



**National Phobics Society**

The anxiety disorders charity



**THE ANXIETY DISORDERS CHARITY**

*Annual Review & Impact Report 2006*

## Our aims

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***To promote the rehabilitation of persons suffering from agoraphobia and associated anxiety disorders, phobias and conditions, in particular, but not exclusively by raising awareness in such topics.***

The National Phobics Society works to relieve and support those living with anxiety disorders by providing information, support and understanding via an extensive range of services, including 1:1 therapy services. We work regularly with external agencies and healthcare professionals to improve the service provision offered in the main to those living with anxiety disorders. We also campaign to raise awareness of anxiety disorders through holding events like our annual 'Anxiety Disorders Awareness Week' and the 'Anxiety Disorders Conference'.

## Our belief

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Our belief is that those who have experienced anxiety disorders are best placed to provide support to other sufferers because they are able to truly understand the impact these conditions have on people's lives.

## Foreword

2006 has been both a productive and rewarding year for the National Phobics Society. At the time of our last report we were embarking on the process of becoming a Charitable Company and I am pleased to announce that this is now official. It has marked the start of a new phase of growth for the charity helping us to establish a greater level of structure to our processes and policies. This has been invaluable in assisting our continued application for quality standards awards; in particular we have worked towards achieving Volunteering England's Investing in Volunteers standard and received a very positive interim review. We await with anticipation the final decision later this year. Indeed, 2006 has been a very positive year for our volunteer team whose dedication, time and effort has been recognised through the NPS receiving The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

In addition, thanks to the work of our volunteer web developer Edward Jung, the NPS was also recognised at this year's IT4 Communities Awards for our website content and accessibility.

This year has seen the development of a number of new projects. With support from the Lewis Family Charitable Trust, we successfully launched our Toilet Phobia Project and were able to increase public awareness through our campaign. The NPS are continually striving to improve our services and the feedback from our membership survey has been extremely useful in making sure we provide what's really needed. In response to increased demand from our younger members, we have established a Young Person's Anxiety Phone-in Service, which is proving very successful. Similarly, following usage feedback from our telecom provider, we now offer an extended helpline service allowing us to provide "out of hours" support to our members. We received approximately 12,000 calls this year and with the extended helpline service we hope to be able to answer even more.

Our partnerships and projects with other mental health organisations are continually growing and this year we took part in the 2006 Anxiety Disorders Conference held here in Manchester. It was a great success with a huge response from the general public. Events like these are testament to the importance of awareness and support of anxiety related disorders and it is this that encourages us at the NPS to continue to expand and develop our members' services. This would not be possible were it not for the continued efforts of all of our staff and volunteers as well as the feedback from our members. It is this partnership that has helped the NPS become what it is today and we can be proud that as we enter our 37th year, we will continue to provide help and support to those affected by anxiety disorders.

Wishing you all the very best in health,



Danny Hulme  
Chairman



## Activities 2006

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2006 has been a busy and successful year for the National Phobics Society with an ever increasing wide range of services being delivered to support the needs of those living with, and/or affected by, anxiety disorders alongside numerous organisational developments:

### **Incorporation**

This year, we successfully incorporated the organisation such that it is now a charitable company with a new Company Registration Number: 5551121 and subsequently we now have a new Charity Registration Number: 1113403.

### **Patrons**

This year we were fortunate to be able to secure the patronage of Ursula James. Ursula is a regular contributor to radio and television, including 'This Morning', where she is the phobia expert, and she has her own series which starts on Channel 5 in 2007. Author of two books, the Clinical Hypnosis Textbook, and You Can Be Amazing – change your life with hypnosis, she has been a long time supporter of the NPS and helped establish the popular hypnotherapy volunteer scheme seven years ago. She currently runs workshops for the NPS ("Phobic No More" and "Tric No More") and has produced a "Controlling Anxiety" CD approved by the NPS, which has shown to be very helpful for anxiety sufferers.

Ursula joins our existing team of patrons who are all so very supportive of the organisation. In particular, thanks must go to Professor Adrian Wells who has a regular question and answer slot in our quarterly magazine "Anxious Times"; Professor Karina Lovell for her ongoing support with just about every initiative we undertake, but specifically the phone CBT research project and Professor Paul Salkovskis again for his ongoing support.

### **Membership survey**

As part of our drive to continually improve our services and to ascertain that we are continuing to meet the needs of our membership, we also undertook a large-scale membership survey in the summer. The survey revealed some interesting information. For example, most members have been members of the organisation for more than 5 years, a significant proportion of our members are living with social anxiety, generalised anxiety disorder (GAD), specific phobias and panic attacks. 30% of respondents stated that being a member of NPS had given them the opportunity to understand their condition and that they were less isolated. When asked when would you be most likely to use the helpline? 28% of respondents stated that they would be most likely to use the service between the hours of 5-9pm. This figure supported the statistics that we had from our telecommunications provider and indicated clearly that there was a need to extend our helpline service beyond its previous hours of operation. A staggering 44% of respondents had accessed therapy through NPS with 21% stating the reason for accessing therapy through NPS being that they could not afford to go privately and that NPS allowed them to access therapy quickly. 16% stated that the NHS did not offer the therapy type that they wanted, alongside others who stated that NPS therapists provided appointments that were more convenient and that waiting times were far shorter than those on the NHS.

96% of respondents stated that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the service – a wonderful satisfaction rate, but not one that will lead to complacency on our behalf as we continue to strive to deliver high quality services to our members.

When asked what other services members would like to see provided in the coming years, respondents stated that they would like to see an extension of local services alongside a greater range of alternative therapy services and more 'social type' services – for example, local get-togethers.

Finally, over 25% of respondents stated that they would be interested in becoming more involved in NPS' work by volunteering. So, not only did we obtain some very interesting and useful feedback from our membership which will of course inform our strategic direction over the next few years, we were also able to successfully recruit many more volunteers!



*Ursula James, NPS patron*

## Volunteering

The volunteer team under the direct leadership of Clare Mayo (pictured) has gone from strength to strength year with volunteers continuing to demonstrate their capacity for adaptation and change. Whilst volunteer retention rates are at an all time high, we have also been able to recruit many more volunteers to work on the helpline and a further 5 new volunteers who are helping to operate the extended helpline. We have 4 area representatives and 14 specialist helpline workers running individual membership services at present. The recruitment of volunteers is certainly increasing and this is very encouraging as volunteers are indeed the lifeblood of the organisation.

This year, we have begun to monitor the types of individuals that are contacting us for volunteering opportunities. This is achieved through a monitoring form that is attached to our standard volunteer application form. The form is detached upon receipt and information relating to age, gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation and disability recorded. We hope that in collating and analysing such data, we will be able to determine who we are not reaching with our volunteer opportunities as they stand at present. Furthermore, we will then be able to explore ways in which to recruit volunteers from any identified hard-to-reach groups.

## Investing in Volunteers

As part of our commitment towards volunteers, we are working towards achieving Volunteering England's Investing in Volunteers standard. Investing in Volunteers is the UK quality standard for all organisations which involve volunteers in their work. The Standard enables organisations to comprehensively review their volunteer management, and also publicly demonstrates their commitment to volunteering. Since May, we have worked on the various components of the standard with our volunteer team, and very recently received a glowing report from the Investing in Volunteers assessor which recommended us for the standard. We are currently awaiting the final decision from Investing in Volunteer's assessment board as to whether we have been awarded this standard.

This piece of work has been extremely useful and has led to the development of a number of projects and pieces of work including the production and compilation of a volunteer file, a volunteer policy file as well as additional training and recruitment materials specifically for volunteers.

## Updating of policies

As a result of the work conducted towards achieving the Investing in Volunteers standard, we recognised that the policies that we had in place were slightly outdated and were not always as inclusive of volunteers as we had hoped. We therefore had the opportunity to update and revise these policies so that they were more appropriate to the organisation. A policy file was created so that all policies were arranged in date order, ensuring that both staff and volunteers were aware of when any particular policy was due for renewal. Many of the policies were reworded in consultation with the NPS Management Committee, staff and volunteers. Every new volunteer to the organisation is now provided with a copy of the Policy Pack upon induction.

## Social work student placements

This year we have continued to provide supported placements for students on the BA and MA Social Work courses at Manchester Metropolitan University. In total we have offered three, 100 day placements to students over the year. It is always good to be able to share our positive working atmosphere with students and to provide them with the opportunity to learn all about anxiety disorders. More importantly we are able to demonstrate on a daily basis our user-led ethos and challenge occasional preconceived ideas about user-led organisations and those who have mental health difficulties.



Clare Mayo, NPS' Helpline Manager



## Activities 2006 (continued)

### Communications strategy

Over the years we have participated in numerous pieces of media work, however for some time we have felt that we have been very 'reactive' in our approach as opposed to being 'proactive'. Whilst we are fortunate in that we receive regular media attention, it became increasingly important to put together a communications strategy to formalise our procedures around the media.

Fortunately early on in the year, we were approached by a team of MBA students based at Manchester Metropolitan University who developed a comprehensive Communications Strategy for the organisation. Numerous recommendations were made in their report including maintaining a more comprehensive database of key media contacts and case studies. Additionally we have been able to develop key media messages which are:

- NPS is the leading authority on anxiety disorders and phobias in the UK
- anxiety disorders and phobias are treatable
- NPS provides tailored expertise, support and treatments on a national level
- volunteers are the 'life blood' of the organisation - their help is vital
- past members are ambassadors for the NPS

We now have dedicated media spokespersons, Dave Thomas (Trustee of NPS) and Nicky Lidbeter (Manager of NPS) alongside a comprehensive database of case studies.

This year we have assisted with a wide range of media enquiries including being actively involved in the television programme 'The House of Agoraphobics' and 'The House of Obsessive Compulsives' which featured our patron, Professor Paul Salkovskis.



Harold Fisher (Founder of NPS) and Nicky Lidbeter (NPS' Manager) receiving the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service from Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Greater Manchester, Colonel Sir John Timmins



Pauline Gregson, Sue Lidbeter, Caroline Nuttall and Geoff Lidbeter outside Buckingham Palace at the Queen's Garden Party in July

### Awards



We have also enjoyed a number of successes this year, including being awarded two prestigious awards. The first was The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service (formerly known as The Queen's Golden Jubilee Award). The award was given for outstanding achievement by our group of volunteers who regularly devote their time to helping people living

with anxiety disorders in the community, improve the quality of life and opportunity for others and who generally provide an outstanding service

We were delighted to receive this award in recognition of the work that we have undertaken since 1970 to support thousands of people affected by anxiety disorders and to this end, would like to thank in particular our immensely dedicated team of volunteers, without which our organisation would not exist and Pauline Gregson for making the nomination. In addition to receiving a beautiful crystal award and a certificate which was signed by the Queen, we are now also able to use the Queen's award logo on our official stationary and other publicity material.



Clare Mayo, NPS' Helpline Manager & Caroline Nuttall, NPS volunteer receiving the IT4 Communities Best Accessible IT Volunteering Project at the Awards Ceremony, held in London in November.



In November this year, we were delighted to hear that we had been awarded the prize for the best accessible IT volunteering project at this year's IT4 Communities Awards 2006. The award was given in recognition of our website and its accessibility to marginalised groups of people. The judges commented: "The website is very clear and well designed with a wealth of information about phobias and an

extensive range of helpful advice that make it a fantastic web resource. The site also has a good level of accessibility - a lot of thought has gone into making this an easy to access and use site".

IT4 communities is a member of the ICT Hub which itself is part of the Home Office's ChangeUp programme for strengthening the capacity of the voluntary and community sector.

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### **Updating of literature**

This year we have revised all of our information packs in an attempt to adopt a more 'corporate image' as well as to ensure that the information that we provide remains up to date and relevant. We have also revised and reprinted a number of our fact sheets with the assistance of key professionals in the field.

### **Training Packages**

This year we have delivered a number of training packages to external organisations including delivery of three 'Anxiety Disorders Awareness' training packages, a 'Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder' training package and a 'Health Anxiety' training package. Over the course of the next year we would like to significantly increase the amount of training courses that we offer and are currently working on putting together several more specific packages. We see training as a means of raising awareness amongst other groups of anxiety disorders whilst also raising the profile of the National Phobics Society.

### **Graduate Mental Health Worker Training**

This year, NPS' manager, Nicky Lidbetter provided consultancy services to the University of Manchester's Primary Care Graduate Mental Health Worker training course, advising on user-led perspectives of mental health and anxiety disorders.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

Clare Mayo, NPS' helpline manager was awarded a place on CSIP (Care Services Improvement Partnership) North West's monitoring and evaluation course. The course is aimed at helping organisations with monitoring and evaluation with an overall aim to enable the demonstration of effectiveness – something that is very important for all organisations these days. With the support of the course leaders, over the next few months we are aiming to put together an effective evaluation procedure to enable us to demonstrate volunteering outcomes associated with volunteering opportunities on the helpline.



*NPS training session*

## New projects and services

Over the year as ever, we have increased the range of services that we offer and have worked specifically on a number of exciting projects:

### Extended helpline

We have known for some time as a result of analysis of data received from our telecommunications provider that many calls were being made to our helpline at times when the helpline was closed. Because of this, we have been working closely with the Mental Health Helplines Partnership (MHHP) to look at ways of extending the hours of opening of the helpline. Fortunately, last year we were able to secure targeted investment funding from the MHHP which enabled us to employ a dedicated Helpline Manager, Clare Mayo, who this year has overseen the development of this new service. Indeed Clare has been a regular attendee of the MHHP monthly meetings that are held in London, providing input.

The extended helpline itself was formally launched on Monday 16th October and currently has 9 volunteers working on the helpline, taking calls from 5-9pm, Monday to Friday. Having the helpline open for these extra hours has allowed callers to access support and information when they need it, making the service much more accessible for those who work during the day. At the time of writing this report, the extended helpline had taken around 94 calls – averaging at 47 calls per month. The number of calls seems to be increasing as the service becomes more established and as people’s awareness of its existence increases.

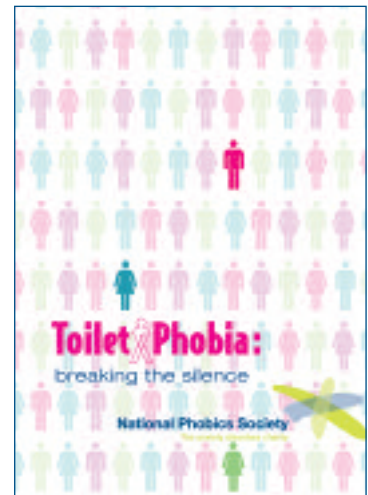
Throughout the course of the coming year we will continue to monitor call data to identify whether we are continuing to meet demand. We know certainly that we get a significant number of calls during the weekend when the helpline is closed, so it may be that over next year, we work towards extending the helpline’s opening hours even further. Additionally, we are looking to adapt our current training package so that we can train people via teleconference and/or over the internet. This we feel will open up the range of volunteering opportunities that we can make available to people who want to ‘put something back’ into the organisation.

### Toilet Phobia project

This year, we were approached by the Lewis Family Charitable Trust to undertake a large-scale project on Toilet Phobia to include an awareness campaign to explore the various aspects of toilet related anxiety, how it affects people and to raise awareness of the help that is available to sufferers of this condition. As the NPS takes many calls every year relating to various aspects of toilet related anxiety, we felt that we were well placed to lead on the project.

By identifying existing NPS members who were affected by toilet related anxiety and who were willing to become involved (anonymously or otherwise) in helping us with the project, we were able to discuss the various ways that toilet related anxiety can be experienced. After an analysis of the case studies that we received, we were able to define the main conditions which appear to relate to difficulties in using the toilet. These were:

- **Social Phobia** - commonly involving worries that people are aware of you using the toilet, people noticing you using the toilet or that people may hear you using the toilet
- **OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder)** - involves factors such as worrying that the toilet is contaminated or being unable to use facilities that are deemed ‘unclean’.
- **Agoraphobia** - worrying about leaving the house unless there is a ‘safe’ toilet that can be used combined with fears around soiling or urinating ones self if leaving a deemed ‘safe’ locality
- **Parcopresis** - fear of defecating in public places
- **Paruresis** - fear of urinating in public places
- **Panic Attacks/Panic Disorder** - fear of being unable to use a toilet in a public place.
- **Specific Phobia** - specific fear of a toilet or toilet related situation



*Toilet Phobia DVD and Toilet Phobia Information Booklet*



Most of the individuals discussing these experiences classified the anxiety as Toilet Phobia. Therefore the term 'Toilet Phobia' became the umbrella term adopted to describe specific fears concerned with the toilet.

Following on from undertaking research involving those affected by Toilet Phobia, we organised a seminar event on the 3rd October at the Royal Society of Medicine where professionals such as Professor Paul Salkovskis and Professor Karina Lovell alongside inspirational speakers were invited to give presentations on the condition in an effort to develop shared understanding and an agreement on various forms of treatment that may be found useful by those affected.

Using feedback derived from this event, we developed an information booklet and information DVD aimed at raising awareness and promoting the treatments available.

#### **Toilet Phobia DVD and Toilet Phobia Information Booklet**

The project also involved raising awareness of Toilet Phobia which the NPS has achieved through working closely with the media with the assistance of an external PR company. Indeed the PR campaign was extremely successful with radio stations as far a field as Israel requesting interviews with members of staff and individuals affected by Toilet Phobia. Hearing others talking openly about their experience of Toilet Phobia had the effect of encouraging other individuals affected to speak up about the condition. We are hoping that the more people discuss this issue, the more the stigma associated with this condition will be reduced. For many people who are affected by Toilet Phobia, there is a double stigma in that they are not only experiencing anxiety which can be difficult to discuss, but that it also relates to the taboo subject of anxiety around toilets.

Some of the comments that we have received to date include:

*"I was delighted to see the news article on the BBC about Toilet Phobia. I spent many years choosing my job based around the toilets, missed many outings, social opportunities, and was often totally dehydrated". Steven*

*"Thanks to CBT things are much more manageable now. I didn't know about your organisation (wish I had). Keep up the good work." Angus*

*"I was amazed to read an article on the BBC website with regards to Toilet Phobia. I thought it was just me." - Tina*

Over the coming year we are looking to build on the exciting work that we have done on Toilet Phobia and plan to host facilitated, supported chat sessions in a dedicated Toilet Phobia chatroom on our website. Additionally, we plan to continue with the awareness campaign to ensure that Toilet Phobia becomes a recognised condition.

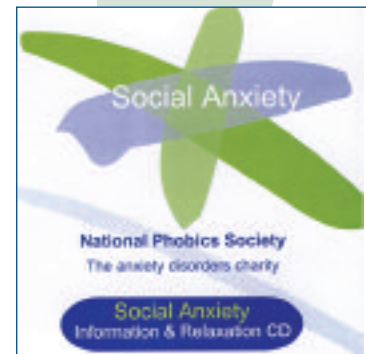
#### **Relaxation and information CD project**

In conjunction with one of our volunteer therapists, clinical hypnotherapist, Ian Brindle, we developed an extensive range of CDs on the following anxiety disorders:

- Claustrophobia
- Agoraphobia
- Emetophobia
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Social phobia/social anxiety disorder

(insert picture of CDs)

The CDs have been extremely well received amongst the NPS membership and the sales of such products certainly help to bring in additional, much-needed income.



## **New projects and services (continued)**

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### ***Young person's anxiety phone-in service***

This year in response to an ever increasing number of calls being made by young people living with anxiety, we developed a Young Person's anxiety phone-in service which is run by a volunteer who has herself ongoing, personal experience of anxiety.

The service is still in its infancy however already the line is busy with calls from younger people who are living with anxiety and who are in need of support.

## Existing services

### Therapy Services

This year over **550** people requested and accessed therapy through our national Therapy Service.

Of those accessing therapy, a large proportion of people requested face to face cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), whilst an increasing number required CBT over the phone. Clearly our therapy services are taking a considerable amount of pressure off NHS psychological therapy services.

In contrast to such services, people requesting therapy through the National Phobics Society are offered an appointment within **2 weeks** of receipt of their request. Additionally, our therapy services are not time-limited; something our members feel very strongly about as many people who access our services have had course of therapy through the NHS but felt that just as they were starting to make some progress, their therapy was ended as they were only allocated 6-8 sessions.

Our therapy services at present offer a range of therapies including:

- Cognitive behavioural therapy
- Counselling
- Clinical hypnotherapy
- Eye movement desensitisation & reprocessing
- Thought field therapy
- Emotional freedom techniques
- Neuro-linguistic programming
- Fast phobia technique
- Aromatherapy
- Therapeutic massage
- Reflexology
- Therapeutic massage
- Reiki healing

We offer therapy in a face to face capacity in over **160 different locations** including Scotland, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland and Wales. Certainly we are in indebted to our team of experienced and committed volunteers who give their time to deliver therapy.

### Phone CBT research project

Indeed, this year we have developed a number of areas of our Therapy Services, in particular our cognitive behavioural therapy phone service, originally developed with the support of Professor Karina Lovell, NPS patron.

We are in the midst of undertaking with the University of Manchester, a research project which is looking at the acceptability and effectiveness of our phone CBT service. Over 100 clients who had accessed the service since its inception in May 2005 were contacted directly by the University of Manchester, and asked whether they would be interested in sharing their experience of accessing phone CBT through the National Phobics Society. Many people responded to this invitation and at the time of writing this report, over 15 people had been interviewed at length over the phone with transcripts subsequently written up. The project is already producing some interesting findings around people's initial perceptions of phone therapy and their beliefs around its effectiveness before commencing therapy.

Over the coming year we would like to continue to expand the phone therapy service by bringing on board more therapists able to deliver therapy in this way.



*Face to face therapy*

## Existing Services (continued)

### Service developments

#### CRB checks

We have also introduced a number of service developments such as a requirement that all therapists registered with the National Phobics Society must have a Criminal Record Bureau Enhanced Disclosure Check carried out every three years of practice. It had already been our requirement that all therapists upon commencing their voluntary work should undertake a CRB check however we felt it important that such checks should not be seen as something that is done once and then forgotten about, but moreover seen as a procedure that is undertaken on a cyclical basis to ensure safety of practice.

#### Clinical supervision

Furthermore in addition to implementing CRB checks as described above, we have also implemented a requirement that all therapists registered with the National Phobics Society must be in receipt of regular external clinical supervision with a named clinical supervisor. Initially, some therapists (particularly those practicing hypnotherapy) felt unhappy about this new requirement, however most now understand and appreciate that clinical supervision helps ensure safety of practice and should therefore be welcomed.

On this matter, we have been working with some of the main clinical hypnotherapy bodies such as the General Hypnotherapy Register (GHR), the British Society of Clinical Hypnosis (BSCH) and more recently, the National Council for Hypnotherapy who are themselves working towards implementing a similar policy so that eventually all therapists registered with these professional bodies will need to be in receipt of regular clinical supervision. We welcome and support such initiatives and feel that the further regulation of clinical hypnotherapy and related therapies can only be a good thing.

#### Annual performance reports

This year we have implemented annual performance reports which are sent to every therapist who is registered with us. The reports detail the number of people referred and the MYMOP (Measure Yourself Medical Outcome Profile) clinical measure score for each person. The reviews have demonstrated the importance of obtaining 'before' and 'after' data for each client accessing therapy services. Without this data, no record exists of the positive progress that people make when referred to our volunteer therapists, and therefore no formal outcome is recorded.

### National Helpline

The helpline this year has taken around 12,000 calls. Although we do not hold data on caller's numbers we are able to record the geographical region of a caller. From this data, we are able to see where the main bulk of our calls originate. Over the past year, we have taken calls from a wide range of locations, the main ones being as follows:

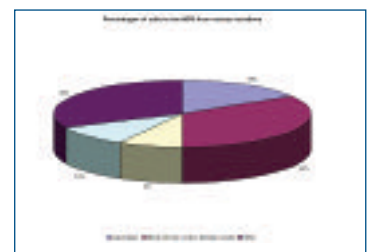
As illustrated above, the majority of calls come from mobiles, closely followed by calls from Outer and Inner London. Manchester calls account for around 10% of all incoming calls to the helpline.

The helpline is still the first point of contact for many people and is therefore a vital service. The helpline has the Telephone Helplines Association's Quality Standard Mark as a result of being subject to external validation.

As well as providing a service to callers, the NPS helpline has always offered individuals living with a mental health problem, and those on relevant higher education courses (psychology degrees etc.) the opportunity to gain experience of working in the field of mental health in a supportive environment.



NPS volunteer helpline worker



## Email support service

As an alternative to the helpline service, we have also continued to operate our popular email support service. The service receives on average 15 emails each day. Emails are answered by volunteers who have received extensive training as well as helpline training, and the service offers much-needed support to individuals who for one reason or another, are unable to call our helpline.

## Professionally-led information lines

### *Psychology Information Line*

This line has continued to operate throughout the year, run on a voluntary basis by Richard Barnard, Consultant Psychologist, of Wythenshawe Hospital in Manchester. The purpose of the line is to provide callers with information on psychological therapies that are available from and recommended by, the NHS.

### *Psychiatric Pharmacy Helpline*

This specialist helpline provides callers with the opportunity to ask questions about all aspects of psychiatric medication as well as herbal/complementary medicine used in the treatment of mental health conditions – for example, St John's Wort and Valerian.

The service is always extremely popular with callers being able to ask questions about their medication that they have not previously been able to ask their GP.

The most frequent enquiries on the line include questions about withdrawal from antidepressants and minor tranquillisers, psychiatric medication and pregnancy/breast feeding as well as side effects of psychiatric medication.

### *Specialist user-led phone-in services*

Throughout the year, we have continued to operate a wide range of user-led specialist phone-in services which have offered support to callers living with a range of anxiety disorders and related issues as follows:-

- Social anxiety disorder
- Blushing phobia
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD)
- Emetophobia
- Public speaking
- Tranquillisers
- Agoraphobia
- Illness phobia/health anxiety
- Panic attacks and panic disorder

These services are all run by volunteers who volunteer their time to take calls at set times during the week from members affected by a particular anxiety condition. The services allow people to hear how others have coped with a particular condition and to share/exchange coping strategies.

Over the course of the year we have been carrying out extensive evaluation of our specialist helpline services which has led to a number of service developments, including the implementation of external supervision support sessions for all specialist phone-in service volunteers. The same exercise was also carried out for area representatives, with a similar recommendation being put in place.



*NPS Email support volunteer*

## Existing Services (continued)

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### Area Representative Service

The NPS Area Representative Service is a scheme whereby volunteers give their time to co-ordinate local get-togethers on a quarterly basis for people living in their area who are affected by an anxiety disorder. This year our area representatives held get-togethers in a variety of places throughout the county including:

- Staffordshire
- North London
- South London
- Leicestershire
- Glasgow
- Norfolk
- Suffolk
- Warwickshire

The aim of the scheme is to enable people to meet others who also experience problems with anxiety, and in doing so, to help break isolation whilst offering the opportunity to share coping strategies.

*"I thoroughly enjoy the volunteer work that I do for the National Phobics Society and I understand the importance of raising awareness of anxiety disorders and highlighting the work done by NPS in my local area. I hope to see my meetings continue long into the future and hope that many more people attend to benefit from the support and experience of other people who are affected by anxiety".*

Robert Amiss, Norfolk Area Representative

### Self Help Groups

This year we have continued to support the development of new support groups throughout the country by providing facilitators of such groups with our 'self help group start-up pack', whilst also assisting with the advertising of new groups, once established.

We have also provided support and direct guidance to a number of Manchester-based support groups including:

- Chorlton anxiety group
- Zion anxiety group
- Trafford anxiety group
- Manchester social phobia group
- Sociability (structured social phobia CBT group)
- Wythenshawe anxiety group

We are in the process too of supporting a new anxiety self help group which will be launched in the New Year in Salford.

In addition to directly supporting groups, we maintain an up to date list of self-help groups that are run independently of ourselves and have made this information available in an easy to use search facility on our website.

### Self-esteem and Presentation Skills workshops

This year we have run 8 workshops (4 in London and 4 in Manchester) on 'Building Self Esteem & Self – Confidence' and 'Presentation Skills'. The workshops are delivered by Joan Callaghan, an NLP practitioner who herself has had personal experience of living with an anxiety disorder.

The feedback received from workshop participants is always highly positive and testament to Joan's dedication and commitment.

### NPS website and on-line services

The website has continued to be developed this year with the expertise of Edward Jung, who has volunteered his time in the capacity of website developer (and then maintainer) for the past 2 years. Edward very recently stood down from this post in order to take up a new role abroad. We are eternally grateful for all the help that Edward has given over the years that he has been involved with NPS and wish him all the very best with his future endeavours.

Thankfully we have been very fortunate to recruit a new volunteer who has already made some excellent developments to the site including a fully functional integral search engine allowing site users to search for content within the site at the click of a button. Over the coming months the whole site will be given a makeover in an attempt to make it even better than it is already! Specifically, we are interested in developing volunteer on-line support forums as well as developing shopping cart functionality to the NPS on-line shop. Already we have incorporated comprehensive information pages on Toilet Phobia and our Toilet Phobia project.

In terms of site statistics, this year the website had a staggering 3, 619, 369 hits with over 80,000 unique visits. With these kind of statistics it is clear that a website is a very important component of an organisation and we need to ensure that our website remains up to date and accessible.

### NPS Magazine – “Anxious Times”

Our quarterly magazine, “Anxious Times” underwent a makeover and changed its title from Don't Panic to Anxious Times. We have received a lot of positive feedback about the new-look magazine and over the year have managed to cover a wide range of issues and anxiety disorders.

The contact section at the back of the magazine remains ever popular with members using this service as a means of making contact with others similarly affected.

### NPS partnership projects

This year we have continued our partnership work with the specialist Driving Phobia service – Anxious Driver, Jays Animal Encounters (an animal phobia service that runs clinics across the country) and Ursula James, who runs high quality workshops entitled ‘Phobic No More’ and ‘Trichotillomania No More’.



## Existing Services (continued)

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### 2006 Anxiety Disorders Conference

This year we were a strategic partner of the 2006 Anxiety Disorders Conference which was held in Manchester.

The conference was a real success with an exciting line-up of eminent speakers including NPS patron, Dr Fred Penzel of Western California, USA who gave a lively presentation on OCD and trichotillomania.

Over 450 people attended the one-day conference which was held at the University of Manchester conference centre and offered lectures and workshops on a wide range of anxiety disorders including Body Dysmorphic Disorder, Driving Phobia, Shy Bladder, Flying Phobia, Dental Phobia and social phobia, to name but a few.

Throughout the planning of the conference, we were most fortunate to receive support from Manchester City Football Club's 'City in the Community' project who were excellent throughout. We continue to enjoy an excellent working relationship with the staff at Manchester City Football Club whose commitment to community based projects such as ours, is second to none.



### Email and personal letter service

This service offers members the opportunity to gain support, information and advice on a wide range of issues relating to anxiety disorders. On average 3 letters each week are received and are answered by the Manager of the National Phobics Society, Ms Nicky Lidbetter. Over the year, Nicky has supported individuals specifically to obtain Blue Badges whilst also writing numerous support letters for individuals in relation to their claim for welfare benefits.

### Legal Question and Answer service

This year, Dave Thomas, NPS volunteer and non-practicing barrister has continued to offer informal legal advice to individuals requiring information in areas pertaining to discrimination, welfare rights etc.

### Dental Phobia Service

Sharon Floyd, NPS' dental phobia expert has supported a number of individuals who have presented with dental phobia/anxiety. Sharon has been able to provide tailored advice and support to such individuals, alleviating their fears and enabling them to pursue often, urgent dental treatment.

### Destigmatize project

This year we continued to offer support to members of Black and Minority Ethnic Communities through our destigmatize project which includes a dedicated website: [www.destigmatize.org.uk](http://www.destigmatize.org.uk)

In addition to the website, we also have fact sheets available in three community languages, Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu.

## Looking forward

As we enter our 37th year, we look forward to the future whilst recognising that we are entering a period of change in mental health. With the compilation of the Layard Report into psychological therapies and the current emphasis on the 'stepped care' model of delivery with the least intrusive intervention being offered first, it seems that after many years of mental health services focusing on the 'severe end', things are finally changing. This we welcome as we are only too aware of the huge gap that exists in statutory sector service provision and indeed the vast need represented by people suffering with so-called 'mild to moderate' mental health problems, that are anything but mild to moderate!

NPS over the coming year will need to continue to champion the cause of anxiety disorders – highlighting the effects of such conditions and supporting those affected to gain access to effective treatments. By this we mean not only encouraging and widening access to evidence based treatments such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, but also other forms of support such as befriending, self-help, and therapies such as clinical hypnotherapy. Similarly, we would hope that the value of user-led organisations such as ourselves continues to be recognised.

## NPS Trustees

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**David Thomas, NPS Vice Chair**

David initially volunteered with the NPS Legal Question & Answer service and was then invited onto the NPS Management Committee. A non-practising Barrister with a special interest in mental health law, David is currently doing post graduate work on the University of Northumbria's Master's program.



**Rose Beech**

I have been involved with the National Phobics Society since 2002 as a volunteer clinical hypnotherapist/counsellor. I joined the committee in May 2004. I also work for Self Help Services, as a facilitator of an anger management/social skills group. I am on the national register of hypnotherapists and psychotherapists, and am also a member of the British Association of Counselling & Psychotherapy.



**Danny Hulme, NPS Chair**

I have been involved with the National Phobics Society since 1999 when I joined as a volunteer telephone helpline worker. At the same time I began my degree in psychology at the University of Manchester and pursued my interest in the treatment of affective disorders. In 2002 I joined forces with Julie Kelly and developed a group cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) course for people suffering with social anxiety. I graduated in psychology in July 2004 and am looking to further my education in the treatment of affective disorders as well as expanding the group CBT course.



**Amandip Kalar**

I was initially welcomed into the organisation as a telephone helpline worker and general volunteer during my time at Manchester University when I was completing my undergraduate degree in Psychology.

When I moved to London to complete my doctorate, I decided to increase my level of involvement. I was keen to open up the services we provided to the UK Asian Community. Today my main role within the NPS is concerned with the Destigmatize project, our sister organisation that provides support for anxiety sufferers in UK Black & Minority Ethnic groups. We are continually looking for ways to obtain additional funding, promote media awareness of, and increase the range of services provided by Destigmatize.



**Julie Kelly**

I initially joined NPS as a volunteer telephone helpline worker and then became a trainee CBT counselling practitioner in 2001. I then went on to co-facilitate a structured social anxiety support group. More recently I represented the NPS on the NICE guidelines steering group for anxiety, as a patient representative.



**Liz Bradford**

I have been involved with the National Phobics Society since 2003 when I joined as a volunteer telephone helpline worker. At this time I was in my third year of my degree at Manchester University in Psychology and Neuroscience. I have since left the university and am working in research involving Pharmaceutical drug trials for a company in Reading.

## Medical Advisors and Patrons

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**Denise Welch**

Denise whilst having television parts since 1981, has reached national prominence in recent years by playing Frances, the wife of Jimmy Nail in Spender, Marsha Stubbs in Soldier Soldier and Natalie Horrocks in Coronation Street.

More recently Denise has starred in Breeze Block for BBC Drama; as Edie in Born And Bred, Clara in The Vice; Pam McGrath in Holby City and Linda in Where The Heart Is amongst many other roles.



**Professor David Clark**

Born in Darlington, England. He studied Experimental Psychology at Oxford University. His clinical training was at the Institute of Psychiatry, Kings College, London in Clinical Psychology. He was a lecturer in Clinical Psychology and Professor in Psychiatry research fellow at Oxford University. Since 2000, he has been Professor of Psychology and Head of the Psychology Department at the Institute of Psychiatry, Kings College, London. He is also Director of the Centre for Anxiety Disorders and Trauma at the Maudsley Hospital and (Honorary) Clinical and Research Advisor to the Northern Ireland Centre for Trauma and Transformation in Omagh. He was won many awards and is a fellow at three medical academies. Professor Clark's research focuses on cognitive approaches to the understanding and treatment of anxiety disorders. His research involves a closely integrated programme of experimental and clinical studies.



**Professor Cary Cooper CBE**

Cary L. Cooper, is Professor of Organizational Psychology and Health, Lancaster University Management School and Pro Vice Chancellor (External Relations) at Lancaster University. He is the author of over 100 books (on occupational stress, stress medicine and industrial and organizational psychology), has written over 400 scholarly articles for academic journals, and is a frequent contributor to national newspapers, TV and radio.



**Professor Robert Edelmann**

Professor Robert J. Edelmann is a Chartered Clinical, Forensic and Health Psychologist working in private practice. From 1986 until 1997 he was involved in Clinical Psychology training at the University of Surrey. His most recent academic appointment was to a Research Chair at the University of Surrey, Roehampton where he currently holds an Honorary Chair. Professor Edelmann is a Fellow of the British Psychological Society and a registered Cognitive Behavioural Therapist with the United Kingdom Council of Psychotherapists. He is the author of books on anxiety research and blushing. His main research interests relate to chronic blushing and social phobia and he has published many articles and book chapters on these topics.



**Professor Malcolm Lader**

Professor Lader is Emeritus Professor of Clinical Psychopharmacology at the Institute of Psychiatry, Kings College London, University of London. He has conducted and supervised clinics dealing with anxiety, sleep and depressive disorders and drug treatment problems for many years. His experience in psychiatry and clinical pharmacology now extends to over 40 years. His main research interest is the drugs used in psychiatry, in particular, antidepressants and anxiolytics. He advises the UK Ministries of Health, Defence and Transport in various capacities and sits on the advisory boards of about 30 international scientific journals. He also acts as an adviser to the World Health Organisation on drugs used in psychiatry.

## Medical Advisors and Patrons (continued)



### Dr David Wheatley

David Wheatley is a graduate of Cambridge University and a fellow of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. He was the director of the stress clinic at the Maudsley and Royal Masonic Hospitals. Author of 8 psychiatric textbooks, he has written hundreds of articles in scientific journals and was editor of the journal, *Stress Medicine*. He also lectures at many international congresses. He was instrumental in founding the British Association for Psychopharmacology (BAP) and the International Society for the Investigation of Stress (ISIS), he is also president of the Section of General Practice at the Royal Society of Medicine. His present interest is in plant products and their use in the treatment of depression, anxiety and phobic disorders.



### Dr David Baldwin

David Baldwin is Senior Lecturer in Psychiatry in the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Biological Sciences at the University of Southampton, and Honorary Consultant Psychiatrist at the Royal South Hants Hospital in Southampton. He trained in medicine at Charing Cross Hospital Medical School, and in psychiatry at St Mary's Hospital Medical School and The Maudsley Hospital. Dr Baldwin is a Fellow of many institutions and societies including The Royal College of Psychiatrists. Dr Baldwin's research interests include the clinical psychopharmacology of anxiety and depressive disorders and the prevention of suicidal behaviour. He has a professional interest in public education about mental disorder and its treatment. He is the author of many books and articles in journals. He is currently conducting investigations of attentional and interpretive bias in patients with anxiety disorders, before and after drug treatment.



### Dr Raj Persaud

Dr Raj Persaud is a Consultant Psychiatrist and Senior Lecturer at The Maudsley Hospital and Institute of Psychiatry in London which are the leading teaching, research and clinical institutions in psychiatry in Europe. He has been recognised for the innovative nature of his research by the receipt of numerous academic awards and prizes including the prestigious Royal College of Psychiatrists Research Medal and Prize and The Maudsley Hospital's own Denis Hill Prize. He also writes regularly in the national press and broadcasts widely for TV programmes and the radio.



### Professor Adrian Wells

Adrian Wells is a Professor of Clinical and Experimental Psychopathology at Manchester University, Professor of Clinical Psychology at the Norwegian University Trondheim, and Consultant Clinical Psychologist at the Manchester Mental Health & Social Care NHS Trust. His research interests include cognitive factors in the cause and maintenance of emotional disorders, cognitive theory and cognitive therapy of anxiety disorders. He is a pioneer of metacognitive theory and treatment based on information processing approaches to emotion and a leading authority on cognitive therapy of anxiety disorders. He is also the author of books on cognitive therapy.



### Dr Fred Penzel

Fred Penzel, is a licensed psychologist who has specialized in the treatment of OCD and related disorders since 1982. He is the executive director of Western Suffolk Psychological Services in Huntington, Long Island, New York, a private treatment group specializing in OCD and O-C related problems, and is a founding member of both the OCF and TLC Science Advisory Boards. Dr. Penzel is the author of books dealing with the subjects of OCD, O-C and Trichotillomania. He is also a frequent contributor to OC Foundation's newsletter and In Touch, the newsletter of TLC.



### Professor David Nutt

Professor Nutt heads a group called the Psychopharmacology Unit in Bristol University. This is researching the biological basis of anxiety and phobias and trying to understand how current effective treatments work. Using these two approaches it is hoped that even better interventions will be developed.



### Professor Paul Salkovskis

Professor of Clinical Psychology and Applied Science at the Institute of Psychiatry, King's College, London and Clinical Director at the Centre for Anxiety Disorders and Trauma, South London and Maudsley NHS Trust since October 2000. He is the editor of Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapy and has published over 170 articles, mainly on anxiety disorders.

Research has focussed on the importance of distorted thinking in the understanding of emotional disorders, and on ways of modifying such negative thinking in order to change problematic behaviours and control negative emotional reactions. This has involved the development, validation and evaluation of cognitive-behavioural theories of and treatments for anxiety disorders.



### Professor Karina Lovell

Karina is a Senior Lecturer in Mental Health Nursing at the University of Manchester. She is an accredited cognitive behaviour therapist and is a past president of the BABC. Her main research interests are developing alternative and accessible interventions for people with common mental health problems. Karina has a particular interest in self help materials for people experiencing anxiety and depression.



### Ursula James

Ursula James is the premier hypnotherapy practitioner and teacher in the UK. She lectures at eight UK medical schools, including Oxford and Cambridge, and has helped thousands of people overcome phobias, remove unwanted habits, and optimise their performance through her unique fusion of hypnosis and coaching. She is a regular contributor to radio and television, including 'This Morning', where she is the phobia expert, and she has her own series which starts on Channel 5 in 2007. Author of two books, the *Clinical Hypnosis Textbook*, and *You Can Be Amazing – change your life with hypnosis*, she has been a long time supporter of the NPS and helped establish the popular hypnotherapy volunteer scheme seven years ago. She currently runs workshops for the NPS ("Phobic No More" and "Tric No More") and has produced a "Controlling Anxiety" CD approved by the NPS, which has shown to be very helpful for anxiety sufferers.

# Supporting NPS

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Without the generous support of individuals and organisations, we would not be able to continue our vital work in improving the quality of life of people who are affected by anxiety disorders. We would like to thank and make special mention of the following:

## **Grant giving bodies**

Awards for All North West

Department of Health

Opportunities for Volunteers (mental health)

## **Charitable Trusts and Foundations**

Lewis Family Charitable Trust

James Braid Society

The Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund

Manchester City Football Club - City in the Community (CIC) initiative

## **Companies**

Anxious Driver

Pacific Recordings

## **Individuals who undertook sponsored events:**

Lindsay Nuttall

Suzanne Hall



**National Phobics Society**  
The anxiety disorders charity



Zion Community Resource Centre, 339 Stretford Road, Hulme, Manchester M15 4ZY

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