to practice than client work. Realizing this is one of health psychology’s most valuable gifts. Health psychology is where academia and practice meet, and the same cannot necessarily be said for all areas of our discipline, which still maintain marked separations.

Naturally, we cannot lay claim to this book being entirely representative, although we have made every effort. Quite simply, we could not approach every single health

psychologist, even though between us we possibly know most of them in some capacity or another. We tried to strike a balance between different career stages, and different working environments, and to give a flavour of the vast range of health issues to which we apply ourselves. However, we have aimed to give readers an idea of where health psychology is heading, so there are more early-career psychologists than might be found in many texts. This has enabled us to show the remarkable spread of health psychology across training, practice, industry and academic environments, and the impressive talents of our authors, reflecting the talents of health psychologists more widely.

We are delighted to be able to set out a vision of health psychology both present and future, and we are pleased that this Noah's Ark of a book is now ready to set sail. We are proud to present to you *Health Psychology in Action*.

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