



SPECIALISMS

Antisocial Behaviour
Anxiety
ASD
Capacity
Depression
Domestic Violence
Historic Sex Abuse
Learning Difficulties
Learning Disabilities
Mood Disorder
Neglect
Personality Disorders
Postnatal Depression
PTSD
Risk
Self Harm
Sexual Abuse Victims
Suicidal Ideation
Trauma

CASE TYPES

Cognitive Assessment
Criminal
Family Proceedings
Fitness to Plead
Forensic
Historic Sex Abuse
Litigation Capacity
Personal Injury
Risk Assessments
Road Traffic Accident

Health Professions Council Registration: **PYL02608**
British Psychological Society Membership: **080836**
Member of the Expert Witness Institute (EWI)

MEDICO-LEGAL EXPERIENCE

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 cases involving domestic abuse. I have completed over four hundred reports in family cases which have related to child protection and completed many global family assessments since beginning this work in 2007.

I have also completed many assessments in private law cases involving parental alienation.

I have prepared over ninety 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 acted as expert in many criminal cases including those concerning fitness to plead/stand trial. I have given evidence in Court many times, including at the High Court.

QUALIFICATIONS

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| 1991 - 1994 | Nottingham University
BA (Hons) Psychology: <u>2.1</u> |
| 1997 - 1999 | Surrey University
MSc Research Methods & Psychological Assessment: <u>Distinction</u> |
| 1999 - 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: <u>Merit</u> |
| 2009 | Registered by the Health & Care Professions Council |
| 2011 - 2013 | Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy Training, The Guild of Psychotherapists, London |
| 2015 | I completed 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. |
| 2019 | I completed the Mentalisation-Based Treatment: Basic Training. |
| July 2021 | Completed training in assessing Autistic Spectrum Condition using the ADOS. |





QUALIFICATIONS CONTD.

- December 2021** Completed foundation training in yoga teacher training.
- September 2022** Completed training in the Autism Diagnostic Interview-Revised (ADI-R)
- June 2023** Qualification as a yoga teacher

WORK EXPERIENCE

December 2022 onwards: Consultant Clinical Psychologist, South London and Merton NHS Trust

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 trained in EMDR. I am registered with BUPA and AXA. I was until recently the Treasurer for the British Rorschach Society.

May 2020 until January 2022: Lead Consultant Clinical Psychologist, Bramley Health.

I was the Lead Psychologist in a forensic service for men and women with complex needs.

September 2007 – February 2015: Carstairs Psychological Associates Ltd.

I was employed as an Associate with Carstairs Psychological Associates Ltd., a company which provides psychological assessments for the Courts in civil, criminal and family cases, and short and long-term psychotherapy.

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

I worked 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.





WORK EXPERIENCE CONTD.

Placements in training

As well as my four core placements, I completed two elective placements in adult mental health in an Assertive Outreach Team, 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

Carstairs, K., Hartley, S., Peden, A., McCarthy Woods, J., van Graan, A., Andronikof, A. & Fontan, P. (2018)

A normative study in England with the Rorschach Comprehensive System. *Rorschachiana*. 39, 105-134.

Birch, S. (2015) Workshop presentation: Assessing the adult's capacity to change. Presented at a study day entitled "assessing a parent's capacity to change in the timescales of their child". St Catherine's College, Oxford, 14th October 2015.

Birch, S. (2015) 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 (2015). 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.





PUBLICATIONS & PRESENTATIONS CONTD.

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.
- (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 have been involved in a pilot project gathering UK normative data on the Rorschach – the initial results of this have now been accepted for publication.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

- September 2021 – refresher in EMDR protocols
- March 2021 – seminar on using the Flash technique in EMDR
- October 2018 – attended an advanced seminar in assessing mental capacity.
- 2017/2018 - Four day training on using the Marschak Interaction Method (MIM)
- Yearly attendance at Bond Solon Expert Witness Conference
- Portman Course on being an expert witness in family cases
- 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
- Psychopathy Checklist Training Course and HCR-20 course

