

23rd December, 2014

Rev A V Ruddle
Association of Christian Counsellors
29 Momus Boulevard
Coventry
CV2 5NA

Dear Tony

RENEWAL OF ACC MEMBERSHIP: CORE ISSUES TRUST

The Trust undertakes for the time being to comply with the ACCs Ethics and Practice Statement, including that of January 2014. We therefore request that our membership of the ACC be renewed. In respect of the ACC's statement on 10th January 2014, compliance does not imply agreement because of legal and professional concerns.

In addition the Trust will now begin the process of seeking to formalise its relationship with the Professional Standards Authority (PSA) as a supplier of counselling and psychotherapy with a special interest in the area of human sexuality. This is in line with government expectations that practising counsellors and psychotherapists are formally registered.

Core Issues Trust values professional collegiality and accountability in its attempts to support and minister to individuals conflicted in their experience of sexuality and those seeking to move away from homosexual practice and feelings. It also recognises, given the ongoing debate in scientific and professional circles, the controversial nature and range of views in understanding human sexuality, particularly 'homosexuality', and how to appropriately align practice with understanding of this area.

As made clear by our Statement in January 2014¹, the Trust is not in agreement with the ACC Executive in respect of its January 2014 Statement². In particular the Trust places on record again its concern that the ACC Executive:

¹ 10 January 2014. CIT Response to ACC Statement to its Members, 10 January 2014. <http://www.core-issues.org/uploads/CIT%20Response%20to%20ACC%201013%20Statement%2010th%20January%202014-FINAL.pdf> <accessed 22 December 2014>

² 10 January 2014. A Statement of the ACC to its Members. <http://www.acc-uk.org/pdfs/ACC%20statement%20to%20its%20members%20January%202014.pdf> <accessed 22 December 2014>

Council of Reference: Mr Andrew Comiskey (CEO Desert Stream /Living Waters), USA; Professor Robert Gagnon, (Pittsburgh Theological Seminary), USA; Rev David Johnston, (Presbyterian, NI); Andrea Minichiello Williams (CEO Christian Legal Centre) GB; Canon Chris Sugden (C of E, GB); Mr Dermot O'Callaghan (Church of Ireland, NI); Rev Hadden Wilson (Baptist, NI)

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- (1) consistently with other signatories of the 'Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy' (2014)³ has offered no peer-reviewed research or scholarship which indicates that so called 'Reparative' , 'Conversion' or talking therapies in current use to explore change are harmful on average, nor that they are more harmful than any other standard modality brought to bear on conflicts in sexual feelings⁴. Referring to studies of the harmful effects of therapies used 50 years ago is not only irrelevant to the current debate but is profoundly misleading , and
- (2) whilst claiming that 'Reparative' and 'Conversion' therapy "imply a predetermined direction of outcome of counselling at the outset", has made no attempt to designate Gay Affirming Therapies in the same category, and
- (3) provides no indication of how it intends, under the PSA to lawfully supply services to individuals whose past sexual orientation was gay or to individuals in the process of changing their sexual identity to 'ex-gay', given that the High Court (on Appeal) has ruled⁵ that persons who are 'ex-gay' may not be discriminated against (even though this identity or orientation is not a 'protected characteristic' in the Equality Act of 2010). We are concerned that the ACC is discriminating on grounds of sexual orientation; and disregarding issues of sexual identity protected by Article 8. We are concerned that no legal opinion has been provided on this issue.

The Trust is committed to acting professionally, based on scientific research and legal understanding relating to therapeutic support for unwanted same-sex attractions. The Trust is aware of the need to act lawfully; and to base professional responses on objectively justifiable evidence.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.



Michael R Davidson, PhD., FHEA

Director

CORE ISSUES TRUST

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³ December 2014. Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy. http://www.core-issues.org/uploads/Conversion_Therapy_MoU%5b1%5d.pdf. <accessed 22 December 2014>

⁴ CIT Statement on Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy, December 2014. http://www.core-sues.org/uploads/Statement_by_Core_Issues_Trust%2018th%20December%202014.pdf <accessed 22 December 2014>

⁵ 27 January, 2014. Core Issues Trust vs Transport for London (Appeal Court) 27 January, 2014. Cf paragraphs 95-98 <http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWCA/Civ/2014/34.html> <accessed 22 December 2014>

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