

Research

Report on mental health guidelines by Gisela Norman

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During the latter part of 2008 the BAcC was asked to participate in a working group, under the guidance of the Foundation for Integrated Health, on the use of complementary medicine into mainstream NHS mental health services.

We asked Gisela Norman, one of our members who has experience in this field, to represent the traditional acupuncture perspective. Her full report appears on the website and I urge you all to read it. I have listed below some bullet points which cover the key issues raised:

- project aim was to enable users of mental health services in the NHS to have improved access, availability, choice, and delivery of complementary healthcare
- guidelines had chapters on nutrition, aromatherapy and herbal medicine, amongst other subjects, and Gisela focused on acupuncture

- each chapter covers governance, regulation, and codes of practice and conduct, the aim being to encourage trust managers to buy in CAM treatments
- cost-effectiveness data was also made available to demonstrate the value that such treatments could offer to the NHS
- the acupuncture sector describes the difference between traditional and medical acupuncture and the science behind it. It also lists the benefits as identified by the World Health Organisation (WHO)
- there is an evidence based section which gives details of research studies in to the use of acupuncture in treating general

psychiatric problems and anxiety, depression, and schizophrenia

- there are guidelines to the limits of an acupuncturist's experience when working with patients with mental health issues, and a section on the requirements needed for setting up an acupuncture service within a mental health setting
- three projects with significant details have been identified:
 - Parkhouse Acupuncture Clinic in North Manchester hospital
 - The Broadway North Centre provided by Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Trust
 - The Gateway Clinic in South East London.
- there is an important section for NHS managers identifying the skills and educational standards that acupuncturists have.

This report and guidelines have been worked on over the last two years and of course have come out at a time when the NHS and healthcare in this country is facing a major transformation. We owe Gisela a debt of gratitude for the work she has carried out in establishing a position for acupuncture in support of mental health patients, which can be used by all who wish to work in this field.