

CPCAB guidance on training issues relevant to the 'Prevent' duty

Background

The Prevent duty was introduced through the Prevent strategy published by the Government in 2011 and supported by further legislation in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 as a duty of specified authorities to have due regard to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. Further updates have been made through the Counter Terrorism Strategy 2018, and the updated Counter Terrorism and Border Security Act 2019. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The aim of Prevent is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. Delivery of Prevent is grounded in early intervention and safeguarding.

The overall strategic objectives of the Prevent strategy are:

- Tackle the ideological causes of terrorism
- Intervene early to support people susceptible to radicalisation
- Enable people who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate

CPCAB has developed this guidance to support centres and tutors delivering counselling and supervision practitioner qualifications to ensure that they are aware of their statutory obligations and to explore the implications for training and practice. This includes presenting a summary of the statutory obligations while also offering suggestions and discussion points.

Who is affected by the Prevent duty?

According to the law those who have a statutory obligation to act in accordance with the Prevent duty are:

- childcare providers
- schools/colleges/higher education institutions
- local authorities
- prisons/probation
- health authorities
- the police

The government position is that protecting children and vulnerable adults from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of a providers' wider safeguarding duties such as protecting individuals from drugs, gangs, neglect, or sexual exploitation. The duty includes the requirement to build resilience to radicalisation by promoting 'fundamental British values' which are defined as

- democracy
- the rule of law
- individual liberty

- mutual respect
- tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs

The Prevent duty guidance covers general themes as well as sector specific advice and information for each of the sectors identified above.

1. Risk assessment

The statutory guidance makes clear that providers are expected to assess the risk of individuals being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology.

According to the guidance there is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to terrorist ideology, but staff should be alert to changes in behaviour which could indicate that an individual may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their professional judgement to identify those who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately.

The Prevent duty does not require staff to intrude into family life but it says they must act if they see changes in behaviour which might be considered concerning and should follow clear procedures to protect individuals at risk of radicalisation. These procedures should be set out in existing safeguarding policies. It is not necessary for providers to have distinct policies on implementing the Prevent duty.

Discussion points:

- What kinds of 'changes in behaviour' might be considered concerning and how might a statutory view of what is 'concerning behaviour' differ from that of the counsellor?
- In a climate of fear how might people overreact and/or project their own prejudices or even use risk assessments as a way of demonising 'difficult' young people and their families?
- In a situation where the counsellor may find themselves trying to balance public interest and the interests of the client how might the counsellor's own issues in relation to diversity impact on the situation, especially when working with others whose primary concern may or may not be the client?

The government suggests that individuals at risk can be referred to the Channel programme – which focuses on providing support to those at risk of radicalisation.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance>

Discussion points:

- What might be the difference between what the government offers as supportive and what a counsellor might judge to be supportive to a client?
- What might a counsellor need to consider in terms of facilitating the client's ongoing support or referral?
- What might a counsellor need to consider in terms of their own ongoing support?

2. Working in partnership

The government sees the Prevent duty as building on existing local partnership arrangements relevant to the specific sector and specific setting. Details for each sector can be found here:

[Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

3. Staff training

The government requires providers to ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead undertakes Prevent awareness training and can provide advice and support to other members of staff on protecting individuals from the risk of radicalisation. The Home Office has developed a core training product for this purpose – Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP).

What to do if you have a concern

The government advice is that if a member of staff has a concern about a particular individual, they should follow the organisation's agreed safeguarding procedures. In Prevent priority areas, the local authority will have a Prevent lead who can also provide support.

The guidance says that those concerned can also contact their local police force or dial 101 extension 6770 (the non-emergency number) for support and advice. In addition, the Department for Education (DfE) has a dedicated telephone helpline (020 7340 7264) to enable school staff and governors to raise concerns relating to extremism directly. Counter-Extremism Helpline is available Mon – Fri 11am – 3pm (excluding bank holidays). If there is concern about extremism in a school or organisation that works with children, it can be reported to the Department for Education via the online portal on gov.uk: [Report Extremism in Education – Start..](#)

Counselling and the Prevent Duty

BACP offers a range of prevent guidance documents available on their website each relating specifically to the groups identified above.

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/events-and-resources/policy-briefings/>

Given the scope of the statutory obligation the Prevent duty is likely to affect:

- Counsellors, trainees, and supervisors working with providers in the sectors identified above.
- Counselling/supervision trainers teaching the current legal and ethical requirements to trainees.

Implications for counselling/supervision training

It is important to consider the implications of the Prevent duty on counselling/supervision training. The following list offers a summary of key issues that tutors might wish to address in teaching trainee counsellors/supervisors about the Prevent duty and its implications for training and practice.

- What the Prevent duty is
- Who it affects
- The importance of clarifying the trainee's role within the organisational/agency setting regarding safeguarding policies and procedures including the Prevent duty if working in a statutory setting
- Clarification of line management and supervision responsibilities
- Clarification about what should be communicated to clients/supervisees regarding confidentiality
- Clear guidance on what to do if a concern is identified in that setting
- How to get support if guidance is not clear.

You might also find it useful to facilitate trainees to reflect on the following questions:

- What impact is the Prevent duty likely to have on the confidentiality boundaries in a particular setting?
- What impact is this requirement likely to have on the therapeutic/supervision work more generally?
- What impact is this duty likely to have on trainees/practitioners/supervisors in their role in particular settings?
- What impact might this duty have on individuals in terms of their own culture and values?
- How effectively are issues of diversity being addressed in the training group?

Discussion points:

It is well documented that mental health outcomes within the Muslim community are poor and that Muslim clients don't easily access primary care mental health services due to stigma.

- How easy would it be for a client to speak openly about their concerns if they did come for counselling?
- What are counsellors' responsibilities in relation to the issue in terms of discrimination and social justice?
- How can counsellors be supported to make fine judgements about when risk becomes a safeguarding issue?
- Will judgements made by counsellor be trusted by the organisations they work for?

BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions (2018) and the Prevent duty

Tutors may want to discuss the Prevent duty considering the BACP's Ethical Framework. Specific clauses to look at might include:

Our commitment to clients;

Clause 5. *Maintain integrity by:*

- a. being honest about the work*
- b. communicating qualifications, experience and working methods accurately*
- c. working ethically and with careful consideration of the law*

Putting Clients first;

Clause 9. *We will give careful consideration to how we manage situations when protecting clients or others from serious harm or when compliance with the law may require overriding a client's explicit wishes or breaching their confidentiality – see also 10, 55 and 64..*

Clause 10. *In exceptional circumstances, the need to safeguard our clients or others from serious harm may require us to override our commitment to making our client's wishes and confidentiality our primary concern. We may need to act in ways that will support any investigations or actions necessary to prevent serious harm to our clients or others. In such circumstances, we will do our best to respect the parts of our client's wishes or confidences that do not need to be overridden in order to prevent serious harm.*

Clause 11. *We share a responsibility with all other members of our professions for the safety and wellbeing of all clients and their protection from exploitation or unsafe practice. We will take action to prevent harm caused by practitioners to any client.*

Confidentiality;

Clause 55. We will protect the confidentiality and privacy of clients by:

a. actively protecting information about clients from unauthorised access or disclosure

d. informing clients about any reasonably foreseeable limitations of privacy or confidentiality in advance of our work together, for example, communications to ensure or enhance the quality of work in supervision or training, to protect a client or others from serious harm including safeguarding commitments, and when legally required or authorised to disclose

Additional Resources

Prevent duty guidance

[Prevent duty guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance)

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2014 (revised 2015)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/counter-terrorism-and-security-bill>

Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Act (2019)

[Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Act 2019 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2019/12)

Working together to safeguard children (2015)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Channel guidance - Channel is part of the Prevent strategy. The process is a multi-agency approach to identify and provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance>

Some of the issues relating to the Prevent duty are explored in the following Therapy Today article:

Jackson, C. (2015) Why are some young people drawn to extremism? *Therapy Today*, vol 26 (2).

[Mental health policy briefings \(bacp.co.uk\)](https://www.bacp.co.uk/mental-health-policy-briefings)

BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions:

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/events-and-resources/ethics-and-standards/ethical-framework-for-the-counselling-professions/>