



GMC Registration No. 4080873; DBS No. 001723550911

SPECIALISMS

ADHD (Diagnosis)
ASD (Diagnosis)
Addiction
Alienation
Antisocial Behaviour
Anxiety
Attachment
Bereavement
Bipolar
Brain Injury
Child Abuse
Chronic Pain
Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
Cultural Diversity
Depression
Dissociation
Domestic Violence
Drug/Alcohol/Substance Misuse
Eating Disorder
Epilepsy
Fabricated Illness
Foetal Alcohol Syndrome
Gender Identity
Harmful Sexual Behaviour
Learning Disabilities
Learning Difficulties
Mood Disorder
Munchausen
Neglect
Non-Accidental Injury
Non-Verbal
OCD
Psychosis
Psychosomatic
PTSD/Trauma
Radicalisation
Risk Assessments
School Avoidance
Self-Harm
Sexual Abuse Victims
Suicidal Ideation
Together and Apart
Tourette's
Trafficking

CASE TYPES

Capacity Certificates/Reports
Clinical Negligence
Disability Discrimination
Educational
Employment Tribunal
Family
Fitness to Plead
Immigration & Asylum
Litigation Capacity
Neuropsychiatric
Mental Health Tribunal
Personal Injury
Private Family Law Proceedings
Second Opinion

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERTISE

Professional Qualification

Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist

Areas of Expertise

Assessment of Adolescents and Children

- Mental Illness
- ADHD
- ASD
- Intellectual Disability
- Depression
- Anxiety
- OCD
- PTSD
- School Refusal
- Challenging Behaviour
- Family Problems

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist currently working with children with intellectual disability with past experience in general outpatient and low-secure inpatient Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

I hold the Cardiff University Law School Bond Solon Expert Witness Certificate for both Civil (2021) and Family Law (2024).

For full details of work history, please refer to the Appendix.

REPORTS

I have prepared more than seventy reports for Local Authorities and family courts, and also provide reports for civil cases and the criminal court. I have also given evidence and been cross-examined in court for complex cases. These reports have covered the following areas:

- Psychiatric assessments of children
- Capacity assessments of 16- and 17-year-olds
- Competence assessments of under 16-year-olds
- Assessment of neurodevelopmental disorders
- Assessment of developmental trauma
- Single joint expert for court case regarding placement of child following child protection concerns



Unit G03, High Weald House,
Glovers End, Bexhill on Sea,
East Sussex, TN39 5ES



01424 444130



office@expertinmind.co.uk



QUALIFICATIONS, TRAINING & RESEARCH

Qualifications

- Paediatric Neurodisability Diploma (with merit)
Sheffield Children's NHS Foundation Trust endorsed by the British Academy of Childhood (BACD), 2024
- FRCPSych, including Section 12 approval, 2024
- The Cardiff University Bond Solon (CUBS) Expert Witness Civil Certificate, 2021 and Family Law (2024)
- CCT in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, as well as Approved Clinician Status, 2014
- MRCPsych; including Section 12 approval, 2011
- DipPEC, College of Medicine, South Africa, Diploma in Primary Emergency Care, 2007
- PhD in Human Physiology, University of Pretoria ("The mechanism of action of Ukrain™, a semisynthetic *Chelidonium majus* alkaloid derivative, in malignant and normal cell lines"), 1999
- MSc in Human Physiology (Cum Laude), University of Pretoria. ("The effects of melatonin on cell cycle events in MCF-7, TK6, HeLa and MG-63 cells"), 1997
- MBChB (Cum Laude), University of Pretoria Distinctions in all subjects: Surgery, Internal Medicine, Paediatrics, Obstetrics & Gynaecology, and Psychiatry, 1993

Selected Publications

- Brar G, Swanepoel A, O'Connell H, McFarland J. Evolutionary perspectives on ADHD. *Irish Journal of Psychological Medicine* (published online 2025 doi:10.1017/ipm.2025.10089)
- Swanepoel A, Maitra R, Botros M, Puttaswamaiah S, Liew A. Clonidine in fifty children with intellectual disability: a naturalistic study. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychopharmacology* (published online 2025)
- Meiser-Stedman R, Allen L, Ashford PA, Beeson E, Byford S, Danese A, Farr A, Finn J, Goodall B, Grainger L, Hammond M, Harmston R, Humphrey A, King D, Lofthouse K, Mahoney-Davies G, Miles S, Moore J, Morant N, Robertson S, Shepstone L, Sims E, Stallard P, Swanepoel A, Trickey D, Trigg K, Vishwakarma R, Wilson J. A phase II pragmatic randomised controlled trial of cognitive therapy for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in children and adolescents exposed to multiple traumatic stressors: The DECRYPT trial. *World Psychiatry* 2025;24:422-434
- Chaudhary N, Salali G-D, Swanepoel A. Sensitive Responsiveness and Multiple Caregiving Networks among Mbendjela BaYaka Hunter-Gatherers: Potential implications for psychological development and wellbeing. *Dev Psychol.* 2024;60(3):422-440. doi:10.1037/dev0001601
- Diederich NJ, Brüne M, Allen JS, Bender N, Bruner E, Changeux JP, Corrado C, Dolgova O, Grünewald A, Hernandez L, Konopka G, Peng J, Lemon R, Levy G, Magistretti P, Rantala MJ, Rockland K, Sullivan R, Swanepoel A, Uchihara T, Amunts K, Goetz CG. Buried treasure? Overlooked and newly discovered evolutionary contributions to human brain disease. *Annals of Neurology* 2025 <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ana.78030>
- Abed R, Swanepoel A, O'Connell H. Evolutionary psychiatry. *World Psychiatry* 2025;24:456-457
- Swanepoel A, Abed R, Brar G, StJohnSmith P, O'Connell H. Evolution: the bridge between "biological" and "social psychiatry". *Irish Journal of Psychological Medicine* 2024 (doi:1-1017/ipm.2024.31)





Selected Publications Contd.

- Swanepoel A. Public health for paediatricians: how an evolutionary perspective can help us improve children's wellbeing. *Arch Dis Child Educ Pract Ed* 2024 doi:10.1136/archdischild-2023-326522
- Swanepoel A. Why an evolutionary perspective is useful for child and adolescent psychiatrists. *World Child & Adolescent Psychiatry* 2023;24:62-67.
- Swanepoel A, Lovell M. Stopping the over-medication of children with Intellectual Disability, Autism, or both and Supporting Treatment and Appropriate Medication for children with ID, ASD and/or ADHD. *BJPsych Advances* 2023;29(5):358-366.
- Chaudhary N, Swanepoel A. "What Can We Learn from Hunter-Gatherers about Children's Mental Health? An Evolutionary Perspective" *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 2023;64(10), 1522-1526.
- Swanepoel A, Abed R, Kaser M, St John Smith P. How evolutionary science can help us understand vaccine refusal in the COVID-19 pandemic. *BJPsych Bull.* 2022 Jul 12:1-5. doi: 10.1192/bjb.2022.36. PMID: 35818884.
- Swanepoel A. Fifteen-minute consultation: How to communicate with parents who have a child on life support with no hope of recovery [published online ahead of print, 2022 Jun 21]. *Arch Dis Child Educ Pract Ed.* 2022;edpract-2021-322262. doi:10.1136/archdischild-2021-322262
- Wren B, Launer J, Music G, Reiss M, Swanepoel A. Can an evolutionary perspective shed light on maternal abuse of children? *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 2021: 26(1), 283-294. doi:10.1177/1359104520974418
- Allen L, Ashford P-A, Beeson E, et al. DECRYPT trial: study protocol for a phase II randomised controlled trial of cognitive therapy for posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in youth exposed to multiple traumatic stressors. *BMJ Open* 2021;11:e047600. doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2020-047600
- Swanepoel A. Fifteen-minute consultation: To prescribe or not to prescribe in ADHD, that is the question. *Arch Dis Child Educ Pract Ed* doi:10.1136/archdischild-2020-318866
- Abed R, Ayton A, St John-Smith P, Swanepoel A, Tracy DK. Evolutionary biology: an essential basic science for the training of the next generation of psychiatrists. *BJPsych* 2019: 215, 699-701. doi: 10.1192/bjp.2019.123
- Wren B, Launer J, Reiss M, Swanepoel A, Music G. Can evolutionary thinking shed light on gender diversity? *BJPsych Advances* 2019:25(6), 351-362. Doi:10.1192/bja.2019.35
- Swanepoel A. Fifteen-minute consultation: Attachment as a model to understand difficult doctor-parent relationships. *Arch Dis Child Educ Pract Ed* 2018;0:1-5. doi:10.1136/archdischild-2018-315570
- Swanepoel A. Fifteen-minute consultation: the angry child. *Arch Dis Child Educ Pract* 2018;0:1-5. doi:10.1136/archdischild-2017-314020
- Swanepoel A, Music G, Launer J, Reiss M. How evolutionary thinking can help us understand ADHD. *BJPsych Advances* 2017; 410-418. Doi: 10.1192/apt.bp.116.016659
- Swanepoel A. Fifteen-minute consultation: safety assessment prior to discharge of patient admitted for self-harm. *Arch Dis Child Educ Pract Ed* 2016 doi: 10.1136/archdischild-2016-310782
- Swanepoel A, Sieff DF, Music G, Launer J, Reiss M, Wren B. How evolution can help us understand child development and behaviour. *BJPsych Advances* 2016 (22): 36-43. Doi: 10.1192/apt.bp.114.014043





Book Chapters

Swanepoel A. ADHD- an evolutionary view. Diederich NJ, Brüne M, Amunts K, Goetz CG (Eds). The Evolutionary Roots of Brain Diseases. Oxford University Press. 2024:360.

Swanepoel A, Reiss MJ, Launer J, Music G, Wren B. Evolutionary Perspectives on Childhood Trauma. Evolutionary Psychiatry: Current Perspectives on Evolution and Mental Health. Cambridge University Press. 2022:214.

Swanepoel A, Reiss MJ, Launer J, Music G, Wren B. Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Evolutionary Psychiatry: Current Perspectives on Evolution and Mental Health. 2022:228.

MEMBERSHIPS & PRESENTATIONS

Professional Memberships

- Fellow of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, 855946
- Recorded on the specialist register of the General Medical Council. Membership number: 4080873
- Member of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, 855946
- Member of the RCPsych Executive Committee of the Evolutionary Psychiatry Special Interest Group (EPSIG) and Finance Officer
- Chair of the World Psychiatric Association Evolutionary Psychiatry Special Interest Group (<https://www.wpanet.org/section-page/evolutionary-psychiatry/>)
- Member of the Advisory Board Paediatric Disability Distance Learning Course

Presentations

- Invited speaker to Ethology conference in Erice, Italy, November 2025: “An evolutionary perspective on child development and autism”
- Invited speaker to the Biannual meeting of the Association of Practicing Psychiatrists (Danish acronym: SAPP) in October 2025: “How to incorporate evolutionary theory into clinical practice”
- Invited speaker (with Dr Nikhil Chaudhary) to Royal Society of Medicine, June 2025: “What we can learn from hunter-gatherers: Implications for child and perinatal psychiatry”
- Invited speaker to ACAMH conference in May 2025: “Embedding evolutionary principles into the educational frontline”: Topic of talk: “An evolutionary perspective on education”.
- Invited talk to NDPSIG of RCPsych 5th June 2024: “An evolutionary perspective on ADHD and autism
- Invited talk in Luxembourg 22-24th Feb 2024: Evolutionary roots of human brain diseases. Title: “ADHD: an evolutionary perspective”
- Two presentations at WPA World Congress of Psychiatry in Vienna 28th September to 1st October 2023 with titles: “Mismatch between our inherited physical and psychological mechanisms and the modern environment” and “Evolutionary theory for understanding child abuse by mothers”.





Presentations Contd.

- Invited guest speaker at the Synapse Centre on 9th Feb 2022 with talk: ADHD in children with learning impairment: are we missing the diagnosis? <https://www.synapsecentre.co.uk/adhd-in-children-with-learning-impairment-are-we-missing-the-diagnosis/>
- Invited guest speaker at RCPsych EPSIG Attachment webinar 19th March 2021 with talk: How evolution can help us understand child development. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ekGB9Ncx38>
- Invited guest speaker at RCPsych EPSIG second symposium on 12th January 2018: "How evolutionary thinking can help us understand ADHD" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwOVJhH0f-4>
- Radio Verulam interview on the Parent Show about Self-Harm on 9th February 2017
- Podcast on RCPsych site: How evolution can help us understand child development and behaviour. 2016. <https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/news-and-features/podcasts/detail/how-evolution-can-help-us-understand-child-development-and-behaviour>

Clinical Appendix

CHRONOLOGICAL WORK HISTORY IN THE UK

North East London NHS Foundation Trust (NELFT), NHS

Feb 2021—Present

Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist
SET CAMHS LD team

- I work with a team that helps children with severe to profound learning disability with comorbid mental health problems.
- I provide assessments and reviews and prescribe medication.
- I also assist team members with formulation and attend professional meetings across services.
- I completed an audit cycle in terms of antipsychotic medication prescribing and reduced this by correctly diagnosing and treating ADHD.
- I am linking with colleagues to rectify this and work according to STOMP and STAMP principles.

Elysium Healthcare

Jun 2018—Oct 2020

Clinical Director CAMHS
Potters Bar Low Secure Adolescent Unit

- As Clinical Director I was responsible for the Low Secure Unit at Potter's Bar and oversaw two CAMHS eating disorder units (Rhodes Wood and Brighton & Hove).
- I appraised and managed six consultant psychiatrists.
- In my clinical work, I was the responsible consultant for six young people with extreme difficulties who were detained under the Mental Health Act
- These young people were all unable to be managed in general adolescent units and were transferred due to serious risk of suicide.
- Potter's Bar CAMHS was inspected by the CQC in December 2019 and received a "good" in all respects.





CHRONOLOGICAL WORK HISTORY IN THE UK CONTD.

- In my role as Child Champion to improve research networking for the NIHR CRN Eastern Region, I arranged a conference for the CRN Eastern Region in November 2018, which was well attended and received excellent feedback.
- I contributed to quality improvement by writing a new policy before young people were sent to A&E, which helped reduce unnecessary referrals.
- I also wrote a policy on how to manage Challenging Behaviour and stopped the use of seclusion on the CAMHS wards.
- I wrote about “Values in CAMHS” for the local Newsletter to help change the culture and also wrote two short pieces that were featured on the Elysium website as blog posts.

Hertfordshire University Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Oct 2014—Jun 2018

Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist

Hoddesdon CAMHS

- I was responsible for a varied caseload of young people with severe and chronic mental illness, including ADHD, ASD, intellectual disability, depression, anxiety, OCD, personality disorder and PTSD. This included initial assessments, diagnosis, formulation, prescribing and monitoring of medication.
- Principal investigator for DECRYPT-trial in Hertfordshire, which is a randomised controlled trial evaluating cognitive therapy versus treatment-as-usual in young people with PTSD following multiple trauma.

