

A close-up photograph of a child's hand holding several autumn leaves. The leaves are in various stages of decay, showing shades of red, orange, and yellow. The child is wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt. The background is blurred, showing more foliage and a dark, possibly outdoor setting.

ANNUAL PTUK REPORT 2023

COMPILED BY HELEN TOZER, CHAIR
THE BRITISH COUNCIL FOR THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS WITH CHILDREN

Play Therapy UK/British Council for Therapeutic Interventions with Children

Annual Report for 2023

Period Covered by the Report

This Report covers the period from the last submission to the Professional Standards Authority (PSA) for re-accreditation in August 2022 to September 2023.

1. Summary

The British Council for Therapeutic Interventions with Children (BCTIWC) held meetings on 6th October 2022 and 23rd March 2023. The BCTIWC received updates from the Registrar, the Director, the Clinical Director and the Operations Director of Play Therapy UK (PTUK).

Main topics of discussion included: PTUK IT systems updates, the appointment of a new Chair of the BCTIWC, PTUK registered membership figures, the substantial reduction in the PTUK membership attrition rate, the PSA re-accreditation and conditions, the PTUK conference and the PTUK office structural and personnel changes.

BCTIWC is satisfied that all legal requirements are being met by PTUK and that there is no conflict of interest between PTUK and the APAC.

2. BCTIWC membership

The previous Chair of the BCTIWC, Lorna Lewis, handed over her responsibilities to Helen Tozer in March 2023. Lorna Lewis will remain a lay member of BCTIWC. The BCTIWC thanks Lorna Lewis for her substantial contribution to BCTIWC over the course of her leadership. Helen Tozer was recruited as a lay member of BCTIWC in October 2022. She has a background in education as a Teaching Assistant, Storyteller and Creative Practitioner and experience in governance as a Director of London Roller Derby.

The Lay Members of the BCTIWC are Helen Tozer, Lorna Lewis and Anna Doherty. The Professional Members are Rachel Morse and Evelyn Saunders.

3. PTUK staffing

The Board of Directors has developed a succession plan to ensure the smooth transition of PTUK's governance that will ensure the uninterrupted functioning of the company for the benefit of all practitioners. The board of PTUK has expanded to include two Executive Directors to sit alongside the CEO. The Operations Director's responsibilities include business strategy, operations and performance. The Clinical Director is responsible for clinical governance, clinical operations, and regulatory compliance with the PSA.

The CEO remains responsible for managing the company overall. This includes driving profitability, managing company organisational structure, strategy, and communication with the board.

The new Directors were promoted from within as they were effectively already handling these responsibilities. In future, the PTUK board's recruitment policy is to advertise vacancies publicly and after a stringent selection process, appoint by majority of the Directors' vote. Should there be a difference in opinion, then the casting vote will be taken by the British Council for Therapeutic Work with Children.

A new PTUK Registrar was appointed in June 2023. The Chair of BCTIWC has met with the new PTUK Registrar, in the compiling of this report, and looks forward to working with her in the future. PTUK also welcomed a new Marketing and Communications Manager in January 2023.

4. PTUK membership

The number of registrants has continued to grow and the attrition rate has been further reduced. The new revalidation process is more efficient and robust with increased qualitative assurance and clinical governance.

5. Annual Visit of the Chair of BCTIWC to the PTUK Office

The BCTIWC chair visited the offices of PTUK on the 26th September 2023. The IT systems introduced in 2021 are continuing to work well. It has made information easier to find and analyse thus making managing the membership renewal easier and more streamlined for the members.

The Operations Director, Clinical Director and the Management and Support of Registrants lead undertook Safeguarding Level 3 training for Designated Safeguarding Leads on the 7th August 2023. The PTUK Data Controller is responsible for making sure staff and members receive appropriate data protection training. PTUK Members can store client data securely in a clinical record management system, Fortuna, which converts clinical observations anonymously for the benefit of clinical reports.

6. Audit of the PTUK Register

The Chair of the BCTIWC undertook an audit of the Register. She found:

- The Register has been managed appropriately, with the details on the online Register matching those of the internal CRM database, Apollo. The Chair saw how a member's record could be edited or removed from the Register. Any changes made to Apollo are copied across to the online, public Register every 3 hours and PTUK office staff can also choose to update the Register immediately if required.
- No members have had to be stuck-off the Register since the last report. Members who have chosen not to renew their membership have been removed from the Register.
- PTUK have undertaken their regular checks of Registrant's websites to ensure members are following PTUK guidelines.
- The system was secure with password protection in place.

7. PTUK Conference

The Chair of the BCTIWC attended the 2023 Annual Conference, celebrating the 25th Anniversary of PTUK, on the 17th June 2023. The conference was well attended with 299 members present.

The Keynote speaker, Paris Goodyear-Brown, gave an address titled 'Impact and recovery from traumatic experiences or memories' and taught a 3 day TraumaPlay course prior to the conference. 69 members attended the training and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. The Chair spoke to PTUK members as they reacted to Paris Goodyear-Brown's

keynote address and could see how they were inspired and motivated by her practice and approach.

8. Awards

PTUK was awarded The Choice Award by the PSA for their continued work to collect evaluation data from Play Therapy sessions with the aim of building a body of evidence. PTUK is now using this evidence to develop proposals for interventions it believes could help widen access to beneficial services for children. One of PTUK's key proposals is for a Children's Mental Health Charter.

9. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee.

A new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee has been formed with a Chair and 5 members from the PTUK membership. They aim to constantly question attitudes, practices and objectives within PTUK, voice any concerns and questions of PTUK members in relation to EDI and continue to drive positive change in all areas of equality, diversity and inclusion for its members and the work they carry out. The EDI committee aims to create and provide training to PTUK members to provide a safe space for learning and questioning in relation to topics of EDI as well as creating, reviewing and amending PTUK policies to adhere to equality, diversity and inclusivity.

10. Resolution of Complaints and Concerns

BCTIWC did not receive any complaints regarding PTUK or PTUK members during this period. PTUK have recently updated their complaints policy.

11. Response to the PSA conditions

PTUK have reviewed and updated their complaints processes to provide improved clarity, accessibility and reassurance to members of the public and PTUK members. These processes are compliant with Human Rights legislation and are consistent with good regulatory practice.

PTUK has shown a commitment to effective and transparent governance through the appointment of two further Directors. This has diversified the board and provided a wider range of experience to inform decision making. The Directors have also appointed a new Registrar to help maintain the transparency, accuracy and robustness of the Register.

As a governing body and professional association, PTUK's commitment to raising standards and protecting the public interest in the use of therapeutic play skills requires that all practitioners are on the PTUK Registrar, including those in training with the Academy of Play and Child Psychotherapy (APAC). This ensures that all Play Therapists working with members of the public are accountable to the same high standards of professionalism, through the use of quality assurance and clinical supervision, from the very beginning of a Play Therapist's practice. The BCTIWC is satisfied that there is no conflict of interest between the PTUK and APAC and that both organisations are wholly committed to protecting the public interest and supporting children's mental health through Play Therapy.