



Corporate Relations > News Archive >

## Derbyshire Could Champion New Therapy

26 November 2009

It's an emerging psychotherapy technique becoming popular in America and Canada - and Derbyshire is spearheading its growth in the UK.

Intensive Short-Term Dynamic Psychotherapy (ISTDP), pioneered by Habib Davanloo, is a specific form of therapy for people with personality disorders, anxiety, depression and psychosomatic disorders which aims to resolve emotional problems as rapidly as possible.

International expert Dr Allan Abbass, who has just become a Visiting Professor at the University of Derby, has vowed to impart his knowledge to students and to practitioners working at its partner agency, Derbyshire Mental Health Services NHS Trust.

Susan McCann, a psychotherapist with Derbyshire Mental Health Services NHS Trust is one of the first therapists in the UK to receive ISTDP therapy training, and in partnership with the University of Derby, the Trust aims to set up the first University accredited ISTDP training programmes in this country.

Dr Abbass, is Professor of Psychiatry and Psychology, Director of Psychiatric Education and founding director of the Centre for Emotions and Health at Dalhousie University in Canada.

ISTDP champions the 'physiology of emotions' to help sufferers mobilise the unconscious mind and complex feelings to identify and tolerate emotions more easily which Dr Abbass says is a cost-effective treatment which can reduce hospital admissions and patients' reliance on medication.

ISTDP patients can be treated effectively in an average of 20 one hour sessions, depending upon the nature of their difficulties. At a recent conference at the [University's Kedleston Road site](#) for psychotherapists, Dr Abbass demonstrated videotapes illustrating striking results of ISTDP including resolution of pseudo seizures, psychologically-based paralysis and chronic tremor.

Dr Abbass said: "It is a great honour to receive the Visiting Professor title from the University of Derby and, working with the Derbyshire Mental Health Trust, it signals the start of an important UK partnership to



Professor David Chalcraft - Professor of Classical Sociology (left) welcomes new Visiting Professor Dr Allan Abbass ahead of the recent University conference about ISTDP.



Some of the key delegates at the recent conference (from left): Pat Owen, Susan McCann, Dr Allan Abbass, Stephen Buller, Dr Robert Neborsky.

raise the profile of ISTDP.

"Research indicates ISTDP is a useful technique treating people with personality disorders and should prove a cost-effective process for health services to tackle a range of issues such as physical stress-linked disorders, panic attacks and depression."

Pat Owen, Head of Subject for [Applied Mental Health](#) at the University of Derby said: "We are delighted that Dr Abbass has joined the University as a Visiting Professor.

"Dr Abbass's expertise and status in the field of medicine, psychotherapy and Short-Term Psychodynamic Psychotherapy (STPP) will be hugely beneficial in acquiring recognition for training developments within the University and an unrivalled asset to the development of training programmes in the UK.

"He embodies a wealth of expertise, experience and knowledge in the theory, practice and research of STPP."

Pat's subject area currently holds the regional contract for the provision of high intensity IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) training. It is hoped that the University and its own [Applied Mental Health Research Group](#) could join forces with a number of health partners to deliver the ISTDP training.

In Canada, Dr Abbass already coordinates multidisciplinary training programs in ISTDP at the Dalhousie University where he also coordinates research and training of local, regional and international professionals. But as yet no University accredited training programmes exist in the UK.

Another special guest at the conference was Dr Robert J Neborsky, MD, who has pioneered the therapy in America. Robert is President of the Southern Californian Society for ISTDP and a Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the UCSD School of Medicine and the UCLA School of Medicine.

Robert said: "It is my firm conviction that this therapeutic approach has the power to free significant numbers of mental health patients from unneeded suffering where other approaches have failed.

"The research shows that these patients not only improve symptoms, change maladaptive character patterns, but also maintain these gains after the end of the therapy sessions. Dr Abbass's research also proves that therapy is cost effective by decreasing healthcare service utilisation. Hopefully, the UK will take steps necessary to train providers in this unique approach."

For more information about this news release, contact Deputy Head of Corporate Relations Simon Redfern on 01332 591942 or 07748 920038 or email: [s.redfern@derby.ac.uk](mailto:s.redfern@derby.ac.uk)