

Stratton P., & Winter, D. (2008) Editorial: Making research useful for the practising psychotherapist. *The Psychotherapist*. 38, 1.

This research section of *The Psychotherapist* explores various ways in which research can give therapists information about the most effective aspects of their practice. We have concentrated on research that is in a form that practitioners can use to increase their effectiveness, their value to their clients and their credibility. There is an enormous volume of good research, with much more variety than implied by the current focus on finding out whether one therapy is, on average, better than another. One could speculate that the dominance of the outcome question has been partly responsible for the resistance of many psychotherapists to becoming engaged with research. We hope to demonstrate through this issue of *The Psychotherapist* something of the great variety of ways that therapists can become involved both as users of research and as participants. Research is a challenging but fascinating pastime and every psychotherapist already has most of the skills needed to become an active researcher (Stratton & Hanks, 2008).

Our outstanding collection of papers indicates something of the range and scope of existing research while demonstrating ways that every practitioner could become more involved. Your Research Committee has concluded that Practitioner Research Networks (PRNs) provide the most practicable and effective route to meeting the research needs of psychotherapy. They have the advantage of providing a route into research for practitioners who are not working in a research environment, while ensuring that the form of the research is driven by the needs of practitioners. The committee commissioned a review of PRNs from the UKCP Roehampton Unit (Thomas et al, 2007) and this report is available from UKCP. The survey of practitioner research in this issue starts with an overview of Practitioner Research Networks (PRNs) as promoted by the UKCP Research Committee and ends with a set of examples of PRNs in action.

We hope you will be encouraged to place research more centrally in your thinking as a psychotherapist, that you will join us on 2<sup>nd</sup> February (see below) or if that is impossible, let us know that you might be interested to join a PRN, and perhaps, even consider joining the UKCP Research Committee.

### **References**

- Stratton, P & Hanks, H. (2008, in press) From therapeutic skills to research competence: Making use of common ground. *Human Systems* **19**.
- Thomas, R., Stephenson, S. & Loewenthal, D. (2007) UKCP Report on Practice-Based Research Networks. London: UKCP Research Unit.

The UKCP Research Committee

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