

UNSW Forensic Psychology Clinic

# Service Information for referral agents

July 2022



## *History*

The UNSW Forensic Psychology Clinic (UFPC) is the training site for the Master of Psychology (Forensic) program. The program has been in existence for over 20 years, and the clinic was founded in 2011. The UFPC (formerly called the Wentworth Forensic Clinic), is aimed at providing best practice training in assessment and treatment of forensic clients. Students in the program dedicate their first year of clinical skills training at the clinic under the supervision of senior forensic psychologists, preparing them for external placements and eventual autonomous practice as endorsed forensic psychologists.

## *Our Services*

We employ evidence-based practice with an emphasis on the scientist-practitioner model and as our roots are within UNSW we are abreast of cutting-edge practice. We maintain strong links with researchers within the UNSW school of psychology and the UNSW law school. We provide a range of treatment modalities, such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT), and Feedback Informed Treatment (FIT) to address a range of issues including offending, criminogenic needs, problematic behaviour, drug and alcohol, mental health issues, personality disorders, as well as child welfare and parenting concerns. We provide individual and group therapy programs (e.g. Family Connections). Treatment progress reports are available on request (at APS rates).

We conduct a wide range of assessments and report for courts, tribunals, or other organisations including (but not limited to) pre-sentence reports, Section 14's, working with children's check, cognitive and adaptive behavioural assessments, and so on. Our assessments are multimodal and involve structured interviews, psychometrics, actuarial and structured professional judgment risk assessment tools, documentation reviews, and interviews with relevant stakeholders.

All clients referred to the UFPC are screened to ensure they are an appropriate fit for a training clinic, and assessed for immediate service or placement on the waitlist. We maintain regular communication with clients and the referral services to ensure they are kept informed of the status of the referral within the boundaries of client confidentiality.

Please be aware that as we strive to ensure we work with best practice strategies, we will require appropriate file information prior to seeing clients for assessment or treatment (e.g., previous psychological assessments and any other information deemed pertinent to proceed).

It is important to note that due to the working operation of a training clinic, timelines often can be longer than within other services due to the learning needs of the provisional psychologists within the clinic. We are happy to have a conversation with referral agents as to the appropriateness of an assessment and anticipated time for an assessment to be conducted and a report to be released, or for a client to be seen for intervention.

As a training clinic, we offer limited assessment service over the December – March timeframe, though ongoing intervention clients continue to be seen by clinic staff.

## *Current Staff at the UFPC*

A profile of the current staff includes experienced forensic psychologists who are accredited supervisors. The supervisors have expertise in the assessment and treatment of a broad range of civil and criminal forensic issues for adults and youths.

**Anita McGregor** is the director of the clinic, and has 30 years of experience as a forensic psychologist in Canada and Australia. Her areas of expertise are within the assessment and treatment of violent offenders, and in various forensic assessment measures. She has taught risk assessment as well as forensic intervention strategies to a generation of forensic psychologists in Australia. She is an AHPRA accredited supervision training provider.

**Leah Vircoe** is a supervising psychologist at the UFPC. She is an endorsed Forensic Psychologist who has worked in both private and public settings across NSW. Leah brings over ten years' experience within NSW Youth Justice, where she held responsibility for therapeutic program development and evaluation, supervising psychologists and other multi-disciplinary teams and providing assessment and intervention for a range of clients with complex clinical and forensic needs. She also has extensive experience preparing psychological reports for local and district court jurisdictions, the mental health review tribunal and the NSW Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

**Kylie Finlayson** is a graduate of the UNSW forensic psychology program and is a supervising Psychologist with our team. She joined the team in 2020 after working as a Psychologist with the New Zealand Department of Corrections (Ara Poutama Aotearoa) in Christchurch.

She has experience providing assessment and intervention for a range of adult clients with complex clinical and forensic needs, and has prepared Psychological reports for the New Zealand Parole Board and court system.

With over 20 years' experience in the criminal justice system, Kylie brings a unique and diverse perspective to issues affecting both clients and referrers. As well as providing individual assessment and interventions at the clinic, she is also a group facilitator for Family Connections.

## *Our Clients*

For the first years of the UFP Clinic, our clinic was housed within the NSW Correctional Services City community corrections office in Sydney. The clinic moved to our current site in 2018, and in 2019 we ended the contract with NSW Correctional Services and opened our services to a wider forensic clientele. Currently, our clients:

- are seen by a supervising forensic psychologist and a provisional psychologist. In court related assessments, the clients are seen by the supervising psychologist (with the provisional psychologist observing or having limited participation) with the report authored by the supervising psychologist. For intervention, the client may be seen by the supervising psychologist and/or the provisional psychologist depending on client need;
- can be self referred, though are often supported in their referral by forensic services, such as NSW Communities and Justice, Legal Aid, Child Welfare agencies, Health, or other psychology firms;
- can be seen on a Work Development Order (WDO). Clients with applicable state debt recovery fines can work off their debts by participating in intervention at the clinic;
- limited *pro bono* assessments or intervention services are provided if UFPC criteria are met;
- can be seen in person (if current vaccination requirements are met) or through telehealth (depending on NSW Health and University of NSW requirements). All relevant safety and hygiene practices are strictly adhered to within the clinic setting.

## *Fees*

### Clients

- pay a small fee (\$10 per session) for intervention if they have a valid concession card, or \$40 per session (standard rate) for psychological intervention;
- pay assessment fees that vary from \$450 (standard fee) or \$225 (concession rate with a valid concession card) for a general assessment (such as a cognitive assessment for NDIS support) to \$750 for a forensic assessment (or applicable Legal Aid rates). Assessment fees include interview, test administration, debriefing & written report. Any file requests, subpoenas or court attendance will be charged out at APS rates. All fees are inclusive of GST.

If additional reports, such as treatment progress reports, for court or other purposes are required, they will be charged out at \$250 per hour for services included in the preparation of a report. Travel to assessment locations will be charged out at APS hourly rates.