Author's response to reviews

Title: The response of mental health professionals to clients seeking help about their sexual orientation

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This paper addresses an issue of considerable importance, namely the attitudes and practice of mental health professionals with regard to their clients who are homosexual. Although we know something about the history of treatments to change sexual orientation, this paper is the first to address the issue of current psychiatric practice. It is empirically robust, in contrast to much published research in this field. It suggests that homosexuality continues to pose dilemmas for many mental health practitioners who are unclear about its nature and whether or not sexual orientation can be changed.

There has been a delay between the end of data collection and publication because when we sent it to the British Journal of Psychiatry the editor took almost one year to decide (apparently after much reflection) finally not to publish. This may have been because of the rather sensitive nature of the findings - namely that up to 17% of therapists have tried to change clients’ sexuality and that there has been no sign of a decline in such practice.

We look forward to your consideration in due course.

Michael King