

We suggest that CFT training could be provided to doctors as part of our suite of regular training courses. Hand hygiene training is ubiquitous, and we propose that mental health hygiene training is equally important. This could be accessed through the training colleges or from employers directly, like hand hygiene education.

In considering self-compassion as a profession, we encourage doctors to view themselves as 'good enough'. Drawing on the work of Winnicott⁵ in finding that 'good enough mothers' are what babies need, we suggest that 'good enough doctors', rather than perfectionist, shamed doctors, are what patients need.

Shame can only be addressed as above if we try to commit to a culture of disclosure and of self-compassion among doctors. As the author above describes, shame is endemic in medicine. As a step towards openness, and towards addressing shame, we ask readers to consider: can I (let myself) be a good enough doctor?

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Obituaries

Robert (Robin) George Priest, MD, FRCP (Ed), FRCPsych, DPM

Formerly Professor of Psychiatry, St Mary's Hospital, London, UK



Robin Priest

28th September 1933 - 2nd October 2018

Robin Priest, who died recently at the age of 85, was a leading academic who took an active part in the affairs of the Royal

College of Psychiatrists. He was a member of the College Public Policy Committee (1972–1980), of Council (1982–1988) and of the Court of Electors (1983–1988). He served as Registrar from 1983 to 1988. He also served on various British Medical Association (BMA) committees, as well as committees of the University of London and the World Psychiatric Association. He was an effective and sensitive committee chair and, during the 1980s, in collaboration with the Royal College of General Practitioners, led the high-profile Defeat Depression campaign, designed to improve the recognition and further support of primary care patients with troublesome depressive symptoms.

He headed the small but vibrant Academic Department of Psychiatry at St Mary's Hospital, London, from 1974 until his retirement. In this capacity, he supported the academic environment in which Stuart Montgomery, Chris McManus, Mohsen Naguib, Brice Pitt and Peter Tyrer could flourish. Generations of trainees with interests in undergraduate teaching and research benefited greatly from his affable manner, encouraging mentorship, valuable statistical expertise and advocacy of psychopathological rating scales. He was an enthusiast for the Foulds' hierarchy of personal illness model for conceptualising psychiatric diagnoses and resolving treatment dilemmas.

He established rotational training schemes in cooperation with consultants in local units in the North West Thames Region and his trainees recall how enthusiastic he was about encouraging and nurturing them. In conjunction with consultants in local units, he was much involved in trials of new remedies, especially antidepressants. This led to many invitations to conferences across the globe.

He wrote or contributed to a number of books on a wide range of subjects, including: *Insanity: A Study of Major Psychiatric*

Disorders (1978), *Benzodiazepines Today and Tomorrow* (1980), *Depression and Anxiety* (1992), *Mental Illness in Pregnancy and the Puerperium* (1978) and *The Psychosomatic Approach: Contemporary Practice of Whole Person Care* (1986).

During his career he received a number of awards, including the Gutheil-Von Domarus Award of the Association for the Advancement of Psychotherapy, the Doris Odlum Award of the BMA, and the A.E. Bennett Research Award of the Society for Biological Psychiatry of the USA.

Robin was born and brought up in Westcliff-on-Sea, in south-east England. His father died when he was 12 years old and his mother, a midwife, brought up her two sons on her own thereafter in straitened circumstances. He attended Westcliff High School for Boys, where our friendship of over 70 years began. From there he went to University College Hospital Medical School, London, graduating in 1956, having already married Marilyn in 1955. After house jobs, he signed up for a 3-year commission in the Royal Army Medical Corps. In the course of his service he was posted to the Far East.

After military service, Robin was appointed Lecturer in Psychiatry at the University of Edinburgh from 1964 to 1967. In 1966, he was Exchange Lecturer at the University of Chicago, where he made many lifelong friends. While there he carried out a survey of the psychiatric status of homeless people living on the streets. This formed the basis of his MD thesis (1970). On his return to the UK, he was appointed Senior Lecturer at St Georges' Hospital Medical School, London, where he worked from 1967 to 1973. From there he was appointed Professor of Psychiatry at St Mary's Hospital Medical School, London.

Robin had a wide range of interests. He enjoyed family tennis and, over many years, played squash regularly with a colleague. He took a close interest in his garden, taking especial pride in the *Magnolia grandiflora* on his lawn. He was fascinated by pond life, newts and snails. He was a keen theatre-goer and followed Essex, his home county cricket team, through their ups and downs. He enjoyed travel, with a special affection for France as well as Malaysia, particularly Penang, where he had been posted during his Army Service.

For several years before he died Robin suffered from cardiac amyloidosis. He became slowly and progressively less mobile until finally he was admitted to an excellent care home, where he died a few days after his 85th birthday. His wife, Marilyn, died less than a year before he did. He is survived by two sons, two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Jack Steinert

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Alec Coppen, FRCPsych (Hon), MD, DSc



Alec Coppen, who died recently at the age of 96, was a leading figure for over 50 years in the study of affective disorders using chemical and psychopharmacological approaches. This was in the era before brain imaging was possible. In a highly productive career, he carried out studies of electrolytes, tryptophan, serotonin metabolites and platelet transport. He was a pioneer of the serotonin theory of depression, which was to have such a key influence in the evolution of antidepressant drug treatment. He was also one of the first to use lithium in bipolar and affective disorders and carried out an important controlled trial of its effectiveness. From his own clinical work, he identified the particular ability of lithium to diminish suicide rates among people with severe affective illness, an observation amply confirmed by subsequent controlled trials and meta-analyses. He also had an interest in the role of folic acid in depression, finding evidence of deficiency and improvement with supplementation. He was one of the few psychiatrists with biochemical research skills.

Alec attended Dulwich College, London, after which he volunteered for military service in 1942. He served in a commando regiment. In 1943, he nearly died from septicaemia and was one of the first people to be treated with penicillin. After the war, he studied medicine at the University of Bristol. He worked at the Maudsley Hospital, London, and in the Medical Research Council (MRC) Neuropsychiatry Unit, before becoming a member of the MRC external scientific staff. He built up his own research laboratory at West Park Hospital, a mental hospital in Epsom, where he worked until retirement. He trained many young psychiatrists in biological psychiatry, both British and from overseas, many of whom later went on to distinguished careers.

His career earned him much recognition and many roles in international organisations. He won the Anna-Monika Prize for biological psychiatry research, as well as various other awards and prizes. He was awarded honorary membership of many overseas psychiatric organisations. He was an early President of the British Association for Psychopharmacology and later President of the Collegium Internationale Neuropsycho-pharmacologicum (CINP), of which he was also an Honorary Fellow and recipient of a Pioneer Award.