

## Editorial

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Welcome to Volume 8, Issue 1 of EPRaP!

We have seen “the great resignation” and mass retirements in the UK following the challenges presented by “Covid”. This is particularly true of the EP profession given the challenges faced, our ageing demographic and seismic shifts in working practices. Increasing demand for EHCNAs encroaching into other areas of work, as well as the perception that local authority conditions are becoming less attractive, has made many reflect on their work and aspirations. Increasingly lucrative private work presents opportunities for flexible working and “portfolio careers”. Psychology services in local authorities are finding it difficult to recruit, and the increase in training places is not a quick fix. Many Year 2 trainees are being snapped up for jobs (over a year before they qualify) and “golden handshakes” are being used to recruit new colleagues and to retain staff for longer. All this is happening at a time when the cost of living crisis is accelerating and poverty increasing. We know that the “downstream” of this will hit the most vulnerable children and families the hardest. The debt being accumulated by many TEPs is significant, and stories of hardship are distressing. Lobbying will hopefully result in an “uplift” in bursaries, but the current climate makes it tough for everyone.

At the summer meeting of the programme directors of UK EP training courses, we celebrated the contributions of colleagues who were retiring. One of them, Beth Hannah, has been a great supporter of EPRaP and a member of the Editorial Board. Good luck from all of us at EPRaP, Beth.

Another programme director, my beloved colleague Mary Robinson, is retiring in January after 32 years as an EP and 26 years at UEL as Tutor and Programme Director for the EP training programme. Mary has done so much for children, families, trainees and our profession. She will be missed but has earned a wonderful retirement.

In this volume of EPRaP, Jess Dark writes about “The Lost Generation of Autistic Women’s Experiences of Secondary School”. Other contributions include Duncan Gillard and colleagues’ report on “The Prosocial Framework” and its applications in schools. Dr Mary Stanley-Duke and colleagues explore “The Psychological Foundations of The Mediating Learning Support Assistant (MeLSA) Training Programme”. Adam McCartney’s paper focuses on collaborating and managing tension within multi-professional teams supporting children with autism at risk of exclusion. The findings identified key issues around professional identity, role and practice. The study also unveiled how professionals manage tensions and professional roles to maximise their capacity in developing an intervention to support children with autism who are at risk of exclusion. We also have a review of Arif Mahmud and Liam Satchell (Eds.), *Mental Wellbeing in Schools: What Teachers Need to Know to Support Pupils from Diverse Backgrounds*, by second-year trainee educational psychologist Sophie Lemboye. Sophie and her cohort are the next generation of EPs, and that bodes well for the future.

*Miles*