

Issued on behalf of Core Issues Trust

## Press Release

For Immediate Release

17 October 2013

### **Ex-Gay Christian Counsellor Hounded Out by Psychotherapist Associations**

#### **Professional life “has been ruined”**

On the basis of just two BBC radio interviews and no complaints from either his clients or his qualified supervisors, the British Psychodrama Association (BPA) under the direction of the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) has this week removed former homosexual Dr Mike Davidson from the psychotherapists' register of trainee professional membership.

Dr Davidson specialises in counselling those who consider themselves troubled by feelings of same-sex attraction as he himself has been in the past. He has counselled without professional objection for six years and is recognised as an intelligent, empathetic and caring therapist. He has recently become a target for gay activists.

But now his professional bodies have hounded him out too. Directly following two BBC radio interviews in January 2012 in which he carefully explained his evidence-backed opinions, he was peremptorily notified by email from the chair of BPA Jonathan Salisbury that, without right of explanation or defence, his trainee membership was revoked with immediate effect pending investigation. Dr Davidson could no longer practice as a UKCP-approved trainee psychotherapist.

The BPA tried him against a set of so-called “Ethical Principles” of the UK Council for Psychotherapy that are themselves anything but ethical. These principles say: “It is not a sufficient defence for a therapist to argue that ... they were acting in the client's best interests, or ... autonomy, as offering such therapy would be ... reinforcing their externalised and internalised oppression.” So if someone asks a therapist for help to reduce unwanted same-sex attractions, they will be told that they are suffering from oppression and that it is unethical for a therapist to do what they ask.

“This UKCP ethical principles document is simply appalling,” said Dermot O’Callaghan, a trustee of Core Issues Trust, a trust established by Dr Davidson. Dr Di Hodgson, Chair of the UKCP’s Diversity, Equalities and Social Responsibility Committee, said on the BBC recently that the UKCP has “taken a view in a way which is regardless of the scientific findings” and that “whether or not something works doesn’t mean that it is ethical ...”

“This has a sinister Orwellian ring to it and denies clients the right to shape their own sexual preferences,” said Mr O’Callaghan. “It represents a ‘great leap forward’ from the study by King *et al* in 2004 of the views of professionals in the field, which found that, ‘Only a small minority [of professionals] believed that current practice denied people distressed by their homosexuality an effective means to change their sexual orientation.’ Clearly the freedom to change which was celebrated in 2004 is now forbidden in 2013.”

“This bodes ill for the significant number of people who are troubled with their same-sex attraction and who want help,” said Mr O’Callaghan. “I urge the general public - and particularly medical doctors - to read the Ethical Principles for themselves to see how bad they are. The rubber is hitting the road now, and Mike’s professional life has been ruined by ideology even though he has done nothing wrong. They have ruined

the life of a caring and courageous counsellor. It is not that a bad therapist has been tried against good ethical principles; rather, a good man has been tried against bad principles. This is a wake-up call for all who value justice, including justice for the group of people who are despised by some for feeling same-sex attraction, and by others for wanting to reduce it. These Ethical Principles must be radically changed.”

The case is supported by the Christian Legal Centre.

Emails, letters and other documents detailing BPA's disciplinary procedures for Dr Davidson are available on Core Issues Trust website: [www.core-issues.org](http://www.core-issues.org) and in the links below (Editor's Notes)

**Dermot O'Callaghan**

Council of Reference, CORE ISSUES TRUST

11 October 2013

-ENDS-

**Editors Notes:**

1. [British Psychodrama Association Appeal Panel Outcome \(5 October 2013\)](#)
2. [“Defence of Practice” Document submitted as one of 31 documents \(No response\)](#)
3. [UKCP Guidance on the Practice of Psychological Therapies that Pathologise and/or Seek to Eliminate or Reduce Same Sex Attraction](#)

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