

## **Dr Agatha Benyera-Mararike**

DCPsych; Post-MSc Diploma; MSc; PGCE; BSc Hons; HE Dip (RM)

### **Chartered Counselling Psychologist**



Health Professions Council Registration: **PYL34593**  
AFBPS-British Psychological Society Membership: **87097**

Dr Benyera-Mararike has completed over 355 Medicolegal Reports and over 100 Professional expert reports. To date, she has never faced criticism, and the court has consistently accepted her opinions.

Dr. Benyera-Mararike is a senior NMC-registered midwifery lecturer and practitioner, Higher Education Academy Fellow, as well as an HCPC/BPS-registered Chartered Counselling Psychologist and Supervisor, with a professional background in clinical practice, education, counselling psychology, psychotherapy, and supervision. She has over 28 years of experience as a midwife, working in consultant-led NHS and private hospitals; 19 years as a qualified therapist and 14 years as a clinical supervisor. Her counselling and psychotherapy experience spans across various clinical populations and counselling settings, including inpatient acute mental health, chronic disease management, women's and children's health, learning disabilities, crisis issues, drug and alcohol work, HMP prison work, HIV and hospice-based bereavement/loss counselling, long-term conditions, HIV mental health, sexual health, LGBTQ+, psychosexual counselling, antenatal screening, and perinatal mental health, as well as psychiatric intensive care units. She is active in community development projects. She currently works in acute mental health and as a Senior Lecturer for a Doctorate in Counselling Psychology Programme.

She also has extensive knowledge and experience in preparing reports within the Criminal Justice System, Civil Procedure, and Family Courts, where she has developed experience as an expert witness. Dr Benyera-Mararike continues to prepare medico-legal reports (MLR) for family, criminal, and civil cases – including accident injury claims, immigration matters, midwifery clinical negligence and birth trauma, and proceedings in the Court of Appeal relating to detainees and victims of torture, as well as complex presentations of traumatic stress. She is a member of the BPS Expert Witness Advisory group.

### **REPORTS COMPLETED**

#### **Past Instructions 2006- 2017 Terrence Higgins Trust**

#### **Professional Expert reports 2006- 2017: (over 100 reports)**

- Wrote client court reports for refugees and asylum seekers.

#### **Instructions and Assessments: April 2017 to August 2025**

#### **355 Medico-legal Expert Witness Reports covering:**

- Medico Legal Report writing for immigration cases for asylum seekers, victims of rape, trauma, torture, and female genital mutilation in detention centres and the community and Forensic
- Cases- Impact of trauma on the psychological well-being of detainees, victims of torture, multiple trauma, trafficking and modern-day slavery
- Assessment of attachment between parents and children
- Impact of domestic violence on adults and children
- Assessment of the impact of a parent's psychological status on their children and their ability to provide care for them
- Issues relating to abuse and neglect

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- Cognitive assessments; Dols; Mental Capacity
- Assessments of children and teenagers:
- Assessment of maturity and psychological effect on the Culpability of the offence
- Midwifery clinical negligence (10 cases)
- Assessment of psychological impact of complex accident injury and road traffic collision, and work-related injuries; Treatment and prognosis or recovery.

#### **PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS**

|             |                                                                                         |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>2015</b> | DC Psych (Doctorate in Counselling Psychology and Psychotherapy) - Middlesex University |
| <b>2006</b> | Post-MSc Diploma in Counselling Psychology - City University London                     |
| <b>2003</b> | Advanced Certificate in Counselling Skills - University of Central Lancashire           |
| <b>2001</b> | MSc in Psychological Research Methods - Lancaster University                            |
| <b>1997</b> | HE Diploma in Midwifery Studies - University of Nottingham                              |
| <b>1991</b> | BSc Honours in Psychology - University of Zimbabwe (UZ)                                 |
| <b>1987</b> | BSc General in Mathematics and Biology - UZ up to part 2                                |

#### **SPECIALIST TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

|             |                                                                                |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>2010</b> | PGCert Supervision, Group-work and Leadership training: NSPC                   |
| <b>2002</b> | Medical Research Ethics & Law Training (PG Level): Keele University            |
| <b>2002</b> | University Certificate in Information Technology, (UCLan)                      |
| <b>2001</b> | ENB 934 – Care and management of HIV/AIDS: The University of Manchester        |
| <b>2004</b> | PGCTLT Clinical Practice & Higher Education: Liverpool University (Fellow HEA) |

#### **Other training includes:**

- Medico-Legal assessment and report writing - Medical Justice Training
- Excellence in Medico-Legal Report writing – Bond Solon
- Civil Law and Procedure – Bond Solon
- Courtroom skills and witness familiarisation – Bond Solon
- Cross-examination day – Bond Solon
- Working with Long Term conditions; HIV, Mental Health
- Perinatal Mental Health; Antenatal screening and diagnosis
- Providing culturally appropriate psychological interventions for BAME and migrant populations
- Psychosexual counselling; LGBT work; Sexual health
- Child protection and safeguarding vulnerable adults
- Working with trauma – Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Court cases Expert Report Writing – Interagency work with Refugees and Asylum seekers; MLR writing – completing Bond Solon Expert Witness accreditation
- Media Spokesperson – BAME HIV work
- Motivational Interviewing
- Couple and Group Work counselling and Supervision
- Bereavement Counselling
- Supervision
- Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT)
- EMDR fully trained therapist
- Working with issues around Autism Spectrum Conditions
- Autism diagnosis, ADOS2 and AD1-R trained

- Up to date with clinical practice mandatory training (e.g Safeguarding adults and children; DoLs; Mental Capacity)

## **PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

- **BPS Guidance** – (2020) Psychologist Expert Witnesses Undertaking Remote Assessments- Contributed as a member of the Expert Witness Advisory Group <https://www.bps.org.uk/guideline/psychologist-expert-witnesses-undertaking-remote-psychological-assessments>
- **Benyera- Mararike A.** (2024). Book Chapter- Chapter 10 - The Importance of Ethnic and Cultural Considerations In Expert Witness Psychological Assessments **IN** Leam A. Craig, Hugh C. H. Koch, and Gus A. Baker (Eds.) Psychology and the Law: Case Studies of Expert Witnesses.
- **Benyera-Mararike, A. (2015).** Tackling HIV stereotypes: targeting late diagnosis across demographics: – **Oral Presentation** on Impact on Practice (counselling aspect). **Impress Health 2 Project Conference.** Canterbury Cathedral Lodge. 25 March 2015.
- **Canterbury Christ Church University:** Staff Development Conference presentation- June 2013 – My Community Development work & overview of DPsych Research- Oral presentation
- **Benyera-Mararike, A. (2013).** Paper on DCPsych research pilot study report. **Title:** Evaluating culturally appropriate HIV counselling for childbearing migrant African women: NHIVNA HIV Nursing. **June 2013 issue. Volume 13 (2) p 14-19.**
- **Benyera-Mararike, A. and James, P. (2013).** Paradoxes in practice: Meaning and experience of receiving traditional western counselling (CWC) compared to culturally sensitive approach (AES) as experienced by HIV sero-positive African migrant women – An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) **Oral Abstract Accepted.** Oral Abstract presentation. **Middlesex University Annual Research Conference 2013. Handbook p 37-38.** Conference 20.6.2013.
- **Benyera-Mararike, A. and James, P. (2013).** Evaluation of fitness for purpose in provision of culturally sensitive counselling: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA.) **Oral Abstract Accepted.** **NHIVNA** Conference 25-27 June 2013. Presented 26.6.2013.
- **Benyera-Mararike, A. (2013).** Assumptions and paradoxes of providing and imposing Classical Western Counselling models (CWC): HIV sero-positive African migrant women's meaning and experience of receiving African Emotional Support Counselling Service (AES) **Abstract Accepted** as Poster Presentation theme: Innovations in practice. **RCM conference** 13-15, Nov 2013)

## **WORK HISTORY**

### **1998 – 2009 Registered Midwife- Sharoe Green Hospital, Preston**

- Duties involved implementing holistic evidence-based midwifery-related duties concerning antenatal, intrapartum and post-partum periods in consultant-led and private hospitals
- Implementing care to women attending the High-Risk pregnancy assessment unit, the Maternity Day Care Unit (MDCU) at SGH
- Counselling for foetal abnormalities after ultrasound scanning, antenatal screening
- Pre- and post-test counselling for conducting diabetic screening
- Providing health promotion information/ advice.
- I advised, reassured or referred women/patients to medical practitioners or other members of the multidisciplinary team as their concerns demanded. I also worked as part of a midwifery team in an antenatal follow-up and booking clinic
- Management responsibilities as core staff on the MDCU and overseeing students on placements
- Being involved in action research and audits

**2003 – 2018 Specialist HIV Counsellor - African Emotional Support Team (BACP award-winning service) - THT (Terrence Higgins Trust)**

**Specialist HIV Counsellor BAME women**

- Carried on with the same duties as above, but with a focus on BAME women; and
- Providing training to front-line workers in the NHS and HIV community centres about working with the needs of this specialised client group
- Writing court reports for asylum seekers as a Professional expert

**THT Locum Counsellor (with NHS honorary contracts and working in HIV clinics and in community centres)**

- Carried on with the same duties as below

**African Emotional Support Worker**

- Spearheaded the inception and running of 5 NHS-based HIV counselling clinics for Africans affected with or infected with HIV/AIDS
- Working at THT, providing culturally sensitive 1-1, couple and group therapy; report writing
- Facilitator - newly diagnosed group
- Inter-agency work
- Wrote court reports for asylum seekers as a Professional expert

**2006 – 2008 Antenatal Screening Genetic Counsellor – Wolson Institute of Preventive Medicine (PT fixed term contract)**

- Antenatal screening, counselling and verifying biochemical screening results
- Academic staff – facilitating medical PBL learning for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year Anatomy and Physiology
- Marking OSCEs

**2009 – 8/2022 Senior Lecturer/Academic Link Manager - Canterbury Christchurch University**

**Senior Lecturer in Midwifery**

- Teach undergraduate midwifery students core modules and specialist sessions
- Personal Academic Tutor and module leader
- Work collaboratively with hospital and community-based clinical staff to support students on practice placements.
- Involved with Continuous Professional Development for Post-qualifying programmes.
- Supervise BSc and MSc dissertations
- Support qualified practitioners as well as mentors by delivering mentor updates and sign-off mentor training in line with NMC requirements.
- Involved as part of the team in curriculum development and validation processes
- Health and Safety Representative

**Sessional Lecturer in Psychology**

- Module convener for Psychology & Therapeutic Process module; and lecturer for Psychology in Practice module

**Academic Link Manager for MA in Practice-Based Play Therapy (4/2009-Teach out phase -2/2018) duties included: -**

- Managing the very complex collaborative programme delivered across eight sites in the UK and 6 overseas venues.
- Leading the programme through a successful Quality Assurance Institutional Audit in March 2010. Recruiting External examiners.
- Being the Deputy Chair of the programme's examination board and liaising with external examiners.
- Managed the day-to-day administration of the programme, coordinating and monitoring students' progress.

- Putting forward any minor or major modification to the Quality Standards Office
- Monitoring work-based dimensions of student experience
- Co-ordinating and collating module evaluations for subject reviews; producing the annual programme monitoring report
- Supervising MA dissertations

**2012- 2020 External Examiner** at various UK universities and those that work in partnership and International Universities – for undergraduate and postgraduate courses, Counselling and Psychotherapy (MSC), Midwifery (BSc and MSc), HIV Nursing (BSc)

**2017 – Present Expert Witness/Counselling Psychologist**

- Medico-Legal Report writing for immigration cases for asylum seekers, victims of rape, trauma, torture in detention centres and the community
- Assessment of attachment between parents and children on issues relating to abuse and neglect
- Cognitive assessments
- Assessments of children and teenagers
- Assessment of maturity and psychological effect on culpability of offences
- Personal Injury Accident claims

**2017 – 2019 Counselling Tutor – ABC qualification, Awards - Bedonwell Counselling Training Centre**

- Level 3 Counselling Skills and Level 4 Diploma in Counselling
- Teaching Level 3 counselling Theory and Skills
- Teaching - Working with diversity module
- Teaching the Ethical framework and Personal Development Level 3 and 4
- Supervised trainees and qualified therapists
- Cohort leadership responsibilities

**2017 – 2023 IAPT High Intensity CBT Therapist - FCS -Faversham Talking Therapies**

Undertaking counselling and supervision (CBT, EMDR treatment, and assessments for a range of presenting issues, including: -

- Anxiety; OCD; PTSD; Depression; Trauma
- Long-term conditions
- Couple relationship and psychosexual counselling
- Drug and alcohol addiction, workplace bullying

**2019 – 2023 Supervisor**

- 9 groups of 4 training per group- Frontline Therapists (Fortnightly)
- 1 Supervisee Xen Zone Childline online counsellor

**2019 – Present Supervisor**

- 2 Counselling Psychologists
- 3 Psychotherapists

**2022 – 2024 Senior Counselling Psychologist -HIV and Sexual Health -**

Kent Community Health NHS Trust (fixed-term contract)

**2024 – Present Senior Counselling Psychologist – Acute Mental Health and PICU**

Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust, UK NHS Trust

**2024 – Present Senior Lecturer – Professional Doctorate in Counselling and Psychotherapy -**

Metanoia Institute/Middlesex University

- Teach second-year module on the Doctorate programme

- Personal Academic Tutor and module leader
- Supervise dissertations
- VIVA internal examiner

**2023 – ongoing External Examiner**, London Metropolitan University - Doctorate in Counselling Psychology and MSC in Psychotherapy programmes.

**2008 – 2009 Head of Counselling, and Senior Lecturer – Gemini College- NCFE qualification Awards**

- Level 3 Counselling Skills and Level 4 Diploma in Counselling
- Teaching Level 3 counselling Theory and Skills
- Teaching the Ethical framework and Personal Development Level 3 and 4

## **Volunteer Counselling Psychologist Posts**

**2005 – 2007 Counselling Psychologist – St Joseph’s Hospice -Kites Project**

- Providing bereavement counselling interventions to service users. The client group was children and young adults within the 3 London boroughs and their carers, and families

**2006 – 2007 Counselling Psychologist – Mile End Hospital Community LD Service**

- Providing integrative counselling interventions to service users. The client group was children and young adults with learning difficulties and their carers, and families
- Took referrals of designated children and families in keeping with the procedures of the Service
- Provided specialist Counselling Psychology services in the following areas: assessment, consultation, individual therapy, and family therapy
- Conducted specialist assessments and implemented appropriate psychological interventions for service users
- Functioned as a full member of the multidisciplinary team at the specialist mental health service and provided a liaison service to wider service agencies
- Provided highly specialist advice to families of children with disabilities
- Providing counselling support for clients with looked-after children, going through fostering, parenting training or where there are parenting concerns
- Writing reports and participating in team meetings, case reviews, supervision, research and audit

**2007 Counselling Psychologist/CBT therapist - Brixton Prison**

Providing 1-1 counselling to prisoners

**2014 – 2015 MuMSAID Perinatal Mental Service, London**

- Providing individual psychotherapy to women suffering from perinatal mental health concerns:-
- Antenatal anxiety and depression
- Postnatal depression
- Tokophobia; Birth trauma
- Attachment and bonding and
- Writing reports

**July - Aug 1997 Nottingham Community Learning Disability Services**

Voluntary Shadowing & Support Worker – Clinical Psychology department

- Shadowing a Clinical Psychologist's work
- Working with the Community Social Worker, shadowing her work
- Independently supporting a mental health client in the community, accompanying her to help her sort out her visits and appointments