

Guidelines from Royal College of Psychiatrists and UK Council for Psychotherapy encourage 'backstreet' therapists for unwanted same-sex attractions

In order to raise the awareness of MPs and Peers to controversy around the Private Member's 'Counsellors and Psychotherapists (Regulation) Bill 2013-2014', Core Issues Trust has provided copies of a publication for all Westminster members in both houses. The Bill, sponsored by Mr Geraint Davies (Lab, Swansea West) is now scheduled for a second reading in the Commons on Friday 24th January, 2014. A debate on "Gay Cure" therapy in Westminster Hall is planned for Wednesday 20th November, sponsored by Labour MP Sandra Osborne, and, it is reported, "will include an official response from the government".

Earlier this year Ms Osborne also sponsored Early Day Motion (219), calling for a ban of psychotherapeutic support for those wanting to reduce or eliminate homosexual feelings.

The publication (2013) "Out of Harm's Way: Working Ethically with Same-sex attracted persons. Questions, of harm, evidence and practice" was commended by Bishop Michael Nazir Ali as "a moderate, sensible open review of the evidence on therapy for those who experience unwanted same-sex attraction... Some such people can be helped by properly informed and regulated therapy. Claims that this is always harmful are shown to be based on ideological bias rather than strict science".

Core Issues Trust warns that the failure of either the Royal College of Psychiatrists or the UKCP to articulate any circumstance at all in which an autonomous individual might legitimately seek and receive support to reduce, and where possible eliminate homosexual feelings means that vulnerable individuals will have no alternative other than to seek 'back street' therapists for help. Such therapists, often informed by Judeo-Christian values of human sexuality are now systematically barred from access to training, supervision, insurance and continuing professional development opportunities.

In 2011, the UKCP produced draconian guidelines making it an ethical offence for any of its registered therapists and counsellors to reduce, or attempt to reduce, homosexual feelings. It has produced no evidence for its claim that such therapies are harmful.

The Royal College of Psychiatrists, under the watch of its President Professor Sue Bailey, has failed to respond to reasonable requests to provide the evidence which they claim shows that homosexuality is "biological", a foundational premise, unsupported by scientific research, which other professional bodies cite without question.

Speaking on behalf of the Trust, Dr Mike Davidson said:

"This is an affront to the autonomous freedoms and rights of individuals, and the parents of young people who wish to move away from homosexual practice and feelings. The UK Parliament is in danger of promoting an injustice against a minority group who wish, quietly, to turn from homosexuality for personal and/or religious reasons without offence to any other group. We call on the government to ratify evidence-based scientific data, rather than to promote political ideology which exploits and uses people who understand themselves to be homosexual, for its own ends. Although only a private member's Bill, this is a clear attempt to test the water for the imposition of such measures in the future. We deplore such intolerance."

Notes to Editors

[Letter to MPs and Peers, Westminster](#) 18th November, 2013

[Information Sheet on "Out of Harm's Way" \(2013\) publication](#)

[Out of Harm's Way: Working Ethically with Same-sex attracted persons.](#) (O'Callaghan, D., Davidson, M. 2013)

Interview:

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