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BURSARY A BOOST FOR COGNITIVE THERAPY IN GUERNSEY



(L-R) Marianne Duquemin with Simon Thornton, managing director of the Praxis Group.

A BURSARY from the Praxis Group has taken Marianne Duquemin one step closer to her ideal job.

Ms Duquemin has received financial support from the Group enabling her to study for a Post Graduate Diploma in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT).

Accredited by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) Ms Duquemin is undertaking the two-year programme at the leading Cognitive Therapy Centre in Belfast. On completing her studies, plus two years' experience working in primary or secondary mental health care, she will become one of the first, if not the only, BACP-accredited cognitive therapy counsellors on the island.

'My aim would be to return to the island to work in CBT and make people more aware of the methods of therapy that are available to assist with mental health problems,' she said.

The Diploma will cover all aspects of CBT which can be effective for a range of psychological problems, such as depression, phobias, eating disorders, anxiety, panic attacks, as well as substance abuse and dependence.

Therapists and clients work together to identify and understand problems in terms of the relationship between thoughts, feelings and behaviours. CBT ultimately helps to achieve a desired change in the way clients think, feel and behave.

Educated at Blanchelande Ms Duquemin completed her GCSEs and A-Levels in the UK. Having graduated from the University of the West of England in Bristol with a degree in psychology she moved back to Guernsey where she has spent the last six years working in health care.

'My plan was always to train in counselling and therapy,' she said.

'I decided on cognitive therapy because I know it works, I have seen the results. It is very practical and focuses on how people think and behave. Its methods are a move away from the traditional "lying on the couch" perception of therapy, giving patients tools to cope with a whole range of psychological disorders.'

Ms Duquemin has the full support of the local branch of MIND, the mental health charity. Its chairman, Tim Loveridge, said: 'MIND is delighted to see Marianne choose this career path with the intention of providing the service to Guernsey. The island desperately needs to increase the level of access our community has to this type of therapy, as well as other counselling and psychiatric support services.'

'Equally, the funding offered by the Praxis Group demonstrates a refreshingly new approach to both recognising the need for better mental health care locally and actually doing something about it. I hope this proves to be a landmark decision, encouraging others to follow.'

With post graduate loans no longer available to students in Guernsey, once Ms Duquemin had decided to go ahead with the course she was faced with a financial dilemma.

'Funding myself through the course would have been virtually impossible without the extremely generous support I have received from Praxis.'

From a financial point of view I wouldn't have been able to do it without them.'

Simon Thornton, managing director of the Praxis Group, is happy to be able to support Marianne through her studies. He sees it as an extension of the Group's overall commitment to training and development enabling individuals to fulfil their potential.

'Training is vital in whatever profession you work,' he said.

'Not only will this diploma help Marianne in her career but ultimately benefit Guernsey. With statistics indicating that one in four of us will experience some form of mental illness at some point in our lifetime it shows just how important it is to have trained therapists like Marianne on the island.'