Our Ref: FOI.14.DGS0177

RE: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Thank you for your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 received on 28 January 2014 by NHS Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). The information you have requested is listed below together with the response:

1. Whether or not your organisation has a policy governing the commissioning of counselling or psychotherapy provided by individuals who are not members of professional bodies which are part of the Accredited Voluntary Register (AVR).

There are six mental health organisations that are listed on the national Accredited Voluntary Register. These are as follows: the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP); Play Therapy UK; National Hypnotherapy Society; National Counselling Society; Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council and British Association for Counselling and Psychology (BACP). All of the AQP Talking Therapy providers in Kent ensure that all employed therapists have completed relevant training, and are members of the BACP or UKCP before they become employed.

The Kent and Medway CCGs have no specific policy as such in place regarding this issue. There is an expectation of the Services which are commissioned, to ensure their staff are affiliated to the correct organisation as described above. For a provider such as Kent and Medway Partnership NHS Trust, it is understood they have a variable number of so called ‘Honorary Staff’ who are offered the opportunity of clinical placements while they complete the practical elements of their training, they would be required to be student members of their professional body.

2. How many people have been referred to counselling or psychotherapy services from providers who are not members of bodies on the Accredited Voluntary Register.

The majority of people treated by our Talking Therapies providers are via self-referral as this is encouraged in Kent and Medway but a substantial amount still come via GPs as well. It is presumed there may be a small number who may have been referred by another health professional, however, Kent and Medway CCGs do not ask providers whether a referrer is a member of an organisation on the Accredited Voluntary Register.

3. How many providers you have commissioned counselling or psychotherapy services from without assurance that the providers are on the Accredited Voluntary Register.

The assurance that Kent and Medway CCGs look for and expects from all of its service providers is that all of the personnel who are involved in the delivery of these whether directly or indirectly to patients are correctly trained, have the regular supervision and are
provided with continuous professional development commensurate with any national requirements.

4. Whether you have a stated policy on the commissioning of conversion or “reparative” therapy and LGBT-friendly treatment more generally.

Kent and Medway CCGs do not have clearly stated policies on the commissioning of conversion and “reparative” therapy is not commissioned. There is no specific line regarding LGBT-friendly treatment as such other than an expectation that the commissioning of all services should be non-discriminatory with a similar expectation on the part of those who provide services that their delivery is in accordance with any relevant statutory guidance and good practice concerning the commissioning and provision of health services.