



Dr Abigail McCormack

BSc (hons), DClinPsych, CPsychol, PG Dip

Chartered Clinical Psychologist



Health Professions Council Registration: **PYL19280**
British Psychological Society Membership: **159558**

Dr McCormack is a Chartered Clinical Psychologist accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS) and a Practitioner Psychologist registered with the Health and Care Professions Council, UK. Dr McCormack is a Bond Solon trained expert witness and has experience of given written and oral evidence in court proceedings. She completed clinical training at the University of Exeter, before pursuing a Clinical and Senior Leadership role with one of the largest IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) service in the UK. She led this service for four years and moved on to a senior lecturer role on the clinical psychology training program at Exeter University and a further senior leadership role for a private psychology provision where she worked as Clinical Director. She specializes in family court assessments and has continued her practice within family court psychological assessment across these roles and has been drawn back to work within this area full time.

Dr McCormack has a high level of training and expertise in identifying and treating mental health difficulties including personality disorder, complex trauma and mood disorder. She has extensive experience of assessing individual adults and parents within family court proceedings and is trained in assessing safe parenting from a psychological perspective. She has also completed assessments for children and entire families within care proceedings and has lots of experience of assessing large families with complex dynamics. As such she is highly experienced at assessing across the lifespan and the diagnostic range. She has also completed multiple cognitive and capacity assessments within care proceedings.

Dr McCormack has experience of working with, assessing for and responding appropriately to complex mental health difficulties, attachment trauma, developmental trauma, risk and safeguarding issues. She is able to identify primary difficulties in order to direct evidence-based treatment and provide a stepwise programme of intervention along with timescales. As such she has an excellent understanding of realistic timeframes for treatment and the types of barriers that may impact the effectiveness of psychological treatment. She has experience of working with clients experiencing a range of physical and mental health difficulties, within both in-patient and out-patient settings, in a variety of different modalities, including individual, group, and couples therapy and have a particular specialism and passion for improving Adult Mental Health, in order to improve safe parenting.

Dr McCormack is an expert Assessor and has significant experience in carrying out complex assessments, utilising self-report measures, client interview, family interview, risk assessment and neuropsychological testing. She is experienced at writing detailed psychological reports and has significant experience of giving evidence in court.

AREAS OF SPECIALISM

- HCPC Registered Clinical Psychologist and Bond Solon trained expert witness, who specialises in Family Court psychological assessments.
- Experienced at providing cognitive and capacity assessments for the family court.
- Experience of conducting psychological assessments at all stages of care proceedings.

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- Experienced in assessing for parental mental health problems, developmental trauma, safe parenting, parental alienation and high conflict parenting.
- Has completed multiple assessments with entire family networks, including parents, grandparents and children and has given oral evidence in family court on multiple occasions.
- Special interest in complex trauma, intergenerational trauma, autism and family systems and can evaluate with the best interests of the child(ren) in mind.
- Adept at distinguishing between complexities in presentations such as autism and attachment and in completing evidence-based assessments and reports with reference to the most up to date literature in the field.
- Recently held a role on the Exeter University Doctorate in Clinical Psychology and therefore has access to the most up to date resources and research within areas pertinent to Family court assessments including parental alienation, domestic abuse and high conflict separation.
- Diagnostic assessment of individuals on the Autism Spectrum and assessment of attachment disorder.
- Complex case work for clients with childhood and adult trauma, personality disorder and mood disorder.
- Managing risk, forensic issues and self-harm and liaising with other professionals as appropriate.
- I am also a BABCP accredited Cognitive Behavioural Therapist.

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

2009	Post Graduate Diploma in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, University of Plymouth
2008	Doctorate in Clinical & Community Psychology, University of Exeter
2002	BSc Psychology (Hons), University of Reading

WORK HISTORY

2020 – Present	Expert witness work specialising in Family court and personal injury
2022 – 2023	Clinical Director of Psychology Associates
2020 – 2021	Senior Lecturer on Clinical Psychology Program in Exeter University
2016 – 2020	Strategic Clinical Lead and Chartered Clinical Psychologist, Outlook Southwest LLP Dr McCormack has responsibility for the design of the organisational strategy in order to deliver a safe, effective and well-led IAPT service, within the financial envelope. She is responsible for creating and modelling an optimal working environment for all members of staff, both clinical and non-clinical, as a health workforce increases the quality of patient care, ensuring patients are seen within an appropriate time frame. It is also Dr McCormack's responsibility to support the senior multidisciplinary management team in delivering within their respective roles.
2008 – 2016	Senior Clinical Psychologist and Lead for Supervision and Professional Development of PWP's <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Oversaw the supervision of PWP's within the workforce and responsible for continued training and professional development of therapists.▪ Completed assessment within the Asperger's Diagnostic Team.▪ The clinical aspect of the role saw Dr McCormack working with clients across the lifespan, with a range of severity and a cross section of disorders including GAD, panic, OCD, PTSD and depression.
2007 – 2008	Trainee Clinical Psychologist, Cornwall Child & Family Service and Eating Disorders Service <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Experience includes individual work and group work, staff and war-based work and peer supervision.

- Consolidation of assessment, formulation and intervention skills from a variety of perspectives in relation to client with eating disorders across the lifespan and children and teenagers in the child and family service.
- Developed, implemented and evaluated a group for teenagers with eating disorders as part of a service development initiative.

2006 – 2007 Trainee Clinical Psychologist, West of Cornwall Community Mental Health Team & Peninsula Primary Care

- Experience of complex case work within a severe and enduring service including childhood and adult trauma, personality disorder, mood disorder and psychosis. Managing risk, forensic issues and self-harm.
- Experience of working as a Psychologist within a multidisciplinary team and disseminating psychological mindedness, including acting as a psychological consultant for CPN's.
- Key experiences were working with clients with anxiety and depression, PTSD and mild-moderate distress.
- Experience of working from CBT, CAT, Psychodynamic and narrative perspectives.

SPECIALIST TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

2019	Excellence in Report Writing (Written Evidence) Bond Salon Expert Witness Training
2019	Excellence in Court Room Skills Bond Salon Expert Witness Training
2019	Leadership Academy Award in Healthcare Leadership
2019	Pacesetter Series: Organisational Development: South West NHS Leadership Training Academy
2019	Leading in Complex Systems: South West NHS Leadership Training Academy
2018	Creativity and Innovation in Leadership: South West NHS Leadership Training Academy
2014	Adult Asperger Assessment Training: Cambridge University
2002	Introduction to Integrative Counselling: Theory & Practice

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Major Research Project: 'Investigating Partner Support of Health Behaviour Change in a Cardiac Population', submitted to 'Health, Education & Behaviour' September 2007 – September 2008

Research Consultant for the Peninsula Medical School. Duties included disseminating psychological thinking, specialist knowledge of working with children and research skills to medical students and aiding in the development, implementation, evaluation and presentation of a research project.

McCormack et al (2010) Consulting with Young People about Healthcare Paediatric Health, 4(2), 167-175