

LETTERS

PERSONALITY DISORDER

Trials of therapeutic communities in personality disorder are under way

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Gask and colleagues state that there is no evidence for the effectiveness of therapeutic communities in the treatment of personality disorder.¹ This is misleading.

As the authors note, therapeutic communities have been used in the treatment of personality disorder in the UK for many years. In the past they were often residential, but almost all now consist of day programmes.² To date, none of the randomised controlled trials of this treatment have been in personality disorder populations.³ At least one randomised controlled trial is currently under way (www.controlled-trials.com/ISRCTN57363317), and a substantial body of non-trial evidence exists.⁴

The article would have represented the current situation better if it had considered recent work on therapeutic communities in personality disorder, as it did for nidotherapy and the Service

User Network, while noting that trial evidence for the effectiveness of this approach is not yet available.

Competing interests: The author was one of the peer reviewers for the original article.

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- 4 Barr W, Kirkcaldy A, Horne A, Hodge S, Hellin K, Gopfert M. Quantitative findings from a mixed methods evaluation of once-weekly therapeutic community day services for people with personality disorder. *J Ment Health* 2010;19:412-21.

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