

Dr Shahzad Alikhan MA (Cantab) MBBS LLM MRCPsych

Consultant Psychiatrist

Approved Clinician (Mental Health Act 1983, as amended 2007)

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Locations: Hertfordshire, London, South East (UK)

w: www.medicolegalassessments.co.uk

SUMMARY

I am a Hertfordshire based Consultant Psychiatrist and Independent Expert Witness with substantial clinical and leadership experience in UK forensic, general adult, rehabilitation and neuropsychiatry services. I am a general psychiatrist but also have expertise in the assessment and treatment of people with more complex needs, especially those who have experienced significant trauma, present significant risks, or have cognitive or communication difficulties.

EXPERT WITNESS/ MEDICO-LEGAL EXPERIENCE

I have been preparing medico-legal reports for courts and tribunals in criminal and civil (including asylum and immigration) cases since 2014 and have given oral evidence on many occasions in Tribunals, Magistrates' and Crown Courts. I am the founder and chair of a medico-legal peer group which includes 5 other consultant general and forensic psychiatrist expert witnesses.

I am in good standing for CPD (Continuing Professional Development) with the Royal College of Psychiatrists. I enjoy learning and consolidating knowledge from a variety of sources, including such as the Palo Alto University (California USA) 'Concept' Assessment of Malingering training, HCR-20 version 3 training (December 2020) and Bond Solon Criminal Law and Procedure Training (2023), and relevant Royal College of Psychiatrists International Congress sessions (2025).

I have a private medico-legal practice (www.medicolegalassessments.co.uk) and can assess individuals in-person in St Albans, Hertfordshire, at other agreed locations, or remotely via video-link, if appropriate

In my medico-legal work I have prepared reports addressing numerous issues including:

- Capacity to litigate
- Disability under the Equality Act 2010

CURRICULUM VITAE

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- Vulnerability and impact on mental health if made homeless
- Post-traumatic stress disorder and effects on autobiographical memory
- Risk of mental health deterioration and risk of suicide on deportation
- Fitness to Plead and Stand Trial
- Psychiatric injury arising from workplace stress
- Disposal and sentencing recommendations
- Second opinions for the First-Tier Tribunal
- Expert evidence (Brain Injury and Offending) to the Parole Board
- Insanity and automatism
- Capacity to form criminal intent
- Measures to support appellants with a history of trauma giving evidence at hearings
- Civil claim against the Home Office for unlawful detention
- Assessment of potential feigning or exaggerating of symptoms in the context of a claim

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

I read medicine at Gonville and Caius College, University of Cambridge and King's College, University of London. I completed all basic and specialist training in General Adult and Rehabilitation Psychiatry on the [Maudsley Training Programme](#) in South London. I was also previously a psychiatrist with the charity and human rights organisation '[Freedom From Torture](#)'.

My qualifications are Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS), Master of Arts in Pre-Clinical Medicine/Natural Sciences (Experimental Psychology) (MA, Cantab), and Master of Laws (LLM) in Mental Health Law awarded with commendation from the University of Northumbria. I obtained Membership of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in 2012, am approved for the purposes of section 12(2) of the Mental Health Act 1983 and am an Approved Clinician within the meaning of that Act. I was an Executive Committee Member of the Faculty of Rehabilitation and Social Psychiatry at the Royal College of Psychiatrists between 2015 and 2025.

I have worked continuously as a consultant psychiatrist since 2016 and have worked at this level in a number of psychiatric subspecialties, including general adult (acute, PICU and rehabilitation), forensic psychiatry and neuropsychiatry. I have further expertise in working with people with personality disorders, and people affected by torture and other extreme trauma, including refugees and asylum seekers. I have published in peer reviewed psychiatric journals and have presented work at national and international conferences. I am regularly instructed to provide medico-legal expert reports in a diverse range of areas including housing, immigration and criminal law. I was recently interviewed for an article in [Neuro Rehab Times](#).

EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

2016	LLM (Master of Laws) with commendation, Mental Health Law. University of Northumbria CCT (Certificate of Completion of Training) in General Adult Psychiatry, Endorsement in Rehabilitation Psychiatry 25 February 2016) Approved Clinician , Mental Health Act 1983 (amended 2007)
2012	MRCPsych (Membership of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, UK) Approved under Section 12(2) Mental Health Act 1983 (Amended 2007)
2007	MBBS (Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery). King's College London School of Medicine, University of London, 2007 MA (Master of Arts) Gonville and Caius College, University of Cambridge, 2007
2000-2003	BA (Bachelor of Arts, Natural Sciences/Experimental Psychology: Class 2.1) Gonville and Caius College, University of Cambridge, 2003 Medical and Veterinary Sciences Tripos (Part Ia and Ib: pre-clinical medicine, Part II: Experimental Psychology)

PRIZES AND DISTINCTIONS

2016: RAID Award for excellence in working with challenging behaviour (Rose Ward team)

2004: Merit (>80%) in Special Study Module in Cross-Cultural Psychiatry under supervision of Professor Dinesh Bhugra (King's College London School of Medicine, London).

2001: Distinction in Medical Sociology (>90%), Medical and Veterinary Sciences Tripos Part 1A (Cambridge University)

EMPLOYMENT

Consultant Rehabilitation Psychiatrist (March 2025 – present) – Fixed Term/Locum
Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT)

- Consultant Rehabilitation Psychiatrist: mixed-sex inpatient and community (enhanced recovery) rehabilitation services
- Medical Lead – HPFT Recovery Strategy

Consultant Psychiatrist (January 2025 – March 2025) – Locum
South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust

- Consultant Psychiatrist (Locum): Acute and Psychiatric intensive care inpatient services, Ladywell Unit, University Hospital Lewisham :
-Johnson PICU (Male Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit)
-Virginia Woolf Ward (Female Acute)

Consultant in Forensic Neuropsychiatry (August 2021 – January 2025)
St Andrew's Healthcare, Northampton.

- Consultant - Rose Ward (Male Medium Secure Neuropsychiatry and Acquired Brain Injury)
- Clinical Lead for Audit, Medium Secure Services
- Chair of Complex Case Panel
- Chair of Secure Acquired Brain Injury National Network (St Andrews/Elysium/Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Secure Brain Injury Services)

Consultant Rehabilitation Psychiatrist (July 2017 – July 2021)

Cornerstone House, Borehamwood, Vision Mental Healthcare, Hertfordshire *[now operating as Barnet Lane Clinic, Borehamwood Elysium Healthcare]*

Specialist independent recovery and rehabilitation hospital with dual therapy streams; Recovery, for men and women with psychosis and other complex mental disorders, and a Mentalisation Based Therapy (MBT) personality disorder pathway.

- Consultant Psychiatrist
- Chair – Clinical Governance/Risk Management

Consultant in Forensic and Rehabilitation Neuropsychiatry (April 2016 – June 2017)

St Andrew's Healthcare, Northampton.

- Consultant Psychiatrist - Rose Ward (Male Medium Secure Neuropsychiatry and Acquired Brain Injury unit) and Berkeley Lodge (mixed sex community based rehabilitation)

Higher Specialist Training (ST4-6) General Adult/Rehabilitation Psychiatry (February 2013- February 2016) – Maudsley Training Programme

Higher (Specialist Registrar) training at the South London and Maudsley and Oxleas NHS Foundation Trusts.

- Inpatient rehabilitation (Tony Hillis Unit, Lambeth Hospital)
- Forensic/medium secure inpatient (Bracton Centre, Oxleas)
- Community rehabilitation (Lambeth)
- General adult community and inpatient (Lewisham).
- Medical assessments and opinion at Court Diversion at Bromley Magistrates' Court
- Specialist forensic and medico-legal experience including regular (weekly) attendance at the South London Forensic Trainees' Academic/Educational Programme for 3 years.

Psychiatrist and Medico-Legal Doctor (Volunteer) – Freedom From Torture, London (September 2013 –November 2016) Psychiatric assessments, psychotherapy, and medico-legal assessments

Core Psychiatry Training (CT1-3) (August 2009 – February 2013) – Maudsley Training Programme

Psychiatry training within the South London and Maudsley and Oxleas NHS Foundation Trusts. Experience in Old Age, General Adult, Child and Adolescent, Liaison, and Forensic Psychiatry. Rotations included the Maudsley Hospital, Guy's Hospital, and the Bethlem Royal Hospital

Foundation Year Two (Senior House Officer): (August 2008 – August 2009)

Barts and the London NHS Trust. I worked in Accident and Emergency at the Royal London Hospital, Rheumatology/Dermatology (Royal London/Mile End Hospital), and General Practice (Walthamstow).

Foundation Year One (Pre-registration House officer): (August 2007- August 2008)

Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust, Harlow Essex. I worked in Intensive Care, Acute Medicine, Urology, and Elderly Care Medicine.'

OTHER CLINICAL AND PROFESSIONAL SKILLS / EXPERIENCE

- Highly experienced in assessing and treating detainees and offenders with mental health problems, including holding clinical responsibility for designated high-profile Ministry of Justice 'restricted patients'.
- Provision of written and oral expert opinion evidence in Magistrates' and Crown Courts for criminal cases.

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- Medico-legal experience spans both criminal and civil matters.
- Special interest in assessing competence to give evidence in mentally disordered victims and witnesses.
- Consultant experience in medium secure and neuropsychiatry settings, including forensic psychiatry for older adults and those with learning disabilities.
- Trained DoLS (Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards) Assessor.
- Substantial experience working at the NHS/Independent sector interface
- Conducted numerous 'access assessments' and risk assessments for forensic patients referred for brain injury admission and to the IMPACT Provider Collaborative.
- Several years of specialist training in assessment and treatment of victims of torture and human rights violations, including refugees and asylum seekers.
- Volunteer psychiatrist at Freedom From Torture (2013–2016), providing psychiatric assessments, therapy, and reports for victims of torture and serious trauma.

TEACHING AND TRAINING

I am a regular teacher and examiner for a national MRCPsych 'CASC' (Clinical Assessment of Skills and Competencies) Course. At St Andrew's Healthcare I routinely taught Cambridge University and University of Buckingham medical students, and line managed a non-consultant doctor. I have taught at the North London Higher Psychiatric Trainees academic day (UCL/Whittington Hospital), the Barnet, Enfield and Haringey NHS Trust academic programme and have delivered workshops for other mental health organisations such as the Priory Group.

MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP ROLES

Executive Committee of the Faculty of Rehabilitation and Social Psychiatry 2015 - 2025 (Royal College of Psychiatrists). I was part of a working group that developed the Rehabilitation Psychiatry training curriculum for the GMC. I also chaired a working group /sub-committee within the Faculty on physical healthcare in rehabilitation psychiatry.

Medical Lead - Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation – 'Recovery Strategy' Working Group

Clinical Lead – Audit (Medium Secure Division) - St Andrew's Healthcare

Chair of Complex Case Panel - St Andrew's Healthcare

Past Chair - Secure Acquired Brain Injury National Network (St Andrew's/Elysium/Lancs and Cumbria NHS FT)

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Medical Appraiser: I am a trained medical appraiser and conducted numerous appraisals of other doctors' practice at St Andrew's Healthcare.

Senior Management Team (SMT) member; Chair - Clinical Governance Committee at Cornerstone House (now Barnet Lane Clinic, Elysium Healthcare), leading on various clinical policies and procedures at the organisation.

PSYCHOTHERAPY EXPERIENCE

I have worked as a Consultant Psychiatrist in a service working with people with personality disorders using Mentalisation Based Treatment (MBT), in which I have had clinical training. I have seen clients for trauma-focused therapy at Freedom From Torture, Isledon Road, London and developed a particular interest in the psychological treatment of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other mental health conditions presenting in refugees and asylum seekers. I have also gained experience of systemic family therapy and being in a reflecting team, working with the families of people with psychosis under general adult community services. I also have clinical experience in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Psychodynamic Psychotherapy.

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Member of Expert Reference Group for the ACER Study ([ACER](#)) at UCL ('Assessing the Clinical and cost-Effectiveness of inpatient mental health Rehabilitation provided by the NHS and independent sector')

'Investigating the Cost-Effectiveness of Rehabilitation Services'

South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust/King's College London

This project used the CRIS (Clinical Record Interactive Search) system to examine outcomes and cost-effectiveness in SLaM's rehabilitation services

Alikhan SM, Lee JA, Dratcu L. Mirtazapine Treatment of a Severe Depressive Episode and Resolution of Elevated Inflammatory Markers. *Case Rep Psychiatry* 2013;2013:697872 doi:10.1155/2013/697872.

Alikhan SM. Patients- preferred and practical? *Psychiatric Bulletin* 2010 v. 34, p. 117.

POSTERS

'Innovations in Investigating Mental Health Rehabilitation Outcomes'. O'Flynn D, Alikhan SM,

Pliszka B, Chandran D, Stewart R. Royal College of Psychiatrists International Congress 29 June- 3 July 2015:

'HIV in a South London Mental Health Population'. O'Flynn D, Mayston R, Pliszka B, Alikhan SM, Chandran D, Candfield S, Taylor C. Royal College of Psychiatrists International Congress 29 June- 3 July 2015

PRESENTATIONS

'The Secure Acquired Brain Injury National Network', UK Acquired Brain Injury Forum (UKABIF) Summit 2022, Salford, 7th November 2022

'The testimony of victims and witnesses with mental health conditions : a legal and historical review', 14th October 2022, St Andrew's Healthcare, Northampton

'Physical healthcare in inpatient rehabilitation settings', Priory Rehabilitation and Recovery Training day , 8th September 2021

'Innovations in Investigating Mental Health Population Outcomes' – O'Flynn D, Crews M, Alikhan SM, Koeser L, Hayes R, McCrone P, Kreif N, Tulloch A. 23rd World Congress of Social Psychiatry, Bucharest, Romania, 25-28 October 2019

'Changes and Challenges in Rehabilitation Psychiatry' , 2nd October 2019, Whittington Undergraduate Centre , London

A Novel Approach to Rehab Research: Exploring Cost-effectiveness of Inpatient Rehab using SLam / IOPPN BRC De-identified Clinical Database (presented by colleagues) - Royal College of Psychiatrists Faculty of Rehabilitation and Social Psychiatry Annual Conference, Bournemouth, 9- 10 November 2017.

'Violence Risk Assessment in Mental Health: Legal Perspectives', St Andrew's Healthcare Risk Assessment Conference, 16th January 2017

'Innovations in Mental Health Rehabilitation Outcomes', O'Flynn D, Alikhan SM. Presentation to the Royal College of Psychiatrists Faculty of Rehabilitation and Social Psychiatry Annual Conference, Nottingham, 19 -20 November 2015.

AUDIT AND CLINICAL GOVERNANCE/QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

2021 -2025: Clinical Lead for Audit within the Medium Secure service at St. Andrew's Healthcare.

With respect to audit experience, I have supervised others in the lead role, and have had direct involvement and experience, in terms of designing data collection tools, collecting and analysing data, and summarising results.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS. AFFILIATIONS. ACCREDITATIONS

Fully registered with the General Medical Council (GMC) with a licence to practice

Approved under section 12(2) Mental Health Act 1983, Approved Clinician status

Executive Committee Member, Faculty of Rehabilitation and Social Psychiatry, Royal College of Psychiatrists

Member of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, UK (MRCPsych)

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Member of the Medical Protection Society (MPS)

Member of the Medico-Legal Society, London

Member of the British Medical Association (BMA)

Member of the Caius Medical Association