

# Statement of Purpose, Adoption Support Agency

The Tavistock Institute of Medical Psychology (TIMP)

**Operating name:** Tavistock Relationships (*previously the Tavistock Centre for Couple Relationships*)

**Service name:** Adopting Together

## Introduction to the organisation and its ethos

The Tavistock Institute of Medical Psychology (TIMP) was formed in 1929. Our new name is Tavistock Relationships, a change from the previous Tavistock Centre for Couple Relationships (TCCR). The Tavistock Institute of Medical Psychology remains the registered charity and company limited by guarantee.

Tavistock Relationships is an internationally renowned charity delivering and developing advanced practice, training and research in therapeutic psycho-educational approaches to supporting couples.

We deliver professional, validated and accredited training in couple counselling and psychotherapy. We also provide clinical services to couples and parents throughout London, including a range of affordable counselling and psychotherapy services to support clients experiencing challenges in their relationships, their sexual lives and their parenting.

In addition, we undertake research, service development and policy activities which encourage the development and growth of effective and innovative relationship support interventions.

Our mission is to ensure that every couple has access to high quality, effective help for their relationship. Our ethos centres on two key themes:

- First we believe that relationships are central to the creation of secure, stable and just societies and that children's wellbeing is largely predicated on the quality of their family relationships.
- Second, we aim to develop and deliver high quality services which offer in-depth engagement with clients. Our core methodology is derived from psychoanalytic and attachment theory with new developments arising out of the learning from neuroscience.

## **The Adopting Together Service**

In 2014 we received nearly £200,000 from the DfE to undertake an innovative programme of work that included the development of a new post-adoption service for couples.

We used the fund to develop and deliver high quality post-adoption support for parental couples, which is a significant unmet need amongst families who have adopted. We designed the services to support the relationships of these couples which are, research shows, considerably stressed by the process of caring for adopted children, whose needs can lead to strains on the adult relationship. Through improving these relationships we found evidence of increased family resilience and stability, benefiting both parents and children.

We delivered two evidence-based models of relationship support that were specifically adapted for adoptive families. Parents were assessed as they entered the programme to determine the most appropriate service, either the evidence based 'Parents as Partners' (PasP) co-parenting programme, which we tailored for adoptive parents. PasP provides couples with a psycho-educational therapeutic 16 week group work programme designed to strengthen the co-parenting relationship, increase father involvement and improve parental sensitivity and authority. Crucially, evidence about this programme shows positive impacts not only on parent-child and couple relationships but also on longitudinal outcomes for children. Our second model is TR's proven and evaluated attachment-based couple therapy developed over 60 years, with specific adoption focused training given to practitioners.

The services were provided at our London centres, which are both centrally located. One is in Warren Street and the other is close to Liverpool Street Station. Both sites have been specifically designed for the delivery of counselling, therapy, group work and training activities, with confidential consulting rooms, attractive group/training rooms, disabled access, reception and toilet facilities, and in New Street a room appropriate to use for creche facilities.

From 1st October 2016 Tavistock Relationships supported by a further grant from the DfE will be offering the second phase of its Adopting Together Service. This phase will concentrate on offering couple therapy to post adoption couples allowing us to further develop the evidence base and outcomes data, using the range of specially selected clinical measures. In addition, we will be offering a range of training and development work for post adoption practitioners.

The Tavistock Institute of Medical Psychology, operating under the name Tavistock Relationships (TR), will be the Registered Provider.

### **Staffing roles**

Andrew Balfour, Chief Executive of TR, will represent the organisation as the Responsible Individual. Andrew is a qualified clinical psychologist and psychoanalytic psychotherapist. He has nearly 30 years' experience of working in NHS and other clinical settings, much of which has been as a senior manager dealing daily with complex cases which require a considerable depth of understanding about risk and safeguarding in families.

The Registered Manager is Honor Rhodes OBE, who is Director of Strategic Development at TR. Honor has a wealth of experience managing family support and social work. She is a qualified social worker with further training in family therapy. She was previously the CEO of Coram Family

and Director of Services at Family Action. As a Principal Officer she managed Family Placement teams, children on the edge of care and Quality and Development Teams.

At Coram she acted as Agency Decision Maker and oversaw the adaptation of Incredible Years for post-adoption parents.

## **Organisational Structure and Management**

The project leader for this service is Damian McCann, an experienced and qualified family therapist and couple psychoanalytic psychotherapist, with many years' experience in Child and Adolescent Mental Health settings. Damian is TR's Head of Development & Learning and has specific experience of developing and leading projects within Tavistock Relationships.

Other staff engaged in delivering the services have accredited qualifications in either social work, couple psychotherapy, family or other UKCP recognized therapies.

TR operates a matrix management system to ensure full oversight and support of the work and will hold internal Programme Board meetings to ensure that the project is effective and delivering against its planned targets. The registered manager, Honor Rhodes, will be responsible for the overall service delivery and she will chair the monthly Programme Board. The Project Lead will report to her. Damian McCann, Project Lead, Couple Psychoanalytic Psychotherapist & Clinical Lecturer will have over-arching responsibility for all clinical matters.

All staff delivering services will be given further training in understanding the specific issues that adoptive couples face. We have an established partnership with CoramBAAF who will provide consultancy and support to us as we develop our adoption specific expertise.

## **Supervision and Good Governance**

As with all of our services, delivery staff will be offered clinical supervision weekly from a senior supervising therapist giving them the opportunity to reflect on their cases and improve their practice. A register of all supervision groups will be kept in accordance with Adoption National Minimum Standards. Andrew Balfour, the Responsible Individual, will supervise senior staff including Honor Rhodes, Director of Strategic Development, and Damian McCann on a monthly basis, and Andrew Balfour meets regularly with the Chair of TR, Nick Pearce.

## **Parent recruitment, parents' experience of Adopting Together services at TR and how we receive complaints and compliments**

Parents are recruited via links with adoption agencies and direct marketing. They will be able to contact TR via email or phone with full details of the service on our website. Our clinical administration team will arrange an appointment for them at a convenient time.

All parents will be given a full clinical assessment to explore what kind of support is most appropriate for their needs. During the initial meeting a TR clinician is able to listen and think with parents about the dilemmas they are living with and the help we can offer. We ask parents to complete a number of psychometric measures, and these help in understanding the point they are starting from, and by measuring again at the end of the service we can see what changes parents have made with our support. At the end of the Adopting Together service, whether it is the therapy or group work offer, we ask parents in some detail about what the experience has been like for them, what we might do differently and what they valued most.

This information has been invaluable in terms of reviewing the services and improving them.

## **Complaints and compliments**

Sometimes parents are unhappy or angry about some aspect of our service and we encourage them to tell us.

TR's goal is to provide the highest quality of service, in a thoughtful and helpful way. Sometimes we may fall short of the standards parents expect and we then strive to understand what has gone wrong, what we can do and how we can improve. We have an accessible and simple complaints procedure that starts with an informal process; if this fails to resolve the complaint then we have a formal process that involves our senior managers and trustees.

It is far more common for people who use our services to tell us how helpful and transformative the experience had been; this is important too.

Both complaints and compliments are used in helping us improve what we do.

For more information on our complaints or compliments feedback procedure please contact us by telephone on 020 7380 1975 or by email to [info@tavistockrelationships.org](mailto:info@tavistockrelationships.org)

OFSTED registration number: Unique Reference Number (URN): 1166735

Registered Charity Number: 211058

Company Registration Number: 241618

Signed:



Andrew Balfour, Chief Executive Officer

15. 9. 2016

Dated: