

## **Report on Funding Received for PGDip Clinical Paediatric Neuropsychology**

This report outlines the funding received from the FPSA to support my completion of a Postgraduate Diploma in Clinical Paediatric Neuropsychology at University College London (UCL). As a Clinical Psychologist and Director of an organisation providing therapeutic services for children and young people in care, this training is essential for addressing the unmet needs of our population.

The FPSA grant significantly aided my pursuit of this specialised training, which I was self-funding. The Clinical Paediatric Neuropsychology course at UCL is currently the only paediatric program in the UK accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS). The course provides comprehensive training in techniques, methods, and research related to neuropsychology, equipping professionals to interpret clinical presentations and understand developmental brain-behaviour relationships. It covered the core knowledge component for the Qualification in Clinical Neuropsychology (QiCN) set by the BPS. There are less than 50 fully qualified paediatric neuropsychologists in the country, with the majority based in the greater London area and none working with children in care specifically.

The course was taught over one year (September 2023 – September 2024), with face-to-face teaching sessions held one week each month. The course also involved one week of self-study per month. It covers all necessary areas of paediatric neuropsychology, focusing on the integration of brain knowledge, ongoing development, and environmental context. The course included 8 modules which covered paediatric development, disorders, assessment, intervention and professional practice issues. The course structure was rigorous and intensive as I worked full time alongside the course, challenging me personally and professionally.

Children in care are a group that have severely limited access to neuropsychological support and this training has enhanced my skills to better support this vulnerable population. Completing this program has equipped me with advanced skills and knowledge to support families and improve outcomes for vulnerable populations, particularly those affected by childhood adversity. I have an enhanced understanding of paediatric brain development and improved my ability to identify and address 'hidden' deficits often associated with increased parental stress and social strain. I have also begun to apply this knowledge in assessment and intervention by better understanding differential diagnoses and being able to better translate neuropsychological knowledge into children's care plans. Neuropsychological testing provides information about how the brain works and detailed assessment of a person's ability. Interpretation of the various test results allows strengths and weakness to be uncovered, from which recommendations can be made for accommodations to assist social and emotional development, learning and functioning. This knowledge will go a long way in supporting local authorities and family courts in making informed decisions regarding children in care.

In conclusion, I am incredibly grateful for the FPSA funding, which has been instrumental in allowing me to pursue this vital training. The knowledge gained will not only benefit my professional development but will also directly impact the lives of the children and families I serve. Having now completed the knowledge component of the QiCN, I aim to build a practice portfolio and pursue to the full qualification with the BPS with the aim to become the first Clinical Paediatric

Neuropsychologist working with children in care. I feel privileged to have the opportunity to enhance my skills in such a significant field.