

CURRICULUM VITAE

For
Dr Sarah Birch

Qualifications

1991 - 1994 Nottingham University

BA (Hons) Psychology: 2.1

1997 - 1999 Surrey University

MSc Research Methods and Psychological Assessment: Distinction

1999 - September 2002 Salomons Centre, Affiliated to University of Canterbury

PsychD in Clinical Psychology

2003 – Chartered by the British Psychological Society

2003 - 2004 Institute of Family Therapy

Postgraduate Diploma in Systemic Practice with Families & Couples: Merit

2009 – Registered by the Health & Care Professions Council

2014 (ongoing) – I am in training with EMDR Works to obtain registration as a practitioner in Eye Movement Desensitisation Reprocessing treatment. I am a member of EMDR Association UK & Ireland.

Work experience

January 2015 onwards: Psychologie Ltd

I am the Director of Psychologie Ltd, which was set up to provide good-quality and timely assessments and treatment of adults. My areas of special interest in psychological treatment are **trauma**, and I am currently adding to my skills in this area by training in **EMDR**. I am registered with BUPA and AXA.

I continue to provide assessments for the Courts, and my particular areas of specialty in this regard are assessing people with **personality disorder, trauma**, and within child protection cases I have a particular interest in **non-accidental injury** and **failure to thrive**.

I also provide assessments to individuals seeking a greater understanding of themselves.

September 2007 – February 2015: Carstairs Psychological Associates Ltd.

I am an Associate with Carstairs Psychological Associates Ltd., a company that provides psychological assessments for the Courts in civil, criminal and family cases, and short and long-term psychotherapy. I have prepared over forty reports in personal injury cases including medical negligence, accident compensation claims, and other cases where an assessment of post traumatic stress disorder symptoms is required. I have completed over seventy reports in family cases which have related to child protection and I have acted as expert in several criminal cases concerning fitness to plead/stand trial. I have experience of giving evidence in Court, including at the High Court.

2005 – 2012: Women’s Service, Sussex Partnership NHS Trust

I was employed as a Senior Clinical Psychologist in a Specialist Women’s Service, which spans forensic and specialist care. The women referred to the service have complex mental health needs, often including a diagnosis of personality disorder, and they present a significant level of risk to either themselves or others.

My job involved providing assessments, therapy, consultation and supervision to three staff teams, and I had managerial responsibility for a team of three psychologists.

2005-2012: University of Sussex

I had a yearly commitment to provide two lectures to undergraduates in psychology at the University of Sussex. The topics varied and included the assessment and treatment of personality disorder.

2003 – 2005: CMHT/Psychological Therapies Service

I was employed as a Clinical Psychologist working in a Community Mental Health Team and a Psychological Therapies Service. I worked with individuals on a range of issues such as depression, anxiety, OCD, trauma, eating difficulties and personality difficulties, using an integrated approach to therapy.

2002 – 2003: Specialist Medium Secure Service for Women

My first post after qualifying was as a Clinical Psychologist at The Dene which is a specialist medium-secure unit for women run by a private organisation for NHS patients. In my time there I gained further experience in a forensic setting with people who have suffered from severe trauma and who often attract a diagnosis of personality disorder.

Placements in training

As well as my four core placements, I completed two elective placements in adult mental health. The first of these was in an Assertive Outreach Team and a rehabilitation unit for people with enduring mental health problems, and the second was on an acute psychiatric ward, and in a primary care service.

Career History Prior to Training

March 1997 – August 1999

St. Helier NHS Trust, Henderson Hospital, Sutton.

I was employed as a **Researcher** in this specialist tertiary service for adults with personality disorder.

May 1996 - March 1997

Horizon NHS Trust, Eric Shepherd Unit, Abbots Langley, Herts.

I was employed as an **Assistant Psychologist** within a multidisciplinary team, working with **adults with learning disabilities in a secure environment**.

August 1995 - May 1996

Milton Keynes NHS Trust, Marlborough House, Milton Keynes.

I was employed as a **Psychology Assistant** in a **Medium Secure Unit for Adults with Mental Health Needs**.

June 1994 - August 1995

I was employed as a Community Healthcare Assistant working with adults with learning disabilities and challenging behaviour, and then as a Nursing Assistant on an acute ward for adults with mental health needs.

Publications & presentations

Birch, S. (in press) Factors that demonstrate change or potential change in parenting capacity. In Bryn Williams, Emma Peart & Roger Young (Eds.) *Understanding and assessing a parent's capacity to change within the timescales of the child*. London: Jordan Publishing.

Carstairs, Kari & Birch, Sarah (in press). Assessing a parent's capacity to change in psychotherapy: The use of the Rorschach and the MMPI-2. In Bryn Williams, Emma Peart & Roger Young (Eds.) *Understanding and assessing a parent's capacity to change within the timescales of the child*. London: Jordan Publishing.

- Birch, S. (2014).** Why I use the Rorschach in court reports. *Your Witness*, 29, 37-38.
- Birch, S. (2013).** A therapist's responses to self harm. *Clinical Psychology Forum*, 248, 12-15.
- Birch, S. (2013).** What makes a good quality psychological report. *The Expert Witness Journal*, 1, 64-66.
- Birch, S. (2013).** Using an interpreter when conducting cognitive evaluations in parenting assessments. *The Expert Witness Journal*, 1, 56-59.
- Birch, S. & Carstairs, K. (2012).** Poster presentation: Assessment of personality in parenting capacity cases. Presented at the annual conference for the Society for Personality Assessment, Chicago, 16th March 2012.
- Birch, S. (2012).** The See-Saw of Recovery in Women's Secure Care. In *Secure Recovery*, G. Drennan & D. Alred (Eds). Oxford Medical publications.
- Birch, S. (2011).** I want you to be able to see it. Diogenes and Pathological Hoarding. *Psychodynamic Practice*, 17, 331-334.
- Birch, S., Cole, S., & Hunt, K. (2011).** Self harm and Positive Risk-Taking. Can being able to think about the possibility of harm reduce the frequency of actual harm? *Journal of Mental Health*. 20, 293-303.
- Birch, S. (2010).** Conference presentation: Pathological Hoarding. Presented at the Association of Forensic Psychotherapy Conference, March 2010.
- Birch, S. & Lavender, T. (2003).** The physical healthcare experiences of women with enduring mental health problems. Status versus stigma. *Journal of Mental Health*. 14, 61-72.
- Dunstan, F. & Birch, S. (2003).** What Makes a TC? A Comparative Study of Ideal Values. In *A Culture of Enquiry. Research Evidence and the Therapeutic Community*. J. Lees, N. Manning, D. Menzies, & N. Morant (Eds.). Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Blount, C., Birch, S., Evans, C. & Warren, F. (2002).** A qualitative evaluation of outcome measures of personality disorder. *Journal of Medical Psychology*, 75, 151-164.
- Birch, S., Dunstan, F. & Warren, F. (1999).** Democratisation, reality confrontation, permissiveness, and communalism. Themes or anachronisms? An Examination of Therapeutic Agents Using Factor Analysis. *Therapeutic Communities*, 20, 43-59.

Research

- (1) My dissertation for the M.Sc. at Surrey University was on the **gender bias in the measurement of personality disorder**, for which I gained a distinction.
- (2) My dissertation for the Psych.D. at Salomons Centre focused on the **physical healthcare experiences of women with enduring mental health problems**, for which I gained a merit. This project reflects my interest in adult mental health, gender issues, and qualitative research. I have published a paper from this research.
- (3) My research into treatment approaches to self-harm was published in an audit paper in 2011: this paper forms part of the NICE review of treatment for self-harm.
- (4) I am currently involved in a pilot project gathering UK normative data on the Rorschach

Continuing professional education

- Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy Training (completed two years 2011- 2013).
- Portman Course on being an expert witness in family cases: a psychodynamic perspective
- Two day training in Cognitive Analytic Therapy
- Rorschach Administration, Scoring and Interpretation
- Bond Solon Course: "Giving evidence for Expert Witnesses".
- Supervisors training and advanced supervisors training
- Introduction to psychodynamic psychotherapy (one week at the Tavistock centre)
- Breakaway Techniques
- Psychopathy Checklist Training Course and HCR-20 course
- Association of Therapeutic Communities Experiential Weekend