



MHYF Vic Newsletter No. 41 November 2013

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MHYFVic at the Faculty Congress 2013

This year's congress of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists Faculty of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry was held at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre ("Jeff's Shed") from 9th – 12th October. It was a really excellent conference where MHYFVic was given honoured status as a partnering organization by contributing three sessions on the program. These were a symposium on consumer/carer involvement in mental health services, a plenary session on "Resilience" including a presentation and live 'hook-up' by Professor James Anthony, and a Youth Mental Health Forum.

Consumer/Carer Symposium

Dr Suzie Dean introduced the session by referring to the legislative requirement for consumers and carers to be involved in the delivery of mental health services, and the importance of advocacy in quality improvement. This was followed by papers by

Lynne Ruggiero and Richard Barnes and a vigorous discussion by the audience.

Lynne Ruggiero spoke of her role as the Consumer Consultant at the Austin Hospital Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service with particular reference to the difficulties bridging the gulf between professional and client languages and views. On the one hand she encountered fears of breaches of confidentiality and persecution of staff whilst on the other hand of being a stooge covering up for the staff. Fearless independence and even-handed ethical communication has earned her an important and valuable place in the service.

Richard Barnes spoke of his experience as a parent of a daughter with serious anorexia. The formidable difficulties gaining access to specialist treatment were eclipsed by the difficulties of the treatment process, itself. The firm commitment of the service to the evidence-based Maudsley family centred treatment could not be shifted even in the face of clear indications that it was not working and that something else needed to be done. The presentation highlighted the dilemmas of both clients and staff in a monolithic system that does not readily allow choices.

The active interchange of questions and comments from the audience showed that there was widespread appreciation of our goal for improvements in services.

“Resilience”

A short autobiographical video by Professor James Anthony, now 97 years old, explained how he had come to elucidate the theme of resilience in mental health. This was followed by a presentation by Professor Bruce Tonge on recent developments in this field and then a discussion with the audience which included a live teleconference participation by Professor Anthony from his home in Washington DC.

The Youth Forum

Ric Pawsey, former Director of “Take Two” Youth residential treatment program, chaired the session and invited comment on three aspects of service – the access, the treatment, and post-discharge care.

Several themes quickly emerged about access:

- Consumers and Carers do not know how to access the system
- There is considerable resistance to access
- Major illness or crisis enables entry to the system but lesser degrees are not helped
- Once in the system the treatment is good but access is difficult

The main themes about treatment were:

- It is hard to have much of a say in treatment options
- Communication within the system is good but communication with outside agencies is poor
- Wholistic support is poor

Discussion on post-discharge care noted the shift from ‘continuity of care’ towards dealing with ‘episodes of care’ followed by a presumption of self-sufficiency unless re-referred. This was prompted by caseload pressure, avoiding non-essential appointments. There is a balancing act between the needs of the professionals, the young people, the carers and the system.

Where there is a mismatch between the family needs and that of CAMHS the clients are left with no choice. It was noted that a large number of terminations of care are deemed unsatisfactory but there is no clear protocol of quality assurance or feedback of results of outcome or satisfaction.

MHYFVic is particularly grateful to the members of the panel, especially the young people from Orygen Youth Mental Health Service and headspace who contributed their lived experience of the system. MHYFVic will be using the material from the forum in its advocacy for improvements in the system.

HISTORY CORNER, 1940

On 14 March, 1940, a beleaguered and reluctant family of three arrived in Melbourne, having been rejected as immigrants to New Zealand and Australia, but later, accepted, here. They had come from a war zone and fled in fear of their lives. But unlike those who arrive today, they were warmly welcomed, by Melbourne psychoanalyst, Paul Dane.

The mother of the child would say that having a child might have been the reason for acceptance by Australia as five other Jewish psychoanalysts were rejected. She was a reluctant immigrant, according to Douglas Kirsner.

The analyst in question had read Ferenczi as a 17 year-old, when Ferenczi was in her home town in Hungary on military deployment. Born Clara Lazar on 4 October, 1900, her reading of Ferenczi inspired both a medical career and an interest in becoming a psychoanalyst.

Clara Lazar Geroe trained under Michael Balint and worked alongside Alice Balint, but it was the views of Ernest Jones expressed at the

1938-39 *Psychoanalytic Congress* in France that encouraged her to apply to migrate to New Zealand.

Upon arrival, Geroe was recruited to work at the Alfred Hospital providing psychiatric intake interviews and setting up a child analytic clinic, despite the tough rules regarding overseas medical training that still persist, today. Soon after, the Melbourne Institute of Psychoanalysis was opened and Geroe was appointed analyst of the Institute.

Those interested in the work of Clara Geroe might access the published work of Kirsner, Stanley Gold, Joy Damousi, and the blog of Christine from 2012.

The story is different to the stories of refugees from war torn countries, today, but our capacity to respond was founded by the work of Geroe in Melbourne. This legacy is worth remembering as planning is underway for an address at the Winston Rickards Memorial Oration in 2014 on the topic of asylum seekers in contemporary Australia.

REFERENCES

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Jo Grimwade

OUR NEW CONSTITUTION

At the Annual General Meeting the new Constitution was adopted. This was necessary because the Government has legislated for a new model Constitution covering all incorporated Associations. Our new Constitution complies with all the provisions of the model but incorporates all the provisions of our former Constitution. The only substantive change is provision for an additional category of "Associate Member".

MHYFVic welcomes our new Associate Members. Since the AGM an invitation for associate membership has been extended to a number of people in the child development and mental health field whom we believe can make an important contribution to our work by comment in their area of expertise. Their membership helps to affirm that our advocacy for improvements in the mental health system is soundly based.

OUR UPDATED WEBSITE

After much thought our website has been significantly revised to give casual visitors immediate information about what we do and what we stand for, whilst at the same time allowing members to go straight to specific sections such as Projects or Newsletters or Events, without having to navigate past reams of information.

Now that the main revision has been implemented we are working on tasks of development of Projects to give us the evidence base for our advocacy. There are quite a few items under development at the present time which are not yet reflected in the website but over the next few months we expect to see a burgeoning of activity.

Visit us on **mhyfvic.org**

FORTHCOMING EVENTS 2014

WINSTON RICKARDS MEMORIAL ORATION

The fifth Winston Rickards Memorial Oration will be held in the Ella Latham Lecture Theatre at the Royal Children's Hospital on Tuesday 4th March 2014.

The Orator will be Professor Louise Newman, whose paper is titled : "Cry Freedom! - Child asylum seekers in Australia: the intersection of mental health and human rights"

MHYFVic 2014

Annual General Meeting

The AGM will be held on Wednesday 27th August 2014 at Pacific Rim restaurant in Albert Park. The after-dinner speaker will be Vicki Cowling describing developments that have occurred over the last two decades in support services for children whose parent has a mental illness.

2013 MHYF Vic Committee

- * President, Jo Grimwade
- * Vice-President, Jenny Luntz
- * Past President: Allan Mawdsley
- * Secretary, Zoe Vinen
- * Treasurer & Membership Secretary,
Lillian Tribe
- * Projects Coordinator, Kylie Cassar
- * WebMaster, Ron Ingram
- * Newsletter Editor, Allan Mawdsley
- * Youth Consumer Representative, vacant
- * Members without portfolio:
Suzie Dean, Miriam Tisher, Sarina Smale