

CACTUS CLINIC – REPORT FROM MEETING 3/8/06 – DISCUSSION DOCUMENT

The Cactus Clinic is run as a research centre within the School of Social Sciences and Law, psychology department, at the University of Teesside.

The nutritional therapist is Angela Beecroft DipION. The research is conducted by Dr David Woodhouse, whose expertise is in psychology, education and mental health. Administration is covered by Amanda Clarkson, a psychologist.

Over the past two or so years they have treated 147 children with ADHD or related problems, using a nutritional approach. Of these 106 improved, 85 of which showed significant improvement. 61 were withdrawn from medication. Some are fee paying (on the basis of £75 per consultation, plus cost of tests), others are not, funded by a charitable trust. There is no business model as such, no rent or separated outgoings. Other than the nutritional therapist fees all other costs are absorbed by the University as part of its research.

They are at a point where they would like to expand, and formalise the clinic process, and also increase the scale and breadth of research.

In principle the University, under the guidance of Liz Barnes, the dean of the School of Social Sciences and Law, may be willing to do the following:

Let the Cactus Clinic form as a business or merge into existing Brain Bio Clinic (eg Northern version of Brain Bio Clinic), a business owned by the charitable Food for the Brain Foundation; expand its operations to offer nutritional intervention for adult patients as well, thus covering ADHD/autistic spectrum, depression/anxiety, schizophrenia, dementia/Alzheimer's disease; rent space at a low rental eg £65 a week, for a period of two years to allow the Clinic to start up; assist in obtaining start-up funding.

Two nutritional therapists would be appointed, plus support staff, with marketing and other functions covered by the Brain Bio Clinic, under the control of the director.

The University of Teesside, psychology department, under the supervision of Dr David Woodhouse, would become the independent evaluator and research partner for the Brain Bio Clinic. This would involve providing them with the data from patients treated at both Brain Bio Clinics to evaluate the efficacy of the treatment protocols. This would require the appointment of a Research Assistant, initially part-time, with minimal cost, ideally moving towards full time (circa £18-20K per annum), and possibly as a funded PhD position. This person would then process the results from the Brain Bio Clinics, and present in a way that would provide independent evaluation, as required by, for example, Primary Care Trusts, to encourage referral.

The Brain Bio Clinic would establish a 'clinical protocol steering group', with input from experts such as a biochemist, geneticist, psychiatrist, paediatrician, psychologist, nutritionist, including Teesside University expertise, to develop and refine the treatment

protocols. These would be enacted by the clinic's nutritional therapists, under the supervision of a psychiatrist, and the results evaluated by Teesside research team. Patrick Holford would act as visiting professor, coordinating and driving this reiterative process.

The commercial objectives would be:

To start-up the clinic to the point of self-sufficiency and profitability

Fund the research assistant

Generate the research necessary to obtain cover of fees by private medical insurance and by referring PCTs

Obtain funding for the new enterprise; for the research; and for individuals unable to afford treatment

The social and educational objectives would be to:

To assist recovery of patients with mental health difficulties, thus lessening the burden on the NHS and social services

To continually develop and evaluate effective treatment protocols

To publish research papers, including a PhD dissertation

To help integrate learning into social and educational agenda and projects