

Cognitive Analytic Therapy (CAT) Practitioner Training

**Spring 2021 – Spring 2023
(Intake 8)**

Course Prospectus and Application Details

**Provided By
CAT Service
Centre for Specialist Psychological Therapies
Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear
NHS Foundation Trust**

**Accredited By
ACAT - Association for Cognitive Analytic Therapy**

About Cognitive Analytic Therapy

Cognitive Analytic Therapy is an integrative and time-limited approach to psychological therapy which is fast-growing in the NHS. It is a collaborative programme for looking at the way a person thinks, feels and acts, and the events and relationships that underlie these experiences. As its name suggests, it brings together ideas and understanding from different therapies into one user-friendly and effective treatment, tailored to a person's individual needs and goals for change. At its heart is an empathic relationship between the client and therapist, the purpose of which is to help the client make sense of their situation and to find ways of making changes for the better. Since the 1970s it has been developed to treat and manage NHS clients with a wide variety of mental health, interpersonal and relationship problems (including those which may have attracted a label of "personality difficulties"). There is growing demand for training in CAT from nurses, psychologists, psychiatrists, therapists and counsellors, as well as from other health and social care professionals dealing with people with complex problems (including in primary care, physical health, and specialist mental health settings). Increasingly CAT is used as a consultation tool to help teams and individuals work more effectively in delivering effective routine care to clients.

Practitioner Training in Cognitive Analytic Therapy

CAT Practitioner Training is a two-year in-service training leading to the major professional qualification in CAT, including accreditation with the Association for Cognitive Analytic Therapy (ACAT) as a CAT Practitioner.

Our training programme enables staff already qualified in a core caring profession or with psychological therapy experience to enhance their understanding and skills in psychotherapy by learning the theory and methods of Cognitive Analytic Therapy.

The CNTW Practitioner Training in CAT has run since 2004, successfully training staff in CAT across clinical specialties, from different multidisciplinary backgrounds, inside and outside the trust. The programme beginning in 2021 will be the eighth training intake for the course.

The current projected start date for the course is Spring 2021. We will confirm the start date once the circumstances surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic are sufficiently settled to allow us to make definite plans.

Program Structure

The training programme, spaced across two academic years, consists of

- training days
- seminar reading groups,
- supervised clinical work
- written work, and
- a personal CAT therapy

Training Days

There will be 10 training days per year, which aim to familiarise trainees with the theory and practice of CAT, and covering the following themes:

1. Basics of CAT Theory & Practice

- CAT concepts, including Reciprocal Role relationships and Procedural Sequences as tools for understanding experiences and problems;
- The practice of CAT including assessment, reformulation with letters and diagrams, managing time and endings, and facilitating therapeutic change;
- CAT's integration of psychotherapy theories, including object relations, intersubjectivity, attachment and modern developmental psychology, cognitive contributions, and personality development;
- Issues common to all psychotherapies within the CAT context, including CAT's foundations in psychotherapy research and integration

2. Deepening CAT Theory & Practice

- The use of the therapeutic relationship including transference & countertransference
- Modern CAT theory incl. the Zone of Proximal Development and dialogical CAT
- Working with complexity

3. Specialist Applications and Topics

- Complex trauma, "personality difficulties", emotional instability and shame
- CAT in relation to creativity, neuroscience and embodied approaches to therapy
- Socially informed practice, CAT research, CAT consultancy
- CAT with specific groups including forensic settings, older people, eating disorders, physical health, psychosis and primary care

The training days are designed to fit with the other elements of the course – in particular supervised clinical work – to enable trainees to learn the practice of CAT and gain competence to practitioner level by the completion of the course; and to fit with the course written assignments to gain the theoretical understanding needed to underpin competent practice in CAT. Training days use a mix of methods with a focus on learning through dialogue within the group, including presentation, experiential exercises, case examples, video and role play. In keeping with the CAT model's focus on the use of the self, each training day includes a half-hour reflective group, with the purpose of reflecting personally on the task of learning CAT.

Training Day Dates

All training days run on Thursdays between 9.30am and 4.30pm, at Walkergate Park Hospital, Benfield Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE6 4QD.

We cannot share precise training dates at present until the pandemic has started to ease. We will circulate training dates to candidates once they are confirmed.

Training Team

The training team is based at the CNTW CAT Service, part of the Centre for Specialist Psychological Therapies based at Benfield House, Walkergate Park, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. **Dr Steve Jefferis** (Consultant Clinical Psychologist) is Course Director, Clinical Lead for the CAT Service, and ACAT-accredited CAT Practitioner and Supervisor. **Paula Biggs** (Psychological Therapist) is Deputy Course Director, ACAT-accredited CAT Psychotherapist and Supervisor. **Judith Loftus** (Psychological Therapist) is a course trainer, ACAT-accredited CAT Psychotherapist and Supervisor. We are supported by other CAT Service staff and by other local CAT practitioners providing training, supervision and academic support to the programme. Some training days, especially in year 2, will include invited local and national speakers with expertise in specialist applications of CAT.

Supervised Clinical Work

Trainees complete a formal CAT treatment with a minimum of 8 clients under the clinical supervision of an ACAT-accredited Supervisor. Supervision takes place weekly, usually for one-and-a-half hours in groups of 3 trainees. There will be a minimum of 40 supervision groups per year. Trainees are required to be in accredited CAT supervision until the completion of all clinical work. This will normally take a minimum of two years, and may take longer for some trainees, depending on availability of suitable clients. Supervision groups are run in various locations, including Newcastle and Sunderland. Trainees are expected to gain experience with a diverse group of clients during training. Trainees discuss the diversity of the training caseload with their CAT supervisor, and may be required to see two cases from outside their employing service (e.g. general adult mental health clients) if they work in a specialist setting. We can often help facilitate access to such clients if needed.

Seminar Reading Groups

Trainees will be required to set up seminar reading groups of between 3 and 6 participants, meeting for at least 16 hours per year of the course. Trainees take responsibility for giving a presentation to the group and leading discussion around a chosen paper. The aim is to encourage trainees to take an active approach to their own learning needs and to identify gaps in their knowledge which their own activity can meet. Course trainers will help with arrangements, provide the reading material and guidelines to assist study, and each group will link up with a local CAT practitioner who will occasionally facilitate the seminar groups.

Personal Therapy

Trainees are required to undertake a 16 session personal CAT training therapy (plus follow-up session) during the course. The therapist, who must be ACAT-accredited, cannot be one of the core team members, and trainees may need to travel to find a suitable therapist. CAT personal training therapy is funded by the trainee themselves as a private arrangement.

Written Work and Assessment

Trainees' progress is assessed via:

- Two essays (on reformulation, and on the application of CAT concepts in clinical practice)
- Two case studies
- Clinical appraisal reports, submitted jointly by clinical supervisors and trainees, at six monthly intervals.

Trainees must attend a minimum of 85% of each element of the course.

Award and ACAT Accreditation

The ACAT Practitioner award is equivalent to a Postgraduate Diploma. ACAT Practitioner trainings are accepted by the Department of Health as meeting the standards for the training of Psychological Therapists in the NHS (www.cfw.org.uk)

After accruing further accredited CAT therapy cases, course graduates are eligible to apply to the two advanced training courses in CAT: the CAT Psychotherapy Training (IRRAPT, leading to UKCP registration as a CAT Psychotherapist), and CAT Supervisor Training (also offered via the CNTW CAT Service). All CAT Practitioner training programmes are accredited and moderated by the Association for Cognitive Analytic Therapy (ACAT).

Admission Criteria (as a guide only)

- Core professional training in one of the caring professions (e.g. psychiatry, nursing, clinical/counselling/forensic psychology, social work, counselling, occupational or art therapy; high-intensity IAPT staff; may include other mental health staff registered with a regulatory body)
- At least one and normally two years of post-qualification experience
- Including experience of delivering formal psychological treatments
- Basic understanding of the CAT model (attendance at an introductory workshop or received some CAT supervision)
- Regular access to clients in the workplace
- Full managerial support for the training
- Non-graduate applicants must demonstrate an ability to undertake studies at the postgraduate level.
- Applicants must have personal qualities that make them suitable for the profession of psychotherapy and have sufficient emotional competence to deal with the psychological aspects of the work. These qualities will normally include a lively and enquiring mind, an ability to listen and respond with compassion and respect and without prejudice, evidence of self-reflection, self-awareness and a commitment to self-development. Applicants should demonstrate awareness and sensitivity to issues of race, gender, sexual orientation, class, disability, ethnic and cultural difference.

Costs

For staff currently employed by CNTW, a number of funded places are available. Clinical supervision is also free of charge if provided by a CNTW CAT Service supervisor. *For CNTW employees the application fee (£10) and interview fee (£40) do apply, so you will need to make arrangements for these fees to be paid.*

For staff not employed by CNTW, fees are as follows:

- Initial application fee: £10. If called for interview: £40.
- Academic training and training days: £2000 p.a.
- Supervision fees (if required from CNTW CAT Service Supervisors): £1200 p.a. Accredited CAT Supervision may be sought independently of the Course.
- Total cost over two years (incl supervision, excluding personal therapy fees): £6450

We welcome applications from interested people working outside CNTW. Previous intakes have been mixed groups of CNTW and staff from other NHS trusts, and non-NHS settings, and this has added much to the diversity of the training groups and the mutual learning available.

For all trainees, there are **personal CAT therapy charges**. These are negotiated directly with the therapist. Typical cost of therapy approx. £935 (16 sessions + follow-up x £55).

Making An Application

To make an application, please submit the following

1. Completed application form, available online: www.tinyurl.com/Application-CNTW-CAT2020
 - With **Current employment details**, including your likely **source of clients**
 - Contact details for **two referees** (your current manager, and your clinical supervisor, or another professional who knows your recent clinical work well)
 - Details of **who to invoice** regarding application and interview fees.
2. **CV**, detailing your professional/work/qualification history
3. A **personal supporting statement** of around 750 words indicating:
 - a) Your current therapeutic approach
 - b) What you hope to gain from training in CAT
 - c) Why it is important for psychotherapists to develop an understanding of their own emotional life
4. One **case summary** of around 500 words (not required to be a CAT case)

Please submit applications, by email only, to CSPTtraining@cntw.nhs.uk . **The application deadline is 28 September 2020.** If you are unable to meet the deadline please contact us.

All CAT training aims to conduct itself with an awareness of the importance of respect for difference in society, whether this is in terms of race, gender, sexual orientation, class, disability, ethnic or cultural difference. All trainees will be expected to approach their learning, as well as their fellow trainees, course contributors and clients from this perspective. **We particularly welcome applications from members of groups currently under-represented in the psychotherapy profession.**

Interviews

Short-listed applicants will then be invited for an interview. The interview has a number of functions:

- To hear about your interest in CAT, and experiences of it so far
- To give you a chance to ask us about the course and any queries you have
- To clarify whether the necessary arrangements are in place, e.g. managerial support, funding, source of clients
- To give you the opportunity to expand on what you have told us in your application, including your case description
- To hear your reflections on your work and the prospect of being a CAT practitioner in training, in order to assess the “fit” between the course and you as a practitioner at this point in time.

Interviews are scheduled to take place on 9th, 10th, 12th & 17th Nov 2020

Please get in touch if you have any queries, on CSPTtraining@cntw.nhs.uk, or call the Course Administrator, Angela Reay, on 0191 287 6100.

Further Information and Frequently Asked Questions for Applicants and Managers

About the Course and the Cognitive Analytic Therapy Service

The Association for Cognitive Analytic Therapy (ACAT) belongs to the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP), and is the accrediting body for CAT trainings in the UK. This CNTW-hosted course is one of fourteen run in the U.K. and Ireland with ACAT accreditation. Our “flagship” course in CAT has been hosted by Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (CNTW) and its predecessor Trusts since 2004. It was set up in order to provide a locally-based training for staff of the Trust in this major approach to psychotherapy. However, this course is also open to external applicants who pay fees for training and supervision.

The course is run by the CNTW Cognitive Analytic Therapy Service. The service is part of CNTW’s Centre for Specialist Psychological Therapies, along with the Regional Department of Psychotherapy, the Newcastle Cognitive and Behavioural Therapies Centre, and the Family Therapy Service. The Centre is part of the Neurological Services & Specialist Mental Health Services CBU. The Cognitive Analytic Therapy Service provides accredited training, supervision and consultation in CAT as well as direct clinical services to clients. We are based at Benfield House on the Walkergate Park site, Newcastle upon Tyne, with clinical work and supervision also currently on offer at Hopewood Park in Ryhope, Sunderland.

The eighth Practitioner Training intake illustrates the ongoing investment and commitment by the trust in Cognitive Analytic Therapy as a significant therapeutic approach.

Why Should My Service Offer CAT on its Treatment Menu?

CAT is designed as a “safe first intervention” for almost any psychological difficulty, with few exclusion criteria, and was designed specifically for NHS settings where resources are limited. The objective of CAT is to deliver an effective treatment, within a time limit, while working at some depth rather than simply treating a person’s surface symptoms. One of the consistent findings across the CAT evidence base is low dropout rates and high levels of acceptability to clients: where clients encounter it, they generally like it.

Many Community Treatment Teams and Psychological Services teams have found that the CAT model is helpful in reducing psychological therapy waiting lists because of the structured and time-limited format. CAT is often successfully used where clients’ problems have not been resolved by other short-term psychological treatments including CBT, or where clinicians have had difficulty actively involving the service user in making changes to move towards recovery.

CAT is being successfully used within many different services including mental health (psychosis and non-psychosis), learning disabilities, older people, adolescents and health psychology. CAT is an evidence based treatment which was built on decades of psychotherapy process research regarding the core components of effective therapy. There is good evidence for CAT with personality difficulties, eating disorders, complex presentations and common mental health presentations, and it is an appropriate form of treatment for many clients with relational difficulties, and those with multiple presenting problems.

Besides enabling trainees to deliver CAT as a psychological therapy, this course also addresses how CAT can be used in “scaffolding” by e.g. CAT consultancy for clients who may not be appropriate for individual therapy. For references regarding any of these issues, please contact us.

What is the Course Philosophy?

The CAT Practitioner Training course is intended to help trainees develop basic competence in Cognitive Analytic Therapy as an integrative form of psychological therapy. The course requires the ability to study at a postgraduate level of competence. Practitioner Training also requires trainees to be intellectually curious and emotionally aware, both in relation to clients and to themselves; it is challenging professionally and personally, but also a very rewarding training. The majority of successful applicants for CAT Practitioner Trainings are currently employed in therapeutic roles, in public sector settings.

As CAT is an integrated theory of psychotherapy, the training starts from an integration of theory and practice right from the start. In line with CAT practice, we aim to make training as collaborative and as respectful of individual differences as possible. We adhere to the professional ACAT Codes of Practice.

The CAT Practitioner Graduate

Successful study on the course will equip you as a trainee with a range of CAT skills, including assessment skills, therapeutic skills using the CAT model and its tools, and the ability to flexibly apply CAT to a range of clients, to their various presenting difficulties, and to the wider context within which they are seen. The course aims to provide you with a broad understanding of the theoretical and therapeutic contributions and challenges provided by other therapeutic approaches, and with a growing ability to engage in communication and debate of these issues, including the basic tenets and value of evidence-based practice.

You will be given an opportunity within a collaborative framework to develop your capacity for self-reflection as an individual and a therapist, which should contribute to an increased ability to handle uncertainty and conflict. This will include an enhanced understanding of personal motivations and 'procedures' that may draw you as an individual to therapeutic work, and the impact this and possible personal limitations could have on the therapeutic relationship. The aim is for you to have developed a sound professional sense of yourself as a CAT therapist by the end of the training. This will include the demonstration of a collaborative stance and of an ability to work within a client's 'zone of proximal development', of self-reflective practice and the maintaining of a critical faculty. It will also involve being able to take personal responsibility for the ethical practice of CAT, for the practical and sustainable management of a CAT workload and for individual Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

What Time Commitment is required for the Course?

You need to attend at least 85% of each element of the course, including training days. You should expect to set aside about four hours per week for personal study and reflection in addition to the core requirements of the course. You may be asked to do some reading or other preparation prior to training days. There will be ten training days per academic year of the course (twenty in total).

In your clinical work, once you have started treating CAT clients you should expect to carry 2 CAT training cases at any one time, i.e. approx. 2 therapy hours per week. You also need to make time for e.g. writing up case notes, letters and diagrams, preparing for supervision, training days and seminars. Four pieces of written work are also required: two case studies of about 4000 words, and two essays (2500/4000 words), one of each to be submitted during each year of the course. Trainees arrange themselves into seminar groups (ideally 3-6 people) shortly after the start of the course. These groups read, present and discuss the basic CAT papers and texts and other key papers in psychotherapy, and consider how the ideas apply to their work in CAT. These papers are grouped in relation to the content of the training days. You need to agree on locations and times suitable for all in your group. The groups meet for 32 hours across the two years.

We estimate that across all commitments, the course requires one working day of the week for the two year duration of the course (including treatment of patients, supervision, monthly training days, seminar groups, reading and admin). The time commitment may increase in the period leading up to the submission of the four pieces of academic written work across the course. Personal therapy is normally completed in non-work time.

What Clinical Work is required?

8 supervised cases are required for qualification. It is quite possible to complete 8 cases over the two years of the course, but this does depend on factors such as the availability of suitable cases, drop-outs, etc. Most CAT training clients will need to be treated with 16 sessions of CAT (usually weekly) and there is a requirement to gain experience with at least one more complex client over 24 sessions (e.g. people with a label of personality difficulties, or who have other forms of complexity). One case can be seen for 8 sessions in the second year. These are the current requirements of ACAT (the accrediting body). If you work in a highly specialist service (e.g. physical health) you will be required to gain broader clinical expertise with CAT, normally by undertaking two non-specialist training cases (e.g. mainstream adult mental health cases).

What Clinical Supervision is required?

Trainees must be in weekly supervision with an ACAT-accredited supervisor for the duration of the course, or until the 8 CAT training cases are completed, if this is longer. Your supervisor may be part of the core course team, provided as part of the training, or you may choose another ACAT-accredited supervisor (which may require the payment of supervision fees). ACAT requires Practitioner trainees to have half an hour's clinical supervision time per week and usually two cases are brought at any one time. Supervision normally takes place in a group, typically with 3 members and lasting 1½ hours, over at least 40 weeks per year. You need to start working with CAT clients as soon as possible after the start of the taught course. Two supervision appraisals, and occasional tutorials with the trainers, will be held during each year.

What is the requirement for Personal Therapy?

You will need to arrange a 16 session CAT personal training therapy (usually weekly), plus follow up, as an ACAT requirement. Having a personal CAT therapy while training has a number of useful functions: gaining some understanding of your own 'reciprocal roles' and problem patterns to better understand the client-therapist interaction; the chance to explore personal issues raised by CAT training; and live experience of being "in the client's chair". Generally we recommend that you start therapy during the first year of the course if possible. Personal CAT training therapy is individually arranged and negotiated with a CAT therapist who is must not be part of the course core training team. Normally trainees pay their own fees for therapy. The costs of personal training therapy vary but you should expect to pay around £55 per hour. Therapists offering private practice CAT are listed on the ACAT website (www.acat.me.uk), however it may be the case that some travel is required to find a suitable therapist. The content of personal therapy is confidential; the course simply requires confirmation that it has taken place, from the trainee and their therapist.

How does my role fit with that required for a successful CAT Trainee?

The course is multi-disciplinary, and is open to experienced health and social care professionals. You need to be currently in a professional role where you are able to work in a therapeutic capacity with individual clients over a sustained period of time, and successful applicants typically have some years' experience of working therapeutically. We are looking to train people whom we hope will be able to continue to treat clients with CAT once the course is at an end. We expect that most trainees will also be able to add to the development of CAT in their local area by e.g. eventually training and/or supervising others.

What Managerial Support is needed?

All applicants require full support for the course from their current manager, from whom we ask for a reference. It is extremely helpful to have a working agreement with your manager on undertaking the course, to ensure all parties are clear about the requirements to complete the course. This also applies if you move posts while training. The agreement relates in particular to the time available to attend training days and supervision; and support to access appropriate training cases in a timely way. Our suggested working agreement for managers supporting CAT trainees can be found here (www.tinyurl.com/WorkingAgreement-CNTW-CAT2020), and you will be required to supply a signed copy before starting the course.

What happens if I cannot complete the Course in two years?

Under normal circumstances, most trainees complete the academic component of the course within two years, and many complete their 8 cases required for practitioner accreditation. For some trainees the completion of 8 clinical cases can take more than two years. This reflects a variety of factors including access to suitable training cases, drop-outs and work place issues. Trainees are encouraged to plan as effectively as possible to increase the likelihood that they can complete close to two years, by for example ensuring that any necessary placements/honorary contracts are set up ahead of the course start, identifying suitable training cases to start the clinical practice immediately upon starting the course and identifying clients consistently throughout the two years. If the 8 cases are not complete after 2 years, you will need to remain in accredited supervision until they are finished. *For external applicants this is likely to incur a further cost for supervision if provided by CNTW CAT Service.* You also need to remain a member of ACAT until completing the course, which incurs a subscription fee after 2 years. Sometimes circumstances arise which mean one or both of these components cannot reasonably be expected to be complete on time, in which case an adapted plan and timetable for meeting the course requirements is put together between the trainee, clinical supervisor and course director.

What do CAT Practitioners say about their training experience?

Our most recent course evaluation showed consistently high levels of satisfaction with the training, with teaching and supervision quality, value for money, skills development and relevance to role all being rates as 4.8 or higher out of 5. Here are some examples of feedback from course graduates:

"The course has a transformative effect on my practice both with individual patients and reflecting on systemic processes, I feel I am now 'good value for money' as a professional."

"An excellent course. This has helped me greatly in my practice. The various CAT concepts, tools and model/framework are easily adapted to suit working with clients with all levels of difficulty."

"The CAT Practitioner Training course is without a doubt the best training I have ever attended. I have learned so much about this approach to psychotherapy but also about myself and my own practice."

"The training days were consistently enjoyable, warm, engaging and collaborative and incredibly well organised!"

The training course will adhere to ACAT's Codes of Practice for Trainers, Supervisors and Practitioners. ACAT has a transparent complaints procedure in the unlikely event of major difficulties.

Course Costs

See the main prospectus for the breakdown of course costs.

Non-CNTW applicants may request supervision from course supervisors, which incurs a cost, or may arrange supervision with an ACAT-accredited supervisor external to CNTW. Trainees sometimes make such arrangements for reasons of geographical location, or if their own trust

provides accredited CAT supervision. In such a case supervision fees (if applicable) are negotiable directly with that supervisor.

Trainees may need to remain in supervision after the end of the two-year taught course in order to complete the 8 cases required for Practitioner accreditation; in this case extra fees for supervision will be payable. External applicants should ensure their managers are aware of this requirement before starting the course.

Shortlisted candidates will be asked at interview how their place on the course will be funded, should their application be successful. Funding arrangements need to be in place by the start of the course. Also included in the training fees are tea and coffee on training days (not lunch), key papers and handouts (in paper or electronic form), marking fees, and fees payable by the course to ACAT for professional accreditation.

Where can I learn more about CAT?

Start with the ACAT website, www.acat.me.uk, which contains useful factsheets and other information about CAT. A brief introductory book is “Cognitive Analytic Therapy: Distinctive Features” (Claire Corbridge et al., Routledge 2017). The main CAT textbook is “Introducing Cognitive Analytic Therapy”, by Anthony Ryle and Ian Kerr (Wiley, 2002). A useful, and very creative, self-help book on CAT is “Change for the Better”, by Elizabeth Wilde McCormick; (5th edition 2017: Sage).

If you have any queries about the course, you can contact us on CSPTtraining@ntw.nhs.uk, or call the Course Administrator, Angela Reay, on 0191 287 6100.

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