

# VICTORIAN BRANCH

## Training Programme

### Course Structure

The training consists of:

- personal group psychotherapy
- formal seminars
- clinical supervision

On satisfactory completion of all components of training the candidate may apply for full membership of the AAGP.

### Personal group psychotherapy

Each trainee is required to have personal group psychotherapy with an AAGP accredited group psychotherapist. This should commence as soon as possible after a trainee is accepted, and continues until the end of training. It is a requirement of training that personal group psychotherapy is concurrent with attendance at seminars and supervision of clinical work.

### Formal seminar series

This is a formal four-year course of seminars, each year consisting of two semesters of 16 seminars. Dates are organised to fit in with the usual Victorian school holidays. Seminars are held on Tuesday evenings from 8 – 9.30pm except in special circumstances when seminar leaders might arrange for an alternative time eg Saturday morning. This would be done in consultation with trainees. Regular attendance at seminars is expected.

Seminars covered throughout the programme will include the following:

#### 1) Introductory

- outline and history of group psychotherapy
- an extended study of the basic texts: Freud, Bion, Foulkes
- basic psychoanalytic concepts: Klein, Winnicott

- seminars designed to illuminate links between the individual and group analytic fields eg John Padel's paper "Ego in current thinking"; Schindler's "The role of mother in group psychotherapy"
- works by Chassegeut-Smirgel "The Ego-Ideal", and McDougal "Theatres of the Mind" and "Theatres of the Body"

## 2) Conducting analytic group psychotherapy

### a) starting a group

- the setting, selection of patients, parameters and guidelines eg Frank Jerome's "Six principles"; Yalom's "Curative factors"; Denis Brown's "Selection and assessment for groups"

### b) different theoretical approaches

- main focus on Bion, Foulkes, Ezriel but also consideration given to Lieberman & Stock Whitaker, and other group thinkers

### c) the life of the group

- early group phenomena; introducing new members; premature termination; defence mechanisms in groups; transference and counter-transference; the group facilitator and his/her task; terminating a group

## 3) Specific forms of analytic group work

- combined individual and group psychotherapy
- co-therapy
- group therapy with adolescents and children
- group therapy with borderline and narcissistic disorder patients
- group therapy with terminally ill patients eg metastatic breast cancer
- group therapy with psychosomatic disorders
- therapeutic communities eg the Cassel Hospital model
- median and large groups

4) Topics suggested by trainees which may be of special interest, or additional seminars on work previously covered.

Seminar Leaders are provided by members of the AAGP, the Melbourne Institute for Psychoanalysis, the VAPP and other informed specialists.

## **Clinical supervision**

The following three components of training are required prior to commencing clinical supervision:

- personal group psychotherapy by an accredited AAGP group therapist
- completion of the first 2 years of formal seminars which include practical issues in setting up groups and the selection of patients
- approval from the Training Committee which is dependent on satisfactory progress

Trainees are required to choose an accredited supervisor to assist them in starting their groups. This involves the selection process of patients for group. Formal requirements are two psychotherapy groups, with a minimum of 2 years and 1 year respectively. At least one group needs to be twice weekly. The total minimum number of clinical group hours over the 2 groups is 300. A different supervisor must supervise the second group with the same pre-requisite of assisting in the selection of patients and commencement of the group. Supervisors will provide a progress report twice yearly to the Training Committee, having first discussed this with the trainee concerned.

Psychotherapy groups for training need to be of mixed gender and with a variety of different diagnoses. Specialized groups with a specific focus have till now not been accepted for training purposes but it is under consideration that trainees might be able to have one workplace group accepted.