BA M.Sc D.Clin.Psych
Clinical Psychologist



**SPECIALISMS** 

ADHD (Diagnosis) Antisocial Behaviour Anxiety **ASD** Capacity Depression Domestic Violence Historic Sex Abuse **Learning Difficulties** Learning Disabilities Mood Disorder Neglect **Personality Disorders** Postnatal Depression **PTSD** Risk Self Harm Sexual Abuse Victims Suicidal Ideation Trauma

# **CASE TYPES**

Cognitive Assessment Criminal Family Proceedings Fitness to Plead Forensic Historic Sex Abuse Litigation Capacity Personal Injury Risk Assessments Road Traffic Accident Health Professions Council Registration: PYL02608 British Psychological Society Membership: 080836 Member of the Expert Witness Institute (EWI)

### **MEDICO-LEGAL EXPERIENCE**

My particular areas of specialty in this regard are assessing people with personality disorder, trauma, and within child protection cases. I have a particular interest in non-accidental injury and cases involving domestic abuse. I have completed over four hundred reports in family cases which have related to child protection and completed many global family assessments since beginning this work in 2007.

I have also completed many assessments in private law cases involving parental alienation.

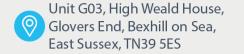
I have prepared over ninety reports in personal injury cases including medical negligence, accident compensation claims, and other cases where an assessment of post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms is required.

I have acted as expert in many criminal cases including those concerning fitness to plead/stand trial. I have given evidence in Court many times, including at the High Court.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

1991 - 1994	Nottingham University BA (Hons) Psychology: 2.1
1997 - 1999	Surrey University MSc Research Methods & Psychological Assessment: Distinction
1999 - 2002	Salomons Centre, Affiliated to University of Canterbury <b>PsychD in Clinical Psychology</b>
2003	Chartered by the British Psychological Society
2003 - 2004	Institute of Family Therapy Postgraduate Diploma in Systemic Practice with Families & Couples: Merit
2009	Registered by the Health & Care Professions Council
2011 - 2013	Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy Training, The Guild of Psychotherapists, London
2015	I completed training with EMDR Works to obtain registration as a practitioner in Eye Movement Desensitisation Reprocessing treatment. I am a member of EMDR Association UK & Ireland.
2019	I completed the Mentalisation-Based Treatment: Basic Training.
July 2021	Completed training in assessing Autistic Spectrum

Condition using the ADOS.





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### QUALIFICATIONS CONTD.

December 2021 Completed foundation training in yoga teacher training.

September 2022 Completed training in the Autism Diagnostic Interview-Revised (ADI-R)

June 2023 Qualification as a yoga teacher

### **WORK EXPERIENCE**

December 2022 onwards: Consultant Clinical Psychologist, South London and Merton NHS

Trust

#### January 2015 onwards: Psychologie Ltd.

I am the Director of Psychologie Ltd., which was set up to provide good-quality and timely assessments and treatment of adults. My areas of special interest in psychological treatment are trauma, and I am trained in EMDR. I am registered with BUPA and AXA. I was until recently the Treasurer for the British Rorschach Society.

#### May 2020 until January 2022: Lead Consultant Clinical Psychologist, Bramley Health.

I was the Lead Psychologist in a forensic service for men and women with complex needs.

#### September 2007 – February 2015: Carstairs Psychological Associates Ltd.

I was employed as an Associate with Carstairs Psychological Associates Ltd., a company which provides psychological assessments for the Courts in civil, criminal and family cases, and short and long-term psychotherapy.

#### 2005 – 2012: Women's Service, Sussex Partnership NHS Trust

I was employed as a Senior Clinical Psychologist in a Specialist Women's Service, which spans forensic and specialist care. The women referred to the service have complex mental health needs, often including a diagnosis of personality disorder, and they present a significant level of risk to either themselves or others. My job involved providing assessments, therapy, consultation and supervision to three staff teams, and I had managerial responsibility for a team of three psychologists.

# 2005-2012: University of Sussex

I had a yearly commitment to provide two lectures to undergraduates in psychology at the University of Sussex. The topics varied and included the assessment and treatment of personality disorder.

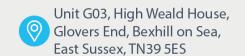
#### 2003 – 2005: CMHT/Psychological Therapies Service

I was employed as a Clinical Psychologist working in a Community Mental Health Team and a Psychological Therapies Service. I worked with individuals on a range of issues such as depression, anxiety, OCD, trauma, eating difficulties and personality difficulties, using an integrated approach to therapy.

#### 2002 – 2003: Specialist Medium Secure Service for Women

I worked as a Clinical Psychologist at The Dene which is a specialist medium-secure unit for women run by a private organisation for NHS patients. In my time there I gained further experience in a forensic setting with people who have suffered from severe trauma and who often attract a diagnosis of personality disorder.





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### **WORK EXPERIENCE CONTD.**

#### Placements in training

As well as my four core placements, I completed two elective placements in adult mental health in an Assertive Outreach Team, an acute psychiatric ward, and in a primary care service.

#### **CAREER HISTORY PRIOR TO TRAINING**

March 1997 - August 1999: St. Helier NHS Trust, Henderson Hospital, Sutton.

I was employed as a Researcher in this specialist tertiary service for adults with personality disorder.

May 1996 - March 1997: Horizon NHS Trust, Eric Shepherd Unit, Abbots Langley, Herts. I was employed as an Assistant Psychologist within a multidisciplinary team, working with adults with learning disabilities in a secure environment.

August 1995 - May 1996: Milton Keynes NHS Trust, Marlborough House, Milton Keynes.

I was employed as a Psychology Assistant in a Medium Secure Unit for Adults with Mental Health Needs.

## June 1994 - August 1995

I was employed as a Community Healthcare Assistant working with adults with learning disabilities and challenging behaviour, and then as a Nursing Assistant on an acute ward for adults with mental health needs.

#### **PUBLICATIONS & PRESENTATIONS**

Carstairs, K., Hartley, S., Peden, A., McCarthy Woods, J., van Graan, A., Andronikof, A. & Fontan, P. (2018) A normative study in England with the Rorschach Comprehensive System. *Rorschachiana*. 39, 105-134.

**Birch, S. (2015)** Workshop presentation: Assessing the adult's capacity to change. Presented at a study day entitled "assessing a parent's capacity to change in the timescales of their child". St Catherine's College, Oxford, 14<sup>th</sup> October 2015.

**Birch, S. (2015)** Factors that demonstrate change or potential change in parenting capacity. In Bryn Williams, Emma Peart & Roger Young (Eds.) *Understanding and assessing a parent's capacity to change within the timescales of the child.* London: Jordan Publishing.

**Carstairs, Kari & Birch, Sarah (2015)**. Assessing a parent's capacity to change in psychotherapy: The use of the Rorschach and the MMPI-2. In Bryn Williams, Emma Peart & Roger Young (Eds.) *Understanding and assessing a parent's capacity to change within the timescales of the child*. London: Jordan Publishing.

Birch, S. (2014). Why I use the Rorschach in court reports. Your Witness, 29, 37-38.

Birch, S. (2013). A therapist's responses to self harm. Clinical Psychology Forum, 248, 12-15.

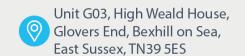
Birch, S. (2013). What makes a good quality psychological report. The Expert Witness Journal, 1, 64-66.

**Birch, S. (2013).** Using an interpreter when conducting cognitive evaluations in parenting assessments. *The Expert Witness Journal, 1,* 56–59.

**Birch, S. & Carstairs, K. (2012).** Poster presentation: Assessment of personality in parenting capacity cases. Presented at the annual conference for the Society for Personality Assessment, Chicago, 16<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

**Birch, S. (2012).** The See-Saw of Recovery in Women's Secure Care. In *Secure Recovery,* G. Drennan & D. Alred (Eds). Oxford Medical publications.





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#### **PUBLICATIONS & PRESENTATIONS CONTD.**

**Birch, S. (2011).** I want you to be able to see it. Diogenes and Pathological Hoarding. *Psychodynamic Practice,* 17, 331-334.

**Birch, S., Cole, S., & Hunt, K. (2011).** Self harm and Positive Risk-Taking. Can being able to think about the possibility of harm reduce the frequency of actual harm? *Journal of Mental Health. 20*, 293-303.

**Birch, S. (2010).** Conference presentation: Pathological Hoarding. Presented at the Association of Forensic Psychotherapy Conference, March 2010.

**Birch, S. & Lavender, T. (2003).** The physical healthcare experiences of women with enduring mental health problems. Status versus stigma. *Journal of Mental Health.* 14, 61-72.

**Dunstan, F. & Birch, S. (2003).** What Makes a TC? A Comparative Study of Ideal Values. In *A Culture of Enquiry. Research Evidence and the Therapeutic Community.* J. Lees, N. Manning, D. Menzies, & N. Morant (Eds.). Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

**Blount, C., Birch, S., Evans, C. & Warren, F. (2002).** A qualitative evaluation of outcome measures of personality disorder. *Journal of Medical Psychology, 75,* 151-164.

**Birch, S., Dunstan, F. & Warren, F. (1999).** Democratisation, reality confrontation, permissiveness, and communalism. Themes or anachronisms? An Examination of Therapeutic Agents Using Factor Analysis. *Therapeutic Communities, 20, 43-59.* 

## **RESEARCH**

- (1) My dissertation for the M.Sc. at Surrey University was on the gender bias in the measurement of personality disorder, for which I gained a <u>distinction</u>.
- (2) My dissertation for the Psych.D. at Salomons Centre focused on the physical healthcare experiences of women with enduring mental health problems, for which I gained a <u>merit</u>.
- (3) My research into treatment approaches to self-harm was published in an audit paper in 2011: this paper forms part of the NICE review of treatment for self-harm.
- (4) I have been involved in a pilot project gathering UK normative data on the Rorschach the initial results of this have now been accepted for publication.

#### CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

- September 2021 refresher in EMDR protocols
- March 2021 seminar on using the Flash technique in EMDR
- October 2018 attended an advanced seminar in assessing mental capacity.
- 2017/2018 Four day training on using the Marschak Interaction Method (MIM)
- Yearly attendance at Bond Solon Expert Witness Conference
- Portman Course on being an expert witness in family cases
- Two day training in Cognitive Analytic Therapy
- Rorschach Administration, Scoring and Interpretation
- Bond Solon Course: "Giving evidence for Expert Witnesses".
- Supervisors training and advanced supervisors training
- Psychopathy Checklist Training Course and HCR-20 course



