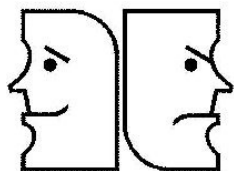


CRITICAL PSYCHIATRY NETWORK

SURVEY OF CONSULTANT PSYCHIATRISTS: A Brief Report

As a result of concern by the 'Bradford Group' (Critical Psychiatry Network) regarding government proposals in the mental health field, a postal survey of consultant opinion was undertaken by members of the network in the early summer of 1999. We aimed to include all Consultant Psychiatrists working with adults within England and Wales.

In the questionnaire we stated:

'... the government was proposing changing the law to allow certain people to be held under preventative detention who have come to be regarded as suffering from a personality disorder. Such people would already be diagnosed as dangerous. No criteria for dangerousness has been specified but psychiatrists are expected to detect the degree of dangerousness and detention would probably depend on whether a high degree of dangerousness is 'diagnosed'. It is proposed that this procedure may be applied to persons who are mentally competent and have committed no crime'.

We then asked if the recipient supported plans for reviewable detention and also, should reviewable detention become law, if they would refuse to implement it.

We sent out 2430 questionnaires and received 1137 replies (a 47% response rate).

Only 214 (19%) of respondents said they supported plans for reviewable detention. 684 (60%) said they were against the plans. 203 (18%) said they were unsure and 36 (3%) said they believed the issues raised would not affect them.

Furthermore, 339 (30%) of all psychiatrists who responded said that if reviewable detention became law they would refuse to implement it. 292 (27%) said that they would implement it and 454 (40%) were unsure.

We believe that these findings suggest widespread professional concern about these proposals