CONFRONTING SELF-HARM: from understanding to responding

23-24 February 2012
Sydney NSW Australia

Aerial UTS Function Centre
Level 7, 235 Jones Street, Ultimo
Sydney, NSW

14th annual TheMHS Summer Forum
The 2012 TheMHS Summer Forum will confront the important issue of self-harm in our society. It will focus on understanding the issues, translating research into innovative practice, and moving towards hope, healing and recovery.

How do we address the crisis of self-harm among young people? How should we confront the neglected issue of self-harm in the elderly? What is the relationship between self-harm and suicide? What are the issues for Indigenous communities, refugees and asylum seekers? Are suicide and self-harm issues affecting these population groups in similar or different ways and how can we best learn from each other to build a better understanding? How do we incorporate the wisdom that comes from personal and family stories of self-harm? How do we engage frontline services such as Emergency Departments, Police, NGO’s, GP’s and private practitioners? And - what policy developments in Australia and New Zealand might enable services to respond better to self-harm?

Come and join us for a stimulating forum where these important issues will be addressed.

TheMHS Summer Forum each year focuses on some of the big issues and challenges in mental health in Australia and New Zealand. These forums aim to raise issues and to highlight problems, future directions, examples of good practice and good research, by inviting speakers with expertise and/or a story to tell.

Invitation to Sydney

Come to TheMHS 14th annual Summer Forum which this year is to be held at the Aerial UTS Function Centre, close to Central Railway Station, Broadway Shopping Centre, Darling Harbour, Sydney Central Business District and Sydney University. At Darling Harbour you will find: the Chinese Gardens; a myriad of cafés and restaurants; Australian National Maritime Museum; Powerhouse Museum; IMAX theatre; Sydney Aquarium; Sydney Wildlife World. Nearby is Paddy’s market; cinemas and ferry, bus, tram, train and monorail services.

Who should attend this Forum?

This forum will be of interest to mental health program managers and directors, clinical leaders, researchers, educators, policy makers, consumers and carers.

The latest program is available from our website: www.themhs.org

Speakers

Graham Martin

Graham Martin is Director Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, The University of Queensland and Clinical Director RCH CYMHS. He is currently a National Advisor on Suicide Prevention to the Australian Government. He has been dedicated to suicide prevention since 1987, is a member of IASP (since 1997), and the International Association for Suicide Research. He is a board member for Mates in Construction Queensland (an industry leader in suicide prevention for building trades), and is Editor for the online journal Advances in Mental Health.

Topic 1: Longitudinal study on how people begin to self-injure
Topic 2: On therapies for self-injury

Katharine Saunders

Katharine Saunders is a Junior Fellow, University Department of Psychiatry, Oxford, UK. She is a member of the Self-harm Risk Report implementation group of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. She lectures in psychiatry to postgraduate and undergraduates, with particular reference to suicide and self-harm. She has written numerous papers, book chapters and is involved in research on bipolar disorder and borderline personality disorder, on risk factors for suicide and online training in the assessment of self-harm. She also performs as a soloist with choirs in Oxford, London, France, Spain and Slovenia, and plays acoustic fiddle with a Brussels-based ceilidh band.

Topic: Self-harm: UK policy and the challenges of implementation
Patrick McGorry, Australian of the Year 2010, is Executive Director of Orygen Youth Health (OYH), Professor of Youth Mental Health at the University of Melbourne and founding member of the National Youth Mental Health Foundation (headspace) board. OYH, Australia’s largest youth mental health research centre and clinical service targeting the needs of young people with emerging serious mental illness, including first-episode psychosis. He is involved in service development, clinical trials and studies of the onset phase of psychotic, mood, and substance use disorders. He has been an advisor to state, national and international governments. His other areas of expertise include refugee and asylum seeker mental health, torture and trauma, suicide and substance use disorders.

Merinda Epstein has a long standing interest in self-harm. She has conducted research on the views of over two hundred people about self-harm and the place it plays in their lives. She has a strong interest in harm-minimisation, the civil and human rights of people who self-harm, the institutional response to overt self-harm, the traumatising and re-traumatising role of accident & emergency departments and the expulsion of so many people who self-harm from service delivery systems. She also has a keen interest in invisible self-harm and the challenge childhood trauma has on the health and mental health system. Many people do: “are you OK?” extremely well and yet they self-harm regularly to maintain their sanity. Merinda started self-harming at 14. She still uses self-harm to deal with dissociation and traumatising memories.

Topic: Shame, trauma and self-harm: When self-harm is a sane response to an insane world

Maggie Mackeller is a writer and speaker. Her latest book, When it Rains, is a memoir chronicling her journey through grief after her husband died tragically while suffering from a mental illness leaving her a single parent of their daughter and pregnant with their son. Shortly afterwards her mother was diagnosed with aggressive cancer and died quickly. When it Rains describes the redemptive process that began with Maggie’s decision to resign from her academic position at the University of Sydney and move to the country. She has also published extensively on the histories of the frontiers of Australia & Canada. She is currently living with her two children on the family farm and writing full time.

Geraldine White is a mental health nurse practitioner in Consultation Liaison mental health, at Canterbury Hospital, Sydney. She runs a small private practice for women at the Brain and Mind Research Institute, Sydney University.

Topic: Working with the person who has self-harmed - in Accident & Emergency Departments

Najeeb Wazefadost arrived in Australia by boat as a refugee from Afghanistan in 2000. She has since completed a Bachelor of Medical Science and is now studying Nursing at UTS. She has been involved in ChilOut (Children out of Detention), Amnesty International, Bamiyan Association and President of Hazara Women of Australia advocating for the rights of refugees, asylum seekers, new arrivals and the release of children from Detention Centres. She has published her own story in a book There is no place like home. Currently she is working as a Case Manager with SSI (Settlement Services International).

Topic: The effects of trauma and suicidal thoughts among Refugees

Nick Allen, is Professor in the Department of Psychological Sciences at the University of Melbourne, and the ORYGEN Youth Health Research Centre. He is a leading researcher in the area of clinical depression, especially for his work on the relationship between adolescence and risk for depression. He has published numerous papers and books on depression, especially during adolescence, and is currently writing a book for the general public on how the science of adolescence can help parents, teachers and other community members to encourage positive adolescent development and prevent mental health and other problems.

Topic: Self harm in adolescents: Prospects for new approaches to treatment and prevention

Michael Dudley, recently awarded Member of Order of Australia (AM), Chairperson of the Suicide Prevention Australia Board since 2001, Conjoint Lecturer in Psychiatry at the University of New South Wales and Psychiatrist at Prince of Wales and Sydney Children’s Hospitals. He conducts research into risk and protective factors in youth and has extensive experience in working with youth, indigenous people, and refugees who are at risk of suicide and self-harm. Currently a member of both the Australian Suicide Prevention Advisory Committee (ASPAC) and the Advisory Board of Inspire Foundation’s ‘Reach Out!’ program.

Topic: Self harm and refugees and asylum seekers

For more details of speakers and topics, please go to www.themhs.org and see the Summer Forum program and listing of speakers.
Ozacom is offering specially reduced room rates for delegates to TheMHS Summer Forum. To obtain the best conference rates book via the link on TheMHS website.

PLEASE NOTE: Standard policy is that hotels require a credit card or cash bond to be presented on arrival to cover any additional charges that may occur during your stay, even if your accommodation has been fully prepaid.

Cancellations – Please see the hotel policy for cancellations.

**Closing Date for Registration**

16 FEBRUARY 2012

The number of places at this Forum is strictly limited, so please book early to guarantee your place. On-site registration may be available, depending upon numbers – please check availability with TheMHS office before the commencement of the Summer Forum.

**PRIVACY STATEMENT**

Your name and contact details will be used only to notify you of future mental health related events organised by TheMHS. If you do not wish to have your details used for this purpose please contact TheMHS office.

**INSURANCE**

It is strongly recommended that delegates take out adequate medical, travel and personal insurance prior to the commencement of travel to cover any loss of fees, accommodation or airfares, should you be unable to participate in the conference for any reason.

**DISCLAIMER**

The information given by presenters at the conference does not represent the views of TheMHS, and does not constitute therapeutic advice.

In the event of industrial action, force majeure or other unforeseen disruption, the conference organisers do not take responsibility for any loss of monies incurred by conference delegates. We strongly advise conference delegates to arrange their own personal insurance. The conference will not be liable for any participant failing to take out their own insurance.

TheMHS CANCELLATION POLICY: Fees will be refunded in full if TheMHS is notified in writing by the 20 January 2012, 50% of fee will be refunded if notification is received by 3 February 2012. NO REFUND will apply after 3 February, except at the discretion of TheMHS Management Committee.

TheMHS - a learning network for improving mental health services in Australasia

TheMHS is an independent education, service development and networking organisation. TheMHS mission is to:

1. Recognise and promote quality collaborative research, practice, policy-making and education
2. Promote active involvement and inclusion of all mental health stakeholders
3. Advocate and promote leadership in the mental health field

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**This Summer Forum is organised by TheMHS Management Committee:**

Cathy Chapman, Kevin Kellehear, Vivienne Miller, Maree Teesson (Co-convenors), Tom Brideson, Andy Campbell, Maria Cassiniti, Lynne Dunbar, Michelle Everett, Roger Gurr, Paula Hanlon, Adam Lane, Leonie Manns, Peter McGeorge, Marilyn McMurchie, Sadie Robertson, Alan Rosen, Tully Rosen, Barbara Tooth

Please check website for updates about the Summer Forum.