

## What's new in training at the Michael Palin Centre Ali Berquez and Elaine Kelman



In August 2011 the MPC moved to adjacent premises where we have a dedicated training room with increased capacity of 25 participants. Our primary aim in training is to increase clinicians' knowledge and confidence in working with clients who stammer (CWS). Approximately ten courses are run each year at the MPC and we also train whole teams in the UK and internationally. Year on year we try to improve our courses guided by your requests and feedback. All our courses are subsidised through the support of Action for Stammering Children and each course costs just £50 per day per participant.

### **New courses**

In 2011 we piloted a new 5-day course for developing specialists in working with CWS aged up to 12 years old. In response to the question "What did you gain from the course?" one participant wrote:

"A huge toolkit of tools and ideas for ways of working; confidence in turning negatives into positives to work in a more SFT (solution focussed therapy) way; framework for doing PCI confidently; ideas to feed back to managers re service organisation; multifactorial model".



In 2011 we also hosted a Masterclass to provide training at a more advanced level for specialist SLTs. All 12 participants gave it a rating of 4 to 5 for both the usefulness and the quality of the presentation (where 5 = excellent). In response to the question "What did you gain from the course?" participants wrote:

"The chance to stop and think about 1) my own therapeutic skills, 2) about the service, peer support, book recommendations, useful therapy questions";

"Others' experience, consolidating current practice, problem solving difficult cases, talking about therapy, others' service models".



In 2011 we also ran a new One Day Introduction to working with CWS for SLTs and student SLTs. All 24 participants rated the presentation at 5 and all participants rated the usefulness of the course at 4 to 5. In response to the question 'What did you gain from the course?' participants wrote:

"Increased confidence, knowledge, knowing where to go for more information and training. Feel excited now about working with this client group. Thank you!";

"I have learnt a great deal about thinking about 'whole family' approach, importance of getting both parents' and child's views, leading from the back and being a facilitator, a useful screening/alarm bell assessment tool, and gained confidence".

### **Study days**

Our interest in a number of areas has led to the development of study days on specific topics. The first study day was about Cognitive Bias Modification (CBM). CBM is a behavioural therapy which has empirical evidence to support its use in the management of social anxiety. In response to the question 'What did you gain from the course?' two participants wrote:

"Intellectual stimulation, refresher on CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy), renewed interest to go and do further reading, look over previous courses on CBM".

"I would love more of these study days – it's exciting to hear about such current and interesting research";

Further topics this year include 'Working with clients with Down Syndrome who stammer' in September; 'Stammering and selective mutism – a workshop for considering similarities and differences' in October; and 'Working with children who stammer with perfectionist tendencies' in December. We are delighted to have the involvement of external specialists to co-teach on two of these days.

### **Improving access**

We recognise the challenges of limited training budgets and reductions in study leave to attend courses. We are trialling running a three day Palin PCI course in September 2012 that includes a Saturday. We have also trialled running our most popular course (Palin PCI) in two days instead of three. Ratings for the presentation, usefulness and length of both courses remain high so participants can choose the length of time that is more suited to their needs. Recently we were also asked if we would consider letting a participant access our training via skype. We trialled this on a 2-day Palin PCI course. Our longer term aim is to use our new teleconferencing system for 'e-training'.

**Student programme**

In 2011 we decided to include student SLTs in certain courses. They are able to attend the One Day Introduction to working with CWS and a 3-day Palin PCI course for student SLTs. Ideally we think the Palin PCI course is best suited to student SLTs nearing the end of their training and may be useful to enhance their future employment possibilities.

**Evaluation**

We continue to evaluate all of our training courses and value participants' feedback (Berquez, Botterill & Cook, 2011).

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**References**

Berquez, A. Botterill. & Cook, F. (August 2011) Building knowledge and confidence in working with children who stammer. Bulletin.