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## TAKING MENTAL HEALTH TRIAGE TO WALES

Associate Professor Stephen Elsom, Director of the Centre for Psychiatric Nursing, and Associate Professor Natisha Sands, Campus Leader, School of Nursing and Midwifery at Deakin University and Principal Research Fellow at the CPN, have recently returned from a busy week of consultation regarding mental health service reform in Wales, UK.

The visit followed 18 months of email, telephone and videoconference discussions between Natisha, Steve and various senior clinicians, consultants, academics, managers and policy makers in Wales. The Wales Mental Health Measure, a new legislative framework for mental health service delivery, is in the final stages of approval by the Welsh Assembly. In this context, the Abertawe Bro Morgannwg (ABM) University Health Board is considering the introduction of mental health triage as part of a major reform of mental health service delivery. With most of the pioneering work in mental health triage having been conducted in Australia, particularly Natisha's ground-breaking PhD studies, Welsh authorities are keen to ensure that their reform agenda is informed by evidence developed here in Australia.

Ian Stevenson, Senior Nurse, Service Development, Improvement and Governance for the Mental Health Directorate of ABM, hosted our visit and has completed an impressive amount of preparatory work involving various stakeholders who will be instrumental in bringing about the envisaged reforms. Ian rolled out the red carpet for us and arranged a hectic schedule of presentations, site visits, and meetings with key staff from the Welsh Assembly, the Mental Health Directorate, NHS Wales, and the ABM (Swansea) University and Glamorgan University. Our presentations included clinical and operational aspects of mental health triage as well as an overview of our research program and the mental health triage education program developed by Natisha and offered through the Centre for Psychiatric Nursing.



L-R: A/Prof Stephen Elsom, Dr Tegwyn Williams, Director of Mental Health Services, A/Prof Natisha Sands, Ian Stevenson, Senior Nurse, Service Development, Improvement and Governance.

The planned introduction of mental health triage services in Wales contrasts with the somewhat ad hoc manner in which triage has evolved in Australia and presents exciting opportunities for new research in this area. To this end we were delighted to present our work and make connections with senior academic staff at the Swansea and Glamorgan Universities. Several professors have expressed interest in working with us and we are in the process of developing a Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Melbourne (CPN), Deakin University, ABM (Swansea) University and Glamorgan University to provide a framework for collaborative research.

As well as the progression of our research program, the next year or three will involve further consultation and mental health triage training for Welsh health professionals. We are planning for a visit to Victoria by Ian Stevenson and his colleagues to enable them to see MHT services operating and to inform the operational changes that will be required to enable the introduction of triage in Wales. At this stage we anticipate that this visit will occur in early March next year.

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of Natisha and myself, to express our sincere appreciation to Ian Stevenson and the many people we met over the course of the week who made our visit to Wales both productive and enjoyable.

**Stephen Elsom**  
Director, CPN

## MENTAL HEALTH NURSES BIG DAY OUT - WARRNAMBOOL

Psychiatric Services, South West Healthcare (SWH) has recently hosted its first Mental Health Nurses Big Day Out. Mental Health Nurses from around western Victoria attended a line up of prominent Victorian Mental Health (MH) Nurse Leaders.

Our local MH nurses were joined by MH Nurses from St John of Go Hospital, Warrnambool, ASPIRE (Psychiatric Services Disability Services), other NGOs and private practice and further afield from Geelong and Mildura.

Ms Rosemary Charleston from the Western Education & Training Cluster facilitated the day that began with an opening address from Mrs Tracy Beaton, Senior Nurse Advisor from the Mental Health and Drugs Division, Department of Health. Tracy's topic was about making a difference, what nurses can do to contribute to Consumer

care, what nurses can do for nurses and what nurses can do for mental health nursing. Her key points included two statements; "Leadership is a journey, not a destination" and "You have to care to notice". These very poignant statements stimulated conversation for our MH Nurses around our service for the rest of the week.

Associate Professor Natisha Sands, Geelong and Warrnambool Chair and Lecturer, Deakin University shared her journey in the development of Victoria's Mental Health Triage Scale Model of care. Her journey demonstrates passion and commitment to what she believed in and how this passion now makes her the Leader in the field in MH Triage in Victoria and world-wide. Her message was that the most important aspect of growing and achieving your passion is through education and anyone can, like her, make great contributions to the MH Nurse Profession.

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## AUSTIN MENTAL HEALTH NURSE RECOGNISED AT THE VICTORIAN NURSING EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Mr Hooi Seng Tan from the Acute Psychiatry Unit at Austin Health was awarded the Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol category by Minister Lisa Neville at the Nursing Excellence Awards on 15 September 2010.

The awards recognise the contribution made by nurses and midwives to their patients, residents and clients and seek to reward innovative and exceptional individuals that have made an outstanding contribution to the health outcomes of the Victorian community through their professional practice.

Hooi-Seng has worked in the Austin Mental Health Eating Disorder Program (EDP) as a Clinical

Nurse Specialist for a number of years now. Hooi Seng is recognised for providing a highly valued set of skills within the EDP and has provided nursing care in a consistently professional, skilful, therapeutic and caring fashion.

He has taken a lead role in training and supporting other mental health nurses to work in this specialty area by initiating and coordinating in-service education and training programs to support the specialist skills required in the EDP. In addition he also coordinates the in-service training for the Acute Psychiatry Unit, which has 19 adult psychiatry beds. He is strongly committed to improving care for eating disordered clients and has prepared and presented to the Centre of Excellence for Eating Disorder (CEED) and to his colleagues training in providing Meal Support Therapy. This has led to improvements in the clinical skills of nursing and allied health clinicians working with this client group.



Mr Hooi Seng Tan and Minister Lisa Neville

Hooi Seng has received a scholarship as part of the Award up to the value of \$10,000 to allow him to share best practice with others or to develop further initiatives. This is a fantastic achievement and recognition of his contribution over a number of years and as Hooi Seng said on the night of the awards, "this is the highlight of my career".

## NORTHWESTERN MENTAL HEALTH NURSES RECOGNISED AT THE VICTORIAN NURSING EXCELLENCE AWARDS

The 2010 State Nursing and Midwifery Excellence Awards presentation ceremony was held on 15 September. NorthWestern Mental Health were very proud when both Jennifer Robinson and Julie Lemieux won awards.

Jennifer was nominated for the award for a nurse who demonstrates excellence and innovation in a public sector Residential Aged Care Facility. Jennifer Robinson is a clinical nurse educator in aged mental health. She is a highly skilled nurse who is well respected and trusted by all levels of nursing. Mentorship is her area of expertise and

she has excellent networking skills. Jennifer demonstrates an enormous capacity to improve services for her clients. She has led a committee that has overseen a project to incorporate palliative care into the residential aged care mental health unit and her endeavours have led to improved palliative and end of life care for people in residential care services.

Julie Lemieux was nominated for excellence in Enrolled Nurse practice. Julie is in a new innovative Enrolled Nurse clinical nurse educator role. Julie is recognised as a champion and a leader in engaging Enrolled nurses (Division 2) and encouraging them to participate in further education to contribute to contemporary and responsive clinical care. It is her enthusiasm and tenacity that has borne fruit with a large number of the Enrolled nurses now being competent in medication administration and improvement to medication management systems and processes generally. She is an exemplary role model and is



Julie Lemieux and Jennifer Robinson

motivated and encourages other nurses to further their professional development and has completed her Advanced Diploma module in mental health with a growing number of other enrolled nurses. We congratulate Hooi Seng Tan for the mental health award and Ashley Wheeler, also from aged in Melbourne Health, for enhancing working lives. An excellent night over all.

### HIGHER DEGREE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

Are you interested in pursuing a Masters or PhD?

Exciting research opportunities exist for people interested in pursuing research higher degrees in mental health nursing practice.

Our research program includes Medication Safety, Physical Health, Therapeutic Optimism, Mental Health Triage and other areas of mental health nursing practice. Scholarship opportunities may be available for the appropriately qualified candidate

For further information contact:  
Associate Professor Stephen Elsom  
Email: sjelsom@unimelb.edu.au  
Tel: 8344 9460

## SEASON'S GREETINGS FROM THE CPN

Last year at this time I did not think it was possible for to be any busier than we had been but I have to admit that I was wrong. The last 12 months have been even busier! The demand for our training events has increased to the point that we have scheduled repeat workshops on several occasions to cope with the extra numbers. This is very pleasing and indicates that mental health nurses and other professionals are taking their professional development opportunities and obligations seriously. It also tells us that we are hitting the mark with the various topics we have offered. Similarly, our controversial symposium on "coercion in clinical psychiatry" attracted a passionate and vocal audience of mental health nurses and consumers who offered their perspectives regarding the balance of human rights and clinical imperatives and the 11th Victorian Collaborative Psychiatric Nursing Conference was yet another resounding success with over 300 delegates from Victoria and other states.

As this is the final issue of Carillon for 2010, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the many people who have worked with us during the year. I will avoid the risk of forgetting someone by not naming individuals but wish to express our appreciation to: the members of our Executive and

Advisory Committees; our many visiting presenters and facilitators; members of the Victorian Senior Psychiatric Nurses Forum and the Victorian Mental Health/Psychiatric Nursing Education and Professional Development Forum; the many mental health nurses, consumers, carers, and other mental health professionals who have participated in our research projects as collaborators, advisors and participants; and all of the participants in our various workshops, symposia, and conference. Finally, I wish to acknowledge the commitment, support and enthusiasm of our team of staff at the CPN including our regular employees and our growing number of honorary researchers.

On behalf of the staff and Executive Committee of the Centre for Psychiatric Nursing, I wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy, safe and productive New Year.

Associate Professor Stephen Elsom  
Director, Centre for Psychiatric Nursing

CPN will be closing  
Friday 24 December 2010 and  
re-opening Tuesday 4 January 2011

## MENTAL HEALTH NURSES BIG DAY OUT - WARRNAMBOOL

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Associate Professor Steve Elsom from the CPN shared his ideas and the evidence of why MH Nurses should and should not practice Intramuscular injections as routine practice. The nurses on the floor were very interested in how, when and where IMI's should be given. Are we so outdated in our practice that we are now untraining our student nurses when they attend clinical placement? Student nurses are taught to give IMI's in the ventrogluteal Muscle and not the dorsogluteal muscle. Let's take time and question our practices, review, investigate and change. Steve's take home message comes from a statement from Harold Wilson "He who opposes change is the architect of decay"

Ms Shirley Jennings led a stimulating and interesting Hypothetical, with our guests and some of our organisation's MH Nurses on the Panel. Using a hypothetical case study we followed the journey of Nelson through a seemingly traumatic journey of seeking help. Even though Greg Miller has not been clinical for a long while he was able to make a valuable contribution in his role and the "clinical liaison nurse". Our MH Nurses confirmed that our Consumer journeys are more accessible, inclusive of family and received high quality MH nursing care.

Mr Greg Miller from North Western Area Mental Health Service led a conversation on the change over from the Nurses Board of Victoria to the Nursing and Midwifery board of Australia and AHPRA presenting the intricacies and changes to registration for MH nurses in Victoria, All in attendance agreed that something needs to be done



L-R Shirley Jennings, Carolyn Byrne, Adel Morrison, Greg Miller, Rosemary Charleston, Stephen Elsom, Tracy Beaton & Natisha Sands

to ensure that MH Nursing in Victoria is recognised as a speciality. In both SA and NSW, MH Nurses retain their speciality. What's up with that? La revolución! Give me a placard and tell me where to stand!

To finish up Ms Shirley Jennings led a workshop on "Bridging the Generation Gap – what happens when Baby Boomers (BB) meet Generations X & Y; creating an afternoon of hilarity and great debate. We learned that BB have a strong work ethic, GX are independent, entrepreneurial and techno savvy and GY are driven and willing to work but prefer the team approach. By having a common goal (care for the consumer, and family and community); ensuring communication and team work and with this new understanding of all generations in the MH nurse workforce we can walk this path together. If we show the latchkey kids (Gen X) were the keys are and how to use them; and listen to and lead our Gen Ys, then us Baby Boomers will be able to retire knowing we have capable, motivated and leading MH Nurses to care for those who need them most, our consumers.

A big thanks to my colleague Mrs Janet Punch for white-boarding the waves with me. Thank you to our sponsors Lilly for our breakfast presentation, The Western Education & Training Cluster, Ms Denise Guppy at HACSU and Psychiatric Services Division, SWH.

The aim of this day for me was to encourage our MH Nurses to think critically and engage in meaningful conversation.

Thanks to all our eminent guest speakers I believe we have achieved that and much much more. Having our Director of Psychiatric Services Ms Caroline Byrne and Tracy Beaton participate for the whole day spoke volumes of the calibre of MH Nurse leadership we have around us.

MH Nurse Big Day Out is on the WETS calendar for November 2011.

**Ms Adele Morrison**  
Senior Psychiatric Nurse/Executive Officer  
Psychiatric Services, South West Healthcare

## MENTAL HEALTH TRIAGE SCALE TRAINING

Bendigo Health recently was selected by The Victorian Department of Health to run the state-wide training for the mental health triage scale for use by all Victorian mental health services

Mental health triage is the process of initial assessment to determine a person's need for mental health services and the nature and urgency of the required response. The mental health triage scale provides a standardised tool to classify the outcome of triage assessments.

In association with LearnPRN, Bendigo Health has been delivering training to mental health triage clinicians across the state to help them understand how to apply the new mental health triage scale and support them in adopting practice change.

During the one day training workshops, participants are armed with information and a 'Mental health triage scale: Train the trainer' resource manual so they can implement the local training in their workplace. Training includes key concepts in mental health triage, best practice tips, case studies, assessment strategies and key points for training

and supporting colleagues during the introductory phase of the mental health triage scale.

To date 10 workshops have been conducted with state-wide representation and over 100 resource manuals distributed.

Bendigo Health senior psychiatric nurse consultant Tim Lenten said the scale is being implemented as part of the Because mental health matters: Victorian mental health reform strategy 2009-2019.

*"The state-wide triage scale has been developed to promote a more consistent and clinically appropriate response to individuals seeking help for themselves, as well as carers and referrers seeking access to mental health services, and to provide a basis for better data collection about service access, utilisation and demand,"* said Mr Lenten.

*"It will also improve communication and referral pathways between public area mental health services and other members of the larger mental health service system,"* added Mr Lenten.

Full implementation of the state-wide mental health triage scale is expected to be achieved by the beginning of September. Bendigo Health will continue providing support to mental health services across Victoria throughout this period.

## KEEPING THE SPIRIT ALIVE

*Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments, toward organisational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results*  
– Andrew Carnegie

I work within a community mental health team (aged care), where team spirit is essential in supporting one another, in a somewhat isolated role. The nature of the role, can put a strain on, the "connectedness" we feel among us (Fagin et al 1995). The additional pressures, of providing quality care and encompassing technical expertise, can blur common goals. Nolan and Smojkis (2003), identified, that support for community mental health nurses is limited compared to ward based colleagues. As a team we must endeavour to contribute to the maintenance of the team spirit.

The unexpected opportunity to explore team spirit, came around May this year during a staff meeting. It was suggested that we celebrate World Mental Health Day (WMHD), a day previously not acknowledged within the service. It was seen as an ideal opportunity to raise awareness of mental health wellness and stigma related issues. This was warmly received within the team, generating some momentum straight away.

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# 12<sup>th</sup>

## VICTORIAN COLLABORATIVE PSYCHIATRIC NURSING CONFERENCE

### CALL FOR ASTRACTS

11 & 12 August 2011

### Call for Abstracts

DEADLINE FOR ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Friday 11 March 2011

As joint hosts the **Centre for Psychiatric Nursing, The Australian College of Mental Health Nurses (Vic Branch), The Health and Community Services Union** and the **Australian Nursing Federation** invite you to attend this exciting conference.

The aim of this conference is to focus on the practice of psychiatric nursing and how this practice contributes to better health outcomes for the consumers of services.

Abstracts of no more than 200 words are invited for 30 minute paper, poster and 60 or 90 minute workshop presentations

that focus on the practice of psychiatric nursing. All posters submitted for the conference will be entered into the Conference Poster Competition with a \$100 Gift Voucher going to the winning entry.

Papers with a focus on recovery from mental health problems are particularly encouraged. Themes below are listed for your consideration but papers need not be restricted to only those shown.

Papers from practicing clinicians and post graduate students undertaking clinical projects are particularly encouraged. If you are interested in presenting a paper

but would like more information, support or guidance please contact Steve Elsom at CPN:

T 8344 9460  
E sjelsom@unimelb.edu.au

Abstracts can be submitted electronically. The instructions and format for the submission of abstracts are located on the CPN website: [www.cpn.unimelb.edu.au](http://www.cpn.unimelb.edu.au)

If you are unable to submit an abstract electronically please contact the CPN:

T (03) 8344 9626  
E cpn@nursing.unimelb.edu.au  
F (03) 9035 8519

#### THEMES

- Psychiatric nursing across the life-span
- Rural issues
- Cultural and indigenous issues
- Dual diagnosis
- Dual disability
- Recovery
- Innovation in practice
- Sustainability of psychiatric nursing
- Consumer perspectives
- Carer perspectives
- Clinically-based research and evaluation



### KEEPING THE SPIRIT ALIVE

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Over the coming months WMHD became a standing item on the agenda. Staff were offering ideas, help and contributing their own time on the day. As a result of staff enthusiasm and increased communications, it was further suggested we have a 5-a-side soccer friendly match, between the community and ward teams. The results were amazing and everyone was talking about it, some a little more competitively than others.

The community mental health team persevered every month with keeping the enthusiasm going. It was also helpful when staff committed to contributing their help on the day. The department itself was becoming more focused nearing match day, and finally the day arrived. We managed to provide an information point for the day, which was warmly received by a broad range of people from within the hospital. Our display incorporated positive images of mental health wellness, and information on services available.

The soccer game was great fun, and an enjoyable, informal way to spend time with team members. The feedback was tremendous and the photographs were an endless source of laughter.

The group felt like a team with a sense of connectedness throughout, which helped motivate members to see it through to the end. The group pursued a common goal, continued to be effective communicators, actively pursue the essence of the team spirit and with perseverance continued to keep the spirit going. Utilising small scale leadership, a common goal was reached which fuelled our team spirit.

As a result of the positive response received, World Mental Health Day will continue to be acknowledged and celebrated within Caulfield General Medical Centre.

Yvonne Banks RMN  
Aged Persons Community Mental Health  
Caulfield General Medical Centre

MAILING DETAILS HERE

If undeliverable return to:  
Centre for Psychiatric Nursing  
School of Nursing and Social Work  
The University of Melbourne  
Level 5 234 Queensberry Street Carlton VIC 3053

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