

POOR POLICY AND DISCRIMINATION

As a psychologist who has undertaken the 4 + 2 pathway I was led (ALWAYS) to believe that this was what required to become a **valued** member of the psychology profession. I feel very devalued now and it is impacting on my part-time private practice work.

Among other reasons, and specifically as there is no evidence to support the elitist claim that clinical psychologists provide better health services to Australians than Generalist psychologists, I would like to see equal Medicare rebates for both groups.

The psychological research is clear.....AND HAD BEEN FOR YEARS that a great proportion of the EFFICACY of counselling treatment occurs because of the QUALITY of the THERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIP.

This is irrespective of both the therapeutic approach and qualifications meaning it does not matter if one is a generalist or a clinical psychologist.

As a plain old “counsellor” in my main job as a Drug and Alcohol Counsellor (in which I am NOT employed a psychologist), I am dealing with complex mental health issues each day. And interestingly.....this is why the Government has created the Dual Diagnosis Initiative years ago to upskill regular counselors (Non-psychologists), to deal with mental health. And yet the Government cannot even be bother to fund psychologists for this poorly paid sector despite Dual Diagnosis being the norm. Guess which client’s are **generally not seen** by Clinical psychologists- who do not even have the basic Alcohol and Drug training (Cert iv in Alcohol and other drugs work),.....and yet these addiction issues are swamping our society and causing mayhem. These difficult clients generally get referred to specialist Drug and Alcohol agencies.

In sum very much disapprove of the Governments policy which ignores research and is creating discrimination between Clinical and Generalist psychologists.

I am very concerned this will jeopardize the quality of mental health care which can be provided to vulnerable Australians.

Julie Wouters (psychologist).