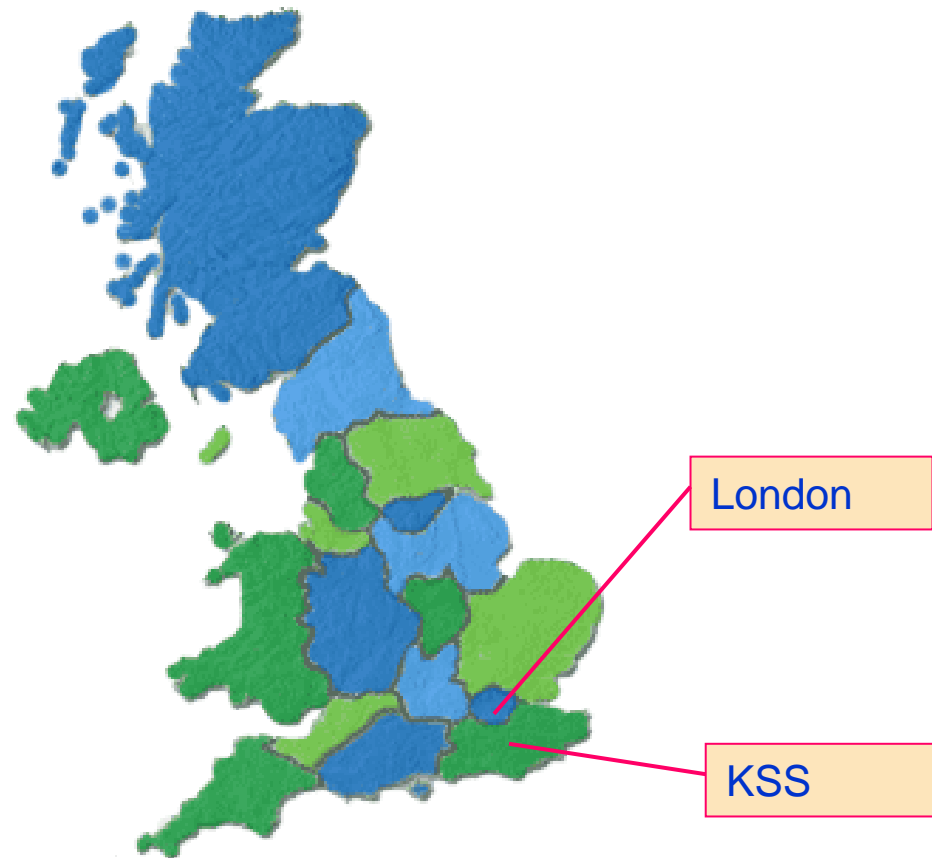

1st – 3rd December 2010
EAPH Annual Conference, Barcelona
“Healthy Physicians for a Healthy Society”

2nd Plenary Session:
“Doctors in Difficulty”

Dr Antony Garelick

*Associate Dean – MedNet London Deanery
and Consultant Psychiatrist/Psychotherapist
Tavistock Clinic & NELMHT*

Deaneries in England and Wales



What is the MedNet service?

- Addresses work, personal or career related problems
- Clinical assessment and brief treatment service
- A network of resources
- Confidentiality (within explicit limits of patient safety)

Nature of Service

- Self-referral
- Psychiatric and psychological assessments
- Up to 6 sessions
- Staffed by Senior Psychiatrists/Psychotherapists
- Narrative based, holistic exploration

Morbidity in the Medical Profession

Goldberg 1978

30% doctors above threshold on GHQ
compared to 18% workers outside health
profession

Caplan 1994

47% stress, 29% anxiety, 27% depression

Morbidity in the Medical Profession (2)

Borrill (1997) - 27% psychological morbidity

Ramirez (2000) - Evidence of stress among consultants. 27% psychiatric morbidity on GHQ (management and communication)

Firth-Cozens (2000/3) - 28% doctors show work-related stresses

Case A

Obsessional / depressive difficulties

Dominant Personality Configuration

Compulsive personalities with very demanding super-egos

Gabbard (1985) - doubt
- guilt feeling
- exaggerated sense of responsibility

Krakowski (1982) - perfectionism
- excessive devotion to work
- doubt
- unable to take leisure time

Socially valuable traits but personally expensive

Empirical study by personality characteristics

Brewin (1992)

Higher levels of self-criticism associated with high rates of depression and less satisfactory parenting

Problems with team working

- Absence of an agreed aim
- Ambiguous roles and responsibilities
- Lack of agreement about what working together means
- Problematic power relationships
- Ideological differences
- Conflicting models of care
- Cynicism/loss of faith (detached/depersonalised working)

Group v Individual (the dialectic)

- Relegation of individual needs and opinions in the service of the group
- Compromise
- Tolerate frustration
- Capacity to consider different points of view and approaches
- Ability to cope with complexity
- Ability to relinquish individual control for the collective approach

Stressors

- High demand, low control
- Recurrent organisational change
- Recurrent organisational demands
- The culture of perfection

Case B

Bipolar Disorder

Stigma

Firth-Cozens 1999 - Problems frequently long-standing, untreated, and appear proportionately higher than in other occupational groups

External - adverse effects on career

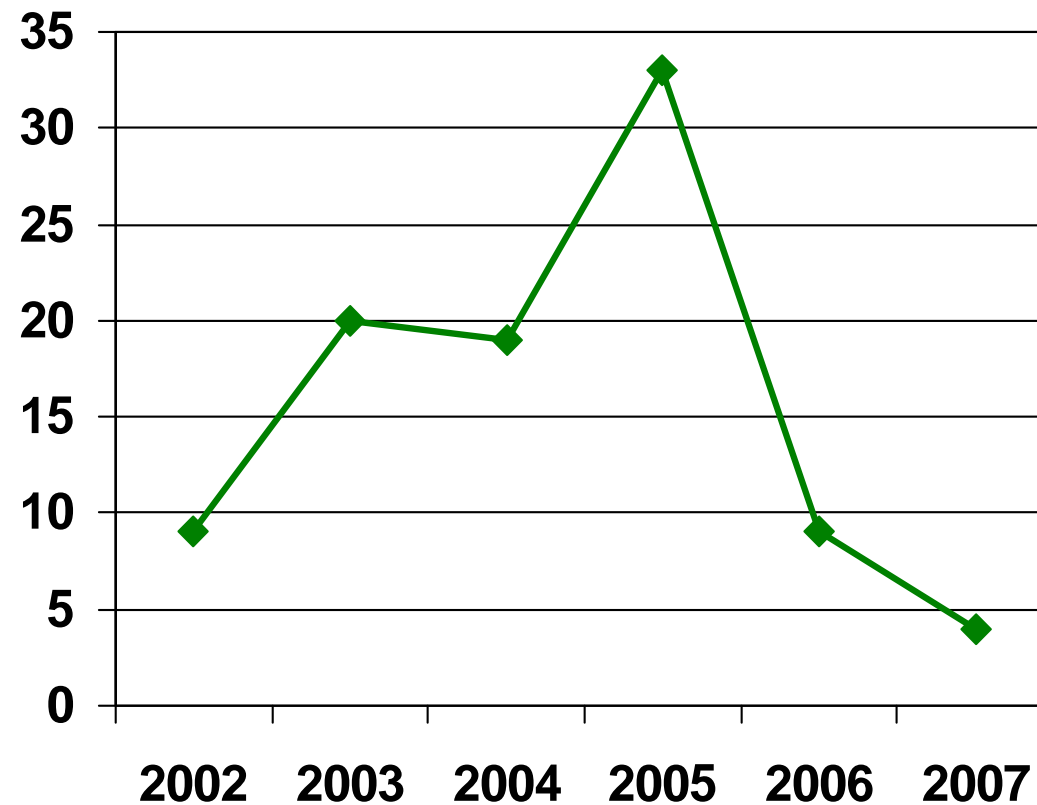
Internal - shame, fear of failure

Conflicts with still prevalent role model of the invulnerable clinician able to cope with any professional stress

Addressing the challenge of stigma

Number of Patients who have completed the Follow Up Survey broken down by year

**Total 98
Respondents
Completed
the Survey
of 391
Contacted
= 25%**



Work

- **Are you in Full time work?**

*Total number currently working full time in medicine
66/98*

- **Are you in Part time work?**

*Total number currently working part time in medicine
23/98*

- **If you are not working, is this by choice?**

Total Number not by Choice 7/98

- **Is this for health reasons?**

Total Number for Health Reasons 2/98

The importance of peer group support

Maslow - esteem

- **The need for self respect**
entails confidence, mastery, achievement, independence and freedom
- **The need for respect from others**
entails recognition, acceptance, status and appreciation

Doctor's Feedback

- Want greater understanding of what generated their problems
- Importance of being in charge of ones own destiny
- Want more than protocol driven approach
- Value knowledge as a means to autonomy and self worth

E Halpert, International Journal of Psychoanalysis 2009