



SPEED YOUR FAMILY INTO RECOVERY

Ethical, accredited interventionists can accelerate addicts into treatment – maverick ones can harm the whole family. So leading players have signed up to become board-registered interventionists with an agreed Code of Ethics. Victoria Sternhold reports on the birth of AIS International



Structured ‘interventions’ – organised by families or employers of an addict, with a professional specialist – are estimated to get addicts, however reluctant, into treatment in over 92% of cases. In the rare instances that the addict does not do so, the family is guided to the help it needs to move out of distress and out of addictive cycles.

In the UK, at least tens of thousands of families and addicts need such help – but they do not get it. And the rehabs which can offer the treatment they need are only half-full, threatening their survival.

We not only need more interventionists, we need ones who are ethical, trained and qualified. Too often, desperate people google for help and believe that the names which crop up first in their search are treatment centres or independent brokers (a deliberate illusion) when, in reality, some merely take their money, give the name of a facility which pays them the greatest commission no matter whether it is best or not for the patient, then take the money for the treatment also, handing a portion to the facility. There

are stories of a young girl wandering round South Africa for a week vulnerable a f t e r first-stage

treatment because the internet broker did not organise anything. And other stories of patients sent to extended care which was wrong for them because the family paid the broker upfront, and it chose a facility with the highest commission rather than one which the rehab recommended the most effective clinically.

Apart from financial practices overruling clinical need, there are stories of people who have been so untrained and inexperienced that they created lasting damage in the family.

So we need interventionists, but they must be ethical, trained and qualified – and proven to be so. For this reason, Deirdre Boyd of the Addiction Recovery Foundation (publisher of *Addiction Today* journal) and the leading US interventionists, John Southworth of Southworth Associates and Ken Seeley of Intervention 911, met to link up with the Association of Intervention Specialists and to create an international branch with board-registered members. These will be the people that families and employers will be able to choose from and trust to carry out effective, ethical interventions.

WHAT IS AN INTERVENTION?

Briefly, intervention is a proven, successful process which has enabled thousands of addicts to receive treatment – no matter how unwilling they might be. Contrary to myth, people do not have to hit rock bottom, which sometimes can mean death, before changing. That can be avoided: an intervention, breaks through the denial of the addict by creating a ‘crisis’ and “raising the bottom”. Through clear, detailed, often documented information, presented in a loving, firm and supportive way, the person realises the effect their addiction has had on everyone important to him/her as well as on their own lives. The Johnson, Systemic and Arise models of intervention are the three most often used.

The professional interventionist helps identify the appropriate people in the addict’s life who will be most influential as part of the team that will enable this individual to accept treatment. The interventionist educates and trains the group as

well as facilitates the intervention.

All members of AIS are BRI-I and BRI-II board-registered interventionists. This identifies that they have a high level of training, education, supervised experience and ethics. The minimum requirements for people to register for BRI-I are to:

- hold a IC&RC (International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium) and/or a recognised certification/licence in a counselling-related field
- have professional indemnity insurance, a minimum of £1-3,000,000
- successfully complete a minimum of 14 hours of training/education on intervention
- have a minimum two years’ work experience conducting interventions
- submit three peer evaluations and supervised practical experiences
- adhere to BRI *Code of Ethics*
- pass an oral and/or written exam
- provide a letter from their certification board verifying your certification is in good standing
- continue training with five CEUs per year.

ESTABLISHING AIS INTERNATIONAL: FIRST THE TRAINING.

Southworth and Seeley arranged with Boyd and a meeting of interested professionals, while at UKESAD 2010, that they would return to provide the 14 hours’ training on intervention required for board registration. They would also address pragmatic business questions, and mentor AIS International founding members free of charge. Jeff Wilbee and Kay Glass of IC&RC enthusiastically supported the training in their international newsletter.

The Sloane Club in central London was chosen as the venue, and the training took place 15-17 October. Venue, flights, accommodation, refreshments and other expenses were generously funded by ‘founder sponsors’: Montrose Place, Betty Ford Center, Proctor Hospital/Illinois Institute for Addiction Recovery, Little Hill-Alina Lodge, Palm Partners and Pine Grove.

The participants themselves are the best people to sum up the rapid progress made...

AIS INTERNATIONAL: WHO'S ON BOARD

PRESIDENT: Rosemary Clough
 INTERIM CO-VICEPRESIDENTS:
 Dorte Tommerup (European Parliament)
 SECRETARY: Joanne Griffin
 TREASURER: Bill Stevens
 ETHICS CHAIR: Jeanette Whitehead
 MEMBERSHIP CHAIRS: Richard Cross, Chris Knight
 SITE CHAIR: Daniel Gerrard
 PROGRAMME CHAIR: Daniel Farnham
 PR: Sarah Graham
 HISTORIAN: Dr Robert Lefever
 AMBASSADORS/MEMBERS AT LARGE: Deirdre Boyd,
 Randy Grimes, John McCann
 CONSULTANTS/MENTORS: John Southworth
 Associates and Intervention911.

**THE FAST-TRACK CANDIDATES SIGNING UP AS
 BOARD REGISTERED INTERVENTIONISTS AND
 TO THE AIS INTERNATIONAL CODE OF ETHICS:**

The above board members plus

Elisabetta Bettasso- Escobar	Anne Sofie Broe Hansen
Penny Burrows	Peter Kaagman
Suzanne Coussins	Liz Kalinowska
Francis de Aguilar	Chris Knight
Jaime Delgado	Dr Robert Lefever
Josh Dickson	Robin Lefever
Mark Fenwick	John McLean
Daniel Gerrard	Lester Morse
John Graham	Ameet Singh Braich
Joanna Griffin	Hilde Sole
Gry Joy Grisvelt	Simon Stephens
Erik E Hansen	Robin Tegg

“Empowering families of addicted loved ones to focus on recovery can only be a good thing. Inspirational!” commented Rob Thomas of Western Counselling. His view was backed by Francis de Aguilar: “Interventions get families involved in a healthy direction from the start; this has to be a good idea”.

“John Southworth and Ken Seeley are truly inspiring, and Eric McLaughlin’s support was invaluable. There are so many addicts who could be in treatment today – if families knew how to work with a registered interventionist, so they can together use their leverage to raise a rock bottom that will save their loved ones’ lives,” added Sarah Graham of Sarah Graham Solutions.

“It was so nice to meet so many like-minded people,” added Richard Cross. “If we can all work cooperatively, we can collectively achieve our common goal of getting as many people as possible to engage in treatment services.”

“It is an absolute disgrace that treatment centres are not operating at anything near to full capacity, bearing in mind the level of addiction problems we have in the UK. AIS International has the potential to very much change this.”

Bill Stevens of Red Chair crystallised the hopes for AIS International and the benefits to come from it. “Our aim for the collective energy is that an interventionist is a respected, accountable and ‘professional profession’ in the vast arena of drug treatment. We have this opportunity to ensure that family interventions are regarded as safe and effective, moral and ethical methods of helping poorly families get sick people into treatment earlier rather than later. It is imperative that the UK is able to make available membership in the AIS, that is inclusive and not exclusive, that this be anglicised in values, geography and culture. We believe that an interventionist who is a member of AIS is clearly employed for the benefit of the family, thus all clinical direction is made free from other influences.”

Chris Knight of Rapid Interventions UK had more to say. “I learnt so much, it has reinforced

the knowledge and faith of helping clients identifying their rock bottoms. Our work in the field of interventions will only benefit from the sense of unity felt by us all. To compliment that work, I envisage treatment centres working with interventionists and understanding what we do. We all felt proud to be part of the founding group of AIS International and look forward to serving where we can.”

“The only change in the ‘big book’ of Alcoholics Anonymous was in order to ‘raise the bottom’. We have come a long way since then. Let’s all move to the next phase – thanks for showing how,” added Lester Morse and Daniel Farnham of East Coast Recovery.

“Awareness of ‘intervention’ in England is still quite new and not recognised by the general public as it is in the US,” noted Jeanette Whitehead of Red Chair and Open Minds. “It is great that *Addiction Today* and others are bringing it to the

forefront. It is important that intervention work is monitored and standards set from the onset for the safety of clients. A professional body is vital, as are people undertaking the appropriate training to meet these standards.”

“I have been so privileged to be involved in this weekend,” said John Graham. “The role play went very well, and bought to life exactly what the intervention was all about. I was reassured that the therapeutic model I trained and practiced in is used in this humane and compassionate manner, and that life-saving intervention is done with this proven means for an outcome that saves a life and emancipates the suffering of family members.”

The presenters and delegates were proactive in their engagement, and the atmosphere over all three days was excellent. I feel excited to be part of this inaugural event and to be one of the potential inaugural members of the professional body that was born today.”

WHERE TO FIND MORE INFORMATION.

The Association of Intervention Specialists is at <http://associationofinterventionspecialists.org/> (AIS International is constructing its website) International Intervention Credentialing Board: www.aiscb.org/AISCB_Code_of_Ethics.html BRI-I or BRI-II certification for membership to AIS: <http://iaodapca.org/certifications/bri/index.cfm>

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS.

The next meeting of AIS International will be at noon on 24 November. If readers have any queries or requests they would like to be heard, simply email info@addictiontoday.org.

The formal twice-yearly meeting attended by AIS International board members, at which all members are welcome, will next be held at 8am on Friday 20 May 2011. This is during the UK/European Symposium on Addictive Disorders, to offer opportunities for treatment centres to meet with the interventionists. Details in January issue of *Addiction Today*.

Images: Scott Maxwell, DBoyd



LIQUID GOLD: ETHICAL INTERVENTIONS
The three-day accredited training was led by John Southworth (front row, in shirt) Ken Seeley (front row, third from left) and Eric McLaughlin (back row, furthest right). It was co-organised with Deirdre Boyd and Jo Griffin (left of and behind t-shirted Daniel Farnham respectively).



HILDE SOLE, who works with clients across Europe, exchanges ideas with **DANIEL GERRARD**



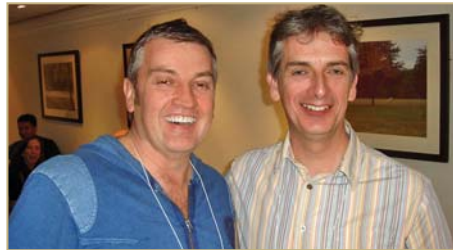
DORTE TOMMERUP (left) of the European Parliament flew in from Luxembourg, with **SARAH GRAHAM**



TECHNIQUES: before roleplays, **KEN SEELEY** (left) and **JOHN SOUTHWORTH** outlined family strategies



JEANETTE WHITEHEAD will chair an Ethics subcommittee; she is seen here with **BILL STEVENS**



GEORGE WILLIAMS (left) of InExcess TV networks with Western Counselling's **ROB THOMAS**



ROLEPLAY: Southworth briefs "the family" watched by **AMEET SINGH BRAICH** who flew in from Spain



JOHN McCANN of Sober Services and **ELISABETTA BETTASSO-ESCOBAR** who works in the US and Italy



JOHN McLEAN catches up on developments and new rehabs in the UK with **CHRIS KNIGHT**



RANDY GRIMES – the NFL footballer plans to help sportsmen in the US; seen with **DEIRDRE BOYD**



JOSH DICKSON (left), a new recruit to the field of addiction treatment, learns from Dr **ROBERT LEFEVER**



LESTER MORSE who works with clients in the US and Italy chats with **DANIEL FARNHAM**



ROBIN TEGG (left) flew in from Marbella for the training and found old friend **MARK FENWICK**