

ABSTRACT:

This presentation aims to explore the implications for counsellors and psychotherapists working within the national Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) programme, from a 'non-IAPT' perspective. A research study was conducted with counsellors and psychotherapists who were working within IAPT services. Although selection criteria were not limited to particular training backgrounds or theoretical approaches, it was stipulated that participants were to be working as psychological therapists for the IAPT programme without any previous training in CBT or 'IAPT-compliant' or 'IAPT-accredited' therapies. Foucauldian discourse analysis was used to analyse interview transcriptions and the study examined the various discourses used by participants to speak about IAPT. Findings indicated that participants drew upon dominant discourses in attempts to fit in or belong, yet paradoxically, the way in which the discourses were used seemed to create subject positions that were outside to, or excluded from, the IAPT services which they worked at. The simultaneous emergence of 'IAPT' and 'non-IAPT' discourses could be seen as a possible indication of the discursive junction where different ideologies are in conflict with one another. As IAPT continues influence how psychological therapy is made available within the NHS, the implications of the power relations that may be operating within this setting are discussed.