

NOTES FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF THE AWARDS PROGRAM

Mr Westhead
1992 including Results

We would have to say that the mentally ill and the services that care for them get a bad press! We have had a surfeit of inquiries and critical reports on poor services, which have been allowed to occur by official and government neglect. We have professional public relations activities, funded by the Scientologists, that try to denigrate psychiatry services at every opportunity. We have repeated manipulation of the media by staff threatened by change, wanting to protect their institutional life against the long term best interests of service users. Now is the time for us all to reverse this trend and to let our community know about the great things being done by government and non-government service providers in collaboration with service users.

Mental health services are undergoing an evolving revolution, from custodial caring in large institutions to active relapse prevention and rehabilitation in positive community settings. Today we wish to honour some of the people who are making this revolution possible by their innovation and excellence in service development and implementation.

Twenty mental health programs applied for our inaugural Australia and New Zealand Mental Health Service Achievement Awards. These awards are modelled on the Hospital and Community Psychiatry awards program in the United States of America, which carries a prize of \$10,000 sponsored by a pharmaceutical company. We decided not to seek such a sponsor, as medication is only a small part of care and recognition by your peers is more important than the money. As with the American awards, ours are not the result of a full investigation nor fully objective in the decisions made, as we do not have the resources to do so and better programs may have failed to apply. Five assessors, not including myself, from different disciplines, different settings, different states and New Zealand, including a consumer advocate, found much inspiration and a high standard of entry, so the decision

making was not easy. We must thank Meg Smith, Lois Ford, John McDonald, Joyce Goh and Dr Kalyanasundaram for the many hours of work they put in, but I know they enjoyed learning from the experience. However, nine programs stood out and they happened to fall into three categories of Government Services - General, Non-Government Services and Advocacy, and Rehabilitation.

I now call upon the Right Honourable Brian Howe to present the awards.

The first category is:-

GOVERNMENT SERVICES - GENERAL

The winner of this category and the unanimously highest scoring program is:-

THE CHATSWOOD MOBILE COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT TEAM

a part of the integrated mental health services administered by the Royal North Shore Hospital and Community Services here in Sydney. I call upon the team leader, John Hambridge to come forward to accept the gold award on behalf of the team.

This team is a multidisciplinary, assertive outreach rehabilitation team providing intensive domiciliary rehabilitation to approximately 60 clients who have a serious mental illness, and their families. Service users have typically had repeated hospital admissions and need frequent practical help with daily living and assistance with medication. Service users and families need enhancement of their knowledge and skills in managing the illness. The staff need to be energetic in advocacy for the service users.

An ongoing evaluation indicates that functioning increases significantly and hospital admission time decreases significantly following referral to the team. The service users successfully assisted by this team can be more psychiatrically disabled than many long stay patients in

psychiatric hospitals around Australia, and I expect that all metropolitan catchment area services will have a similar team before long, a major factor in dramatically reducing the need for long stay hospital beds.

We congratulate this team for providing leadership in adapting this American concept to Australia and New Zealand and for doing it so well.

The silver award goes to the
FAR WEST MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE

which is based in Broken Hill and which covers 15,000 square kilometres in western NSW. I call upon the manager, Mark Hemming to come forward to accept the award on behalf of his team.

This team has shown how a multidisciplinary, comprehensive community based service can successfully operate in an isolated area more than 500 km from the nearest psychiatric hospital. They have two gazetted beds at the local general hospital which can be opened when necessary and which are run by the same team. They also provide assertive case management and rehabilitation. They have actively undertaken research and evaluation to ensure a quality service. They are an inspiration to rural services and we congratulate them.

The bronze award goes to the
CLINICAL STUDIES UNIT,

based in Wolston Park Hospital, Brisbane. I invite Joy Welham, research psychologist, to come forward to receive the award on behalf of the team.

This unit was established four years ago to encourage multidisciplinary research on schizophrenia and other serious psychiatric disorders from a bio-psycho-social perspective. The Unit has emphasised close liaison with service users, consumer groups, other health professionals and tertiary institutions. There are over forty permanent staff involved

and they have been able to attract increasing grants from competitive funding sources. We look forward to significant results for service users and congratulate them on their efforts.

The second category is for
NON-GOVERNMENT AND ADVOCACY SERVICES

The gold award goes to the

VICTORIAN MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS COUNCIL

Which is the umbrella organisation for 40 self-advocacy groups of psychiatric services users in Victoria. I invite David Walter, chairman of the management committee, and Rod Salvage, consumer consultant, to come forward to receive the award.

The organisation has used survey techniques in three projects to influence service user involvement in shaping the provision of services to better meet users needs. "Unlocking the System" started as a survey of service users in Melbourne western suburbs and ended as a strategy for user participation in mental health services. "Understanding Anytime" was a survey of users of a leading psychiatric hospital which led to the hospital reviewing all its procedures in consultation with users. "Project Focus" is a clinical and user survey of community mental health clinics and it will be presented in a seminar tomorrow afternoon. The assessment committee recognises that this work has far reaching implications for service providers in Australia and New Zealand and we congratulate the organisation on its initiatives.

The silver award goes to

CHARMIAN CLIFT COTTAGES

a NSW state wide service for women experiencing psychiatric distress with dependent children needing stable, safe and supported accommodation. I call upon Yvonne Shipp, the Director, to come forward to receive the award.

This service is based in my catchment area of the City of Blacktown and thankfully I was not an assessor so there was no

conflict of interest. I assisted the "Women in Limbo" committee in western Sydney, an off-shoot of the women's refuge movement, to obtain funds in 1985 for this project with the promise that our service would provide close psychiatric cover. It has been a good working relationship with this unique program that provides active personalised programs for the women and their children, who can miss out in purely adult services. The service has undertaken evaluation activities and restructured services as a result. They also run training programs for women's refuge workers to give greater understanding of women affected by mental health disorders. The committee congratulates the service for its quality in pioneering a service that allows children to stay with their mother during mental disorder.

The bronze award goes to

THE INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY LIVING ASSOCIATION

providing supported accommodation, rehabilitation and psychiatric care for 81 people in ten group homes in the eastern and inner suburbs of Sydney. I invite the Director, Steve Newhouse, to come forward to receive the award.

Each resident has a case manager provided by the local health service and individual service plans are devised for each resident. The structure and processes of the organisation aim to empower the residents by providing a home where they may experience themselves as valued individuals; actively seeking opportunities for residents to participate in and eventually to control decision making within their living environment. They also ensure that residents have access to a range of health and other services, advocating where necessary and educating personnel working in those services.

The committee congratulates the service for providing a good service in one of the few parts of Sydney that still lacks integrated, comprehensive community based services.

The third category is

REHABILITATION SERVICES

and the gold award goes to the

PRE-VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM

a part of the Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services of the ACT Mental Health Services. I invite Mimi Christie, the Director, to come forward to receive the award.

The Pre-Vocational Program consists of two sub programs. The Technical and Skills Centre aims to assist people to enhance their employment, training and educational opportunities, with a wide variety of technical, clerical and work preparation courses being available.

Northside Contractors is a registered business that provides casual part time work including yard maintenance, car washing, furniture removal, carpentry, basic property maintenance, cleaning and clerical tasks. In 1991 a retail garden centre was established to provide employment in retail horticulture and related aspects of the horticultural trade for people who have completed a retail horticulture course. Rates of pay are at industry standard and covered by workers compensation insurance. The committee congratulates the program on its flexible range of work related experiences that can lead to increased skills and the confidence to go on to work other supported work programs.

The silver award goes to the

LEISURE INTEREST SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAM

sponsored by the Queensland Association for Mental Health in cooperation with, and resourced by, the Valley Community Psychiatry Service in Fortitude Valley in Brisbane. I invite Terry Maguire, the Recreation Officer, to come forward to receive the award.

The LIST program attempts to systematically introduce clients to an affordable, specific leisure interest area and then to train the person to a skill level sufficient to continue the interest in the community. LIST courses are integrated with

mainstream community facilities and taught by volunteers who are experts in the particular leisure area selected. Course have included visual arts, theatre and drama, environmental awareness, ballroom dancing, tennis and calligraphy.

The committee congratulates the program for an innovative way of developing purposeful and satisfying activities for those who may not achieve full time work.

The bronze award goes to the

GLENELG PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES REHABILITATION PROJECT

which provides in-patient and community rehabilitation for service users from a population of 110,000 in an area of 223,500 square kilometres in south west Victoria. I invite Robert Ogilvie to come forward to receive the award on behalf of the service.

This evolutionary rehabilitation program began in 1985 and it has aimed to be innovative, flexible and responsive to the needs of service users. It has been effective in rehabilitating residents who had been in long term care for decades and then successfully adapted to meet the needs of a different, younger and less institutionalised group. The truly multidisciplinary teams offer continuity of care from in-patient rehabilitation through to the community living lifestyle chosen by the service user. Support is provided as required, including respite care. The committee congratulates the service on the changes brought about by staff from within a traditional long stay institution, involving consultation with users and active evaluation.

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK MINISTER BRIAN HOWE FOR PRESENTING THESE AWARDS AND FOR BEING WITH US TODAY. CONSIDERING HIS INTEREST

IN MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES, WE HOPE HE WILL BE AROUND TO PARTICIPATE IN OUR BIGGER AND BETTER AWARD PROGRAM NEXT YEAR.

POSTER DISPLAYS

Anticipating that you would like more information on these inspiring services, we have asked them to prepare poster presentations of their work and these are in the display area outside this auditorium. Representatives will be available for discussion at the times shown on the displays.

MORNING TEA IS NOW BEING SERVED AND THE NEXT SESSION BEGINS AT 10.45 am.