

gramme devised by Masters and Johnson but has been modified in various ways. The therapy takes place over a period of about three months with the clients seeing the therapist weekly and doing their exercises in their own home. Further, although the behavioural model is followed in terms of the exercise programme, counselling skills come into play when clients reach a block, so that the current model is closer to that written about by Kaplan.

Marriage Guidance offers its counselling service nationwide (though spread rather thinly in places) through a network of 140 autonomous Marriage Guidance Councils, which range in size from ones which have only two or three counsellors to ones with over fifty. All of these Councils are federated to the National Marriage Guidance Council which carries the responsibility for the selection, training and supervision of counsellors and so ensures consistency in standards of work. Most counsellors see clients on the premises of their local council, but an increasing number work in centres such as GPs' surgeries, general and psychiatric hospitals and penal institutions.

The counsellors are largely voluntary workers who are required to spend at least three hours a week face to face with clients as well as finding time for paperwork and case-work supervision. Increasingly, there is payment for extra hours on a sessional basis and in Salford a salaried counselling scheme exists. Each counsellor who comes into the agency must first be sponsored by their local Council. They then go forward to a day-long selection process with three selectors, which involves both individual interviews and work in groups.

The basic counsellor training takes two years and includes six 48-hour sessions of residential training, constant in-service supervision and regular attendance at discussion groups at which counsellors present cases with which they are having difficulty. The training and supervision are undertaken by tutors who are selected from experienced counsellors who then have further training in supervision. At present, counsellors start work with clients after their first session of residential training. The pattern of training has recently been under review and a modified model will come into operation in 1985. In this model there will be two sessions of training before a new counsellor meets their first clients.

Marriage Guidance clients come from a cross section of social groupings. A survey in 1982 showed a close correspondence between Marriage Guidance clients and the population as a whole. In 1982/3, 39 per cent of the interviews given were with wives on their own, 18 per cent with husbands on their own and 33 per cent with married couples, the remainder with single people. Although counsellors usually try to see spouses together, this is not

essential. It is possible to effect considerable change in a marriage without the second partner being seen. Most first appointments are made by telephone or letter, though occasionally if there is a vacancy a client will be seen on a walk-in basis.

Clients are usually self-referred but some come via Citizen's Advice Bureaux, GPs, solicitors or psychiatrists. A number come on the recommendation of friends or relatives who have themselves been clients.

The demand for the services of Marriage Guidance is high and in many areas clients have to wait for some time, maybe several weeks, before they can be seen. Some councils now operate a system of Reception Interviews so that clients can be seen at least once fairly soon after they apply.

The interest in, availability of, and demand for counselling of all kinds is growing all the time. People now have higher expectations of relationships and women particularly have less need to stay in bad marriages for financial or social reasons. These changes of attitudes and expectations have led to what is sometimes seen as breakdown in old patterns of marriage and family life. Change, whether at a personal level or in society, is uncomfortable and can sometimes seem destructive. But it can also be creative. As long ago as 1967, H. V. Dicks asked, in his book *Marital Tensions*: 'What is the possible evolutionary meaning of the widespread malaise in our society's marital and family life?' He went on to say that he regarded it as 'a manifestation of the pain and maladaptation inseparable from growth.' As Marriage Counsellors work to help the partners within a marriage towards maturity, perhaps they are also helping in the transition towards a more mature society.

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The Nominations and Awards Committee of the International Association for the Scientific Study of Mental Deficiency has presented Dr J. Jancar, Consultant

Psychiatrist, Stoke Park Hospital, Bristol, with an IASSMD Award on the basis of his distinguished achievement in the field of scientific literature.