

translinks

Newsletter of the Queensland Transcultural Mental Health Centre
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Editor: Penny D'Ath

Welcome

Welcome to the first issue of Translinks for 2004. We hope that you have found some time during the festive season to rest and re-energise not just physically, but also mentally and spiritually. We have entered the year of the Monkey, which according to the Chinese zodiac will be a year of movement, discussion, exchange of ideas, rich in the unexpected and a year of transformations. This is very much how 2004 is already shaping up at the QTMHC, with some of the new initiatives in transcultural mental health that we commenced last year now near completion, whilst other initiatives are now in full swing.

The BRiTA (building resiliency in transcultural adolescents) project has completed its first pilot phase and has been successful in securing funds for another phase through a partnership with the QUT Resiliency Project and the Brisbane City Council to enable the program to be adapted to the needs of primary school aged children and to pilot the adapted program in the schools participating in the QUT project. This is a very exciting collaboration as it enables us to pilot a program focusing on individual resiliency in a school environment that is addressing resiliency issues at an environmental level. It is best practice and provides us with a unique opportunity to focus on the special needs of young children from diverse cultural backgrounds.

The Multicultural Community Development in Mental Health Project will be presenting a program of workshops this year, exploring the cultural beliefs surrounding mental health and mental illness from the perspectives of the nine ethnic communities participating in the project. The workshops will be promoted to mental health services and broader human service agencies. Look out for promotional material coming out soon or on our website.

A one day information session was held by the QTMHC in November 2003 due to the number of new projects and new staff, to update each other on our work and identify areas where our work intersects to ensure that we continue a whole of centre approach. This day was attended by all QTMHC core and project staff, 19 in total, a reflection of the growth of our organisation and breadth of issues that we are now involved in to promote transcultural mental health issues across the state.

Rita Prasad-Ildes, Manager

Ph. 3240-2835

Email: rita_prasad-ildes@health.qld.gov.au



QTMHC Planning Day:

(from left, back row) Elvia Ramirez, Lejla Cistic, Sirous Momenzadeh, Clifford Soo, Katayoon Haghseresht, Fadumo Yusuf, Kate Lemerle, Chuol Luoth, Greg Turner.
(from left, front row) Tusi Luafutu, Cora Gatbonton, Karen Grimley, Deborah Mitchell, Ofelia Ramirez, Rita Prasad-Ildes, Benny Behzadpour, Odette Tewfik, Penny D'Ath.

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Staff

Rita Prasad-Ildes
Manager

Clifford Soo
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Co-ordinator**

Polly Nip & Deborah Mitchell
Clinical Services Workers

Greg Turner
**Education & Development
Co-ordinator**

Penny D'Ath
Resource Officer

Toni Wilsdon
A/Administration Officer

Katayoon Haghseresht
Refugee Care Co-ordinator

Kate Lemerle
**Research Project
Co-ordinator**

Sirous Momenzadeh
**Outcomes Project
Co-ordinator**

Staff update

We welcome **Toni Wilsdon** to the Administration Officer position while **Penny D'Ath** has moved across to the outcomes project for nine months to oversee the cultural contextualisation and translations of the Mental Health Inventory into 13 community languages. We also welcome **Sirous Momenzadeh** to the position of Project Coordinator for the Transcultural Mental Health Outcomes Project. **Polly Nip** has returned to one of the Clinical Services Worker positions while **Clifford Soo**, who has been filling in for Polly, is staying on with us on a part time basis to fill in for **Elvia Ramirez** in the Mental Health Promotion Co-ordinator position while Elvia is globetrotting around the world while away on long service leave. **Deborah Mitchell** has taken up the part time Community Development Project Coordinator position and remains half time in the other Clinical Services Worker position.



Toni Wilsdon, our Acting Administration Officer

District partnership project

A partnership project between QTMHC and the Cairns, Logan-Beaudesert and Gold Coast district mental health services is now well underway with workers commencing at the end of 2003 in Cairns and Logan. The project enables QTMHC to purchase the time of an existing worker in these district mental health services for half time over 12 months to focus on transcultural issues locally. The focus of the project is on capacity building and upskilling within the district mental health services to address transcultural issues through service development, systems change and establishing relationships with key multicultural agencies in these regions.

In Cairns, Mark Millard has established a very good working relationship with the community reference group of the local Migrant Settlement Service and is working to address local language service issues, as well as within the mental health service and improving access to the Transcultural Clinical Consultation Service. One of the strategies in North Queensland will be to recruit more bilingual/bicultural allied health workers (particularly with mental health experience) who can be registered with the Transcultural Clinical Consultation Service so that services can be provided locally rather than through video-conferencing which is currently the case.

In Logan-Beaudesert, Karen Grimley has been working hard to establish links with local multicultural agencies and is currently planning a community forum where members from the local multicultural communities can raise issues of concern about mental health, as well as meet representatives from the local mental health service to find out more about what the mental health service provides. Karen is also working on strategies to address culturally appropriate service provision issues within the mental health service such as:

- Providing training on transcultural mental health issues with a specific aim to developing a culturally competent workforce.
- Inservices for all the teams on accessing the Transcultural Clinical Consultation Service.
- Upskilling in available resources to deliver culturally appropriate services.
- Participating in mental health promotion and prevention activities for the local multicultural community.
- Identifying and rectifying barriers to access to mainstream mental health services by people from CALD background.
- Developing protocols for staff in working with interpreters.

For further information please contact: *Cairns*: Mark Millard, Ph 4050-3100 or mark_millard@health.qld.gov.au
Logan: Karen Grimley, Ph 3299-8772 or email at karen_grimley@health.qld.gov.au.



**Karen Grimley,
Transcultural Mental
Health Project Officer at
Logan-Beaudesert
Mental Health Service**

Review - 'Looking after yourself - Hints and tips'

by Katayoon Haghseresht, Refugee Care Co-ordinator

As the Refugee Care Co-ordinator at the Qld Transcultural Mental Health Centre, I have had the opportunity of working with people who have experienced incredible circumstances and are now struggling with a new type of trauma: facing new barriers, cultures and values as refugees in Australia.

They are facing these new issues in conjunction with their struggle to live with the direct consequence war has had on them and their families - members of which have died or are missing.

As the work I undertake with this group of people is so tremendous and at times demanding, it has been helpful to have at my fingertips a newly written booklet that contains STRATEGIES to assist with the types of problems that this client group faces.

A Brisbane based community agency, Qld Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT), has recently launched a booklet titled: "*Looking After Yourself - Hints and Tips*".

This booklet not only provides, in basic language, definitions and coping strategies for common problems such as anxiety, fear, nightmares, flashbacks and depression, but also covers other less talked about types of problems such as what to do if you have aches and pains with no apparent cause, grief and loss and feelings of self blame.

While reading this booklet, I got the sense that a lot of thought and wisdom went into writing it, as the authors understand that the workers, as well as our clients, are in need of easy-to-follow, practical coping strategies written in the spirit of demystifying and normalising the effects of trauma.

As an added bonus for those working with people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds - the booklet is available in various languages!

I would like to say a big 'Thank you' to the staff involved at QPASTT, who have taken the time and energy to develop this booklet.

Please contact QPASTT on (07) 3391-6677 if you would like to order the "*Looking after yourself - Hints and Tips*" CD ROMs. The cost of the CD is \$55 (includes GST).

National Practice Standards for the Mental Health Workforce

Mental health services throughout Queensland (and across Australia) are required to comply with the *National Practice Standards for the Mental Health Workforce 2002*. **The third Standard is: Awareness of Diversity:** *Mental health professionals practise in an appropriate manner through actively responding to the social, cultural, linguistic, spiritual and gender diversity of consumers and carers, incorporating those differences in their practice.*

The National Practice Standards implementation group, chaired by Professor Beverly Raphael, has decided to pursue progressive implementation and:

"have selected the first three National Practice Standards, on the grounds that they have particular value for all groups including professional groups, mental health services through the Mental Health Directors in each State and Territory, and Australian universities that offer undergraduate and postgraduate courses with a mental health content".

Professor Beverley Raphael (August 2003), National Practice Standards for the Mental Health Workforce, Bulletin No. 1.

The QTMHC Education and Development program is available to assist services in implementing Standard 3. We are available to visit regional services and deliver all of the education and professional development required to implement Standard 3 (with the exception of Indigenous issues and gender issues). This is provided at no cost to Queensland Health regional mental health services. To discuss your needs regarding the implementation of Standard 3, please contact Greg Turner via email greg_turner@health.qld.gov.au or by phone on 3240-2833.

Multicultural Innovative Dementia Services Pilot

A newly funded three year partnership pilot program between the QTMHC, the Islamic Women's Assoc of Qld and the Multicultural Communities Council Gold Coast has begun, focusing on dementia care needs of people from CALD through the provision of culturally appropriate and flexible care that allows CALD aged people to remain living at home. Eligible clients are those who have been assessed for a high level of residential care by the Aged Care Assessment Service and are living in the catchment area of Brisbane South and the South Coast. QTMHC will be providing culturally appropriate assessments, psycho-education and short term support for the clients and carers.

For further information please contact Rita Prasad-Ildes.

Family Violence

The QTMHC has been working in partnership with the Samoan community to develop a response to family violence issues. With strong support from the Department of Families an interagency meeting was held in Logan City involving representatives from a large number of government and non-Government agencies, as well as community representatives from the Samoan community to develop an across agency response.

For further information please contact Rita Prasad-Ildes.

Do you provide any multicultural mental health services or resources?

Then the join the most comprehensive national online database hosted by Multicultural Mental Health Australia. Visit www.mmha.org.au to submit your services, resources, research or projects related to multicultural mental health.

Training resources on transcultural aged mental health issues

The QTMHC will be developing a ninth module as part of the "Managing Cultural Diversity in Mental Health" training program focusing on the specific mental health issues of aged people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

For further information contact Greg Turner.

Community Focus Groups on the Mental Health Inventory

As part of the process of translating the consumer self-rated mental health outcome measure, the Mental Health Inventory, QTMHC will be conducting focus groups with people from the following language groups: Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Greek, Italian, Spanish, Tagalog, Croatian, Arabic, Serbian, Samoan, Farsi, Khmer and Indonesian. We would like to hear from any community association from the above language groups that we can work with to help recruit people from these language groups to participate in the focus groups.

For further information contact Penny D'Ath.

The Need for Understanding

The QTMHC is keen to hear from individuals (and agencies) who would be interested in attending (and hosting) the course, *The need for understanding: The care of refugee survivors of torture and trauma*. The primary target audience for which this program was developed are mental health professionals and others working with individuals and groups from refugee backgrounds, particularly newly arrived refugees and those on Temporary Protection Visas. The course is a partnership between QTMHC and the Qld Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT).

Module 1, 'Torture, trauma, and it's effects', can be delivered to both clinical and non-clinical service providers working not only in mental health, but across a range of agencies who may work with refugee survivors of torture and trauma. Sections include:

1. Torture and trauma
2. Refugee experience
3. The effects of torture and trauma
4. The impact of trauma on the family

Module 2, 'Assessment and treatment', can be delivered to mental health professionals who provide clinical services to refugee survivors of torture and trauma. Sections include:

1. Assessment and treatment
2. Assessment tools
3. Treatment and recovery
4. The emotional responses of workers

To express interest in this course, please contact Greg Turner via email: greg_turner@health.qld.gov.au or Ph. (07) 3240-2833.

What's on.....

19th – 20th February 2004 – *Double trouble. Comorbidity: Drugs, alcohol, mental health TheMHS Conference*

Venue: Swiss Grand Hotel, Bondi Beach, Sydney, Australia. For more information, Ph. (02) 9810-8700 or email: info@themhs.org.

23rd – 24th February 2004 – *ARCHI Toolkit Seminar: Mental health, hospitals and communities*

Venue: Adelaide, Australia. For more information, Ph. (02) 4985-3165 or email: admin@archi.net.au.

21st – 24th April 2004 – *International internet, media and mental health conference*

Venue: Brisbane, Australia. For more information, Ph. (07) 3858-5576 or email: immh04@im.com.au.

26th – 30th April 2004 – *18th World conference on health promotion and health education*

Venue: Melbourne, Australia. For more information, Ph. (03) 9417-0888 or email: health2004@meetingplanners.cmo.au.

10th – 13th May 2004 – *RANZCP 38th Annual conference: Balance*

Venue: Christchurch, New Zealand. For more information, Ph. (02) 6257-3299 or email: ranzcp2004@ausconservices.com.au.

2nd – 3rd August 2004 – *Perspectives on recovery Conference*

Venue: Wanganui River Gardens, Yeronga, Brisbane, Australia. For more information, Ph. (02) 6285-0111 or email: secretariat@amhcn.com.au.

1st – 3rd September 2004 – *5th TheMHS & AICAFMHA Conference*

Venue: Gold Coast, Australia. For more information, Ph. (08) 8132-0786 or email: secretary@aicafmha.net.au.

15th – 17th September 2004 – *3rd World conference on the promotion of mental health and prevention and behavioural disorders*

Venue: Auckland, New Zealand. For more information, Ph. (09) 300 7010 4985 3165 or email: conference@mentalhealth.org.nz.

20th – 24th September 2004 – *Mental health nursing: A challenging landscape*

Venue: Canberra, Australia. For more information, Ph. (03) 9682-0244 or email: anzcmhn2004@icms.com.au.

Regional Education

Mackay & Cairns

“Managing cultural diversity in mental health”

Modules 1 - 4

Contact: Greg Turner

Email: greg_turner@health.qld.gov.au

Ph. (07) 3240-2833

Electronic Version of Translinks!

Due to increasing costs, future issues of the *Translinks* newsletter will be available electronically. The next issue of *Translinks* will be emailed to Qld Health staff.

If you/your organisation would like the newsletter sent to you electronically in the future, please send an email to penny_d'ath@health.qld.gov.au prior to the May 2004 issue of *Translinks*.

Transcultural Clinical Consultation Service

Sessional workers

A good start for the new year with another six new bilingual/bicultural mental health consultants joining the program including two Indian, Croatian, Iranian, Vietnamese and Chinese consultants. Their professional backgrounds include psychiatric registrar, social worker, psychologist and community worker. We would like to extend our warm welcome to these new workers.

Looking for sessional workers

The TCCS is looking for bilingual/bicultural professionals to work with the statewide clinical consultation service on a casual basis. If you have:-

- tertiary qualifications in psychiatry, psychology, social work, mental health nursing or occupational therapy; and
- relevant work experience (preferably in mental health)

and you are interested in the TCCS service, please contact Polly or Deborah on 3240-2833. If you do not have the above qualifications but you are an experienced bilingual/bicultural worker from one of the following communities, you can also contact our service: Horn of Africa, Pacific Islands, Cambodian, Thai and Vietnamese.

TCCS Promotion

The program has visited most of the mental health services in South East Queensland to present information on the Centre and services provided by TCCS. As the TCCS is a statewide service, the next phase is to extend this service promotion to regional and Far North Queensland. As visiting all these services in person may not be achievable, the Centre will use video conferencing facilities to conduct presentations.

Group Supervision Program

The Transcultural Clinical Consultation Service's (TCCS) group supervision program re-commenced in August 2003 following the successful completion of the initial supervision program in June 2003. The program continues to attract a variety of bilingual mental health consultants who seek an opportunity to discuss and reflect on cross-cultural practice, explore clinical and cultural issues, and share experience, knowledge and skills with other bilingual mental health consultants.

The program will continue in its present format throughout the early stages of 2004. Many thanks to Chris Lobsinger, external supervisor for his contribution to the program thus far.

A case scenario - Transcultural Clinical Consultation Service (TCCS)

Following our promotional visits to various mental health teams in recent months we find that sometimes there is still a lack of understanding about the TCCS and the range of services it is able to provide.

The uniqueness of the TCCS lies in its access to a large pool of bilingual/bicultural mental health consultants from over 60 different language and cultural groups comprised of psychiatrists, psychiatric registrars, psychologists, social workers, occupational therapists, mental health nurses and community workers who can provide culturally appropriate mental health assessments, clarify diagnosis, cultural consultation, assistance in the development of culturally appropriate treatment plans, psycho-education for the consumer and carer and be involved in short term shared care.

The following is a typical case scenario for the TCCS, which illustrates the important role a bilingual mental health consultant can have in bridging the cultural gap between a CALD consumer and a mental health service:

Polly, one of the Clinical Services Workers from the TCCS receives a call from Linda, a family support worker from a neighbourhood centre who has concerns about one of her clients, a man from Vietnamese background, who frequents the neighbourhood centre and who is displaying increasingly erratic behaviour. Polly discusses the presenting symptoms with Linda and both agree that it would be important to conduct an assessment of his mental state. Linda also believes that her client may have been seen by the local mental health service in the past, but is not sure. Polly faxes Linda information about the TCCS and how it works in Vietnamese for her to pass on to her client, as well as a referral and consent form for her client to allow Linda to release his name and further information about him to the TCCS.

After receiving the referral and consent forms signed by Mr V, Polly contacts the mental health service in his local area to find out if they have previously seen Mr V. Polly finds out that on several occasions over the past three years, Mr V has been brought in by his family in a crisis, and that he is currently receiving follow up treatment through the community team. Mr V responds well to treatment when in hospital, but seems to relapse when he goes home. Polly suggests to the service that it may be helpful to have Mr V reassessed by a sessional bilingual mental health consultant of Vietnamese background who can provide recommendations to the treating team that will assist in their provision of treatment to Mr V.

Polly organises Anh, a Vietnamese psychologist working at another district mental health service and registered with the TCCS as a sessional bilingual mental health consultant, to attend the next case review meeting of the treatment team to discuss Mr V's case and ensure a collaborative approach. It is agreed that it would be helpful to have Anh conduct a re-assessment and she organises a meeting with Mr V at the local mental health service. At the completion of the assessment, Anh provides a report to Polly which indicates that Mr V's mental state has recently deteriorated due to family pressure and conflict, and recommends that psycho-education be provided not only to Mr V about his mental illness, but also to his family as they have limited understanding about his illness and the treatment strategies recommended by the service. Mr V feels his family does not understand him, his wife is very impatient with him which causes him further stress, and his children make fun of him.

Polly discusses the report and recommendations with the treatment team at the mental health service, and all agree that it would be beneficial for Anh to provide psycho-education to Mr V and his family, especially since the mental health service has indicated that they have not met with Mr V's family. Anh meets with Mr V and his family on another two occasions at the local mental health service, where she provides education to them about Mr V's illness, the treatment recommended by the mental health service, the role of the mental health service and coping strategies for Mr V and his wife. Anh is not only able to provide this information to the V family in their own language, but also within their own cultural understanding of mental health and illness.

For further information please contact Polly Nip or Deborah Mitchell on 3240-2833.



QTMHC Library New Additions



Books

- 📖 **'You never stop being a refugee': The special needs of older refugees** by Centre for Refugee Research & School of Social Work, University of NSW. (REFU.20)
- 📖 **Healthy families here & now: the impact of migration on the emotional wellbeing of migrants and refugees in Manningham** by Migrant Information Centre & Women's Health East, Melbourne (FAMI.6)
- 📖 **The refugee consumer voice. How to ensure it makes a difference** by Brisbane Inner South Division of General Practice (REFU.19)
- 📖 **Living without roots. A Queensland report on the needs of people who have been granted Temporary Protection Visas** by J. Hague (LIVI.1)
- 📖 **Communication strategy for culturally and linguistically diverse background communities** by Migrant Information Centre Melbourne (COMM.16)
- 📖 **Supporting Vietnamese families: A report on the development of a culturally appropriate service model for implementation by family support agencies to increase access to services by Vietnamese families in the City of Whitehorse** by Migrant Information Centre Melbourne (VIET.6)
- 📖 **Untangling the threads: Perspectives on mental health in Chinese communities** by Transcultural Mental Health Centre (CHIN.10)
- 📖 **Speaking of sadness and the heart of acceptance. Reciprocity in education. A model of interactive learning between migrant communities and mainstream mental health services** by N. Procter (RECI.1)
- 📖 **Cultural awareness tool: Understanding cultural diversity in mental health** by E. Seah, F. Tilbury, et al. (CULT.18)
- 📖 **Access to information about government services among culturally and linguistically diverse audiences** by Worthington Di Marzio & Cultural Partners Australia (ACCE.2)
- 📖 **Counseling international students: clients from around the world** by N. Arthur (COUN.2)
- 📖 **The health of refugees: public health perspectives from crisis to settlement** by P. Allotey (Ed) (REFU.21)
- 📖 **Transcultural Psychiatry: Indigenous healers, trauma and psychosis 40(4)** by L. Kirmayer (Ed) (TRANS.32)

**If you would like to borrow any of the above books or
use the Resource Library
please contact
Penny D'Ath on (07) 3240-2833.**

QTMHC on the Web!

The QTMHC website, previously only accessible to Queensland Health staff through the Queensland Health intranet, is now able to be accessed by everyone as it is now on the Queensland Health internet site. Apart from multilingual mental health resources, the website also contains other useful downloadable information such as QTMHC resources and publications.

www.health.qld.gov.au/pahospital/mentalhealth/