

translinks

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

Welcome

If your year is shaping up to be like ours then the holidays are already a distant memory and everything is into full swing! We ended last year having undertaken a number of significant events such as the mental health week forum, the formal launch of the *Stronger Families in the Samoan Community Project* and the bi-monthly cultural seminars with the Iranian, Spanish-speaking, Arabic-speaking, Samoan and Vietnamese communities. Each one of these seminars was a significant event in itself, which have so far involved more than 400 participants from across the mental health, human service and multicultural sectors. These seminars have not only been informative but inspiring, and for those outside Brisbane you will be pleased to know that we have commenced videoconferencing these seminars to other locations across Queensland. You will find more information about each of these activities on page 5 of this issue of *Translinks*.

This financial year the QTMHC has received some additional resources to assist us to scope the service and resource impacts of the Queensland Multicultural Mental Health Plan 2003-2008 which was developed and endorsed last year. The extra staffing is enabling us to liaise with key services, programs and initiatives across the state to negotiate transcultural involvement and input. In essence we are trying to "embed" ourselves a bit more across a range of programs to ensure that transcultural mental health issues are addressed. As we only have these additional resources until June we have a very big agenda ahead of us over the coming months.

We are very pleased to welcome to our team two consumer participation workers, Maria Teresa Montenegro-Vega and Aloma Lane. Maria Teresa and Aloma have joined the community participation project offering their unique and vital perspectives as consumers to ensure that the project, which is now directly engaging with consumers, remains focused on consumer issues.

It is hard to believe that QTMHC is entering its 10th year but it is true! We are planning a big celebration at the end of this year and we would like to hear from anyone who was involved in the early days who we may have lost contact with, as this would be a great opportunity for a reunion as so many incredible people have been involved along the way and contributed to the success of the QTMHC.

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Faalolo Kurene
Samoan Project Officer

Greg Turner
Statewide Project Officer

Lara Denman
Refugee Mental Health Project
Officer

Aloma Lane
Maria Teresa Montenegro-Vega
Consumer Participation
Workers

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Staff update

The past few months have seen a number of staffing changes due to additional resources relating to our 5 year plan: Greg Turner has taken up the temporary position of statewide project officer while Clarissa Wilson has joined us to backfill the education and development co-ordinator position. Lara Denman has commenced in the refugee mental health project officer position, Elvia Ramirez is working full time in the position of mental health promotion co-ordinator, Polly Nip has taken up the temporary position of clinical services co-ordinator, while Deborah Mitchell is now working full time as a clinical services worker in the Transcultural Clinical Consultation Service. Katayoon Haghseresht has moved to the project officer position in the Community Participation Project and Penny D'Ath has moved to a project officer position focusing on the co-ordination of the development of multimedia training resources to complement our aged mental health training module while retaining her information and resource role.



QTMHC Staff: (from back row, Left to right: Faalolo Kurene, Greg Turner, Lara Denman, Polly Nip, Penny D'Ath (middle row) Clarissa Wilson, Deborah Mitchell, Simone Bell, Kate Lemerle (front row) Katayoon Haghseresht, Elvia Ramirez, Rita Prasad-Ildes, Toni Wilsdon & Sirous Momenzadeh.

Consumer participation workers

My name is Maria Teresa Montenegro-Vega. I have begun working as a consumer consultant with the Qld Transcultural Mental Health Centre. I am finding it very encouraging.

My name is Aloma Lane and I am a mental health consumer. I am half Samoan and half Australian, but I was brought up in New Zealand. I am 23 years old and some of my interests include dancing, singing, song writing and playing guitar in worship.



Consumer participation workers: from left: Aloma Lane and Maria Teresa Montenegro-Vega.

Men's exercise program

A successful physical activity and psycho-education program for men of refugee backgrounds has just been completed. The EFFORT Program was a partnership between the Qld Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma Inc. (QPASTT), the Princess Alexandra Hospital Mental Health Services (PAH MHS), School of Human Movement Studies at the University of Qld (UQ), the Clem Jones Sports Centre and the Qld Transcultural Mental Health Centre (QTMHC).

The participating men from Iraqi, Afghani and Bosnian backgrounds, many who were assessed as having clinically significant mental health problems, engaged in a two-hour bi-weekly session program over 16 weeks in a range of sports and gym activities and participated in psycho-education sessions. The men reported many physical, emotional, mental and social benefits from participating in the EFFORT Program. Feelings of self-efficacy and self-confidence increased as well as levels of relaxation. Friendships within the men in the three language groups were strengthened and developed across these groups. Feeling welcomed by the regulars to the sport centre was reported as making them feel good.

The preliminary analysis of the quantitative evaluation of the men who completed EFFORT shows that it improved clinical levels of anxiety, depression and psychological distress in 40%, 60% & 50% of the men respectively to non-clinical significant levels.

A 20 minute video/DVD about EFFORT is available for loan from QTMHC. The full project report will shortly be on the QTMHC Website.

Promoting stronger families

Fausia O Aiga la Mautu

The *Promoting stronger families* project focuses on the Samoan community and is managed by the Qld Transcultural Mental Health Centre under the guidance of a Steering Committee (made up of respected members of the Samoan Community), and various government and non-government agencies.

Mr Faalolo Kurene, project co-ordinator and six community facilitators (three men and three women) have undergone training on a range of issues relating to family violence and will be holding group discussions within the Samoan community over the coming months.

The community facilitators will work in the following areas:- Caboolture (Seti Ah Kee & Agnes Faletagoai), Ipswich (Faaua Lologa & Losalia Situlia), and Logan (Leifi Ateliano Posiano & Faamomoi Su'a).



The facilitator's responsibilities are:

- ◆ To create a safe environment to engage members of the Samoan community in a dialogue about family violence issues
- ◆ To provide information on legislative issues relating to family violence
- ◆ To collect information from the community (needs and issues)
- ◆ To work within a Samoan culturally appropriate way
- ◆ To inform the community about services and support to access help
- ◆ To inform services on the best ways of dealing with this issue in the Samoan community

What is the best way to reach the community?

The best way to deal with this issue and to reach the Samoan Community is to work with the leaders of the community. The leaders are pastors, elders, and chiefs. It is said, *"If you win the chief, you win the whole family, if you win a pastor, you win the whole church."* However, if you fight against the chief, you are fighting against the community and the same with the pastor.

If a member of the family breaks the law, the chief of that family should be contacted. Services should also contact the pastor of that family. These are the key people to deal with the problem.

How do we promote stronger families?

- By encouraging people's spiritual beliefs – *"Love your neighbour as yourself"*. Violence is not permitted in churches and is inexcusable in any Samoan church.
- By strengthening their culture – Communal lifestyles where people work together for a common goal and care for each other's needs.
- By explaining the law of their adopted country – Family violence is physical, psychological, verbal, sexual, social, financial abuse and any action that may violate one's freedom. Some of these terms are not clear in the Samoan community and are not considered abusive, and need to be explained within the Samoan cultural context.

The project was formally launched to the community in December, 2004 and has received strong support through the Samoan media and from church leaders to work with the community to break down the barriers around family violence issues and to find culturally appropriate ways for prevention.

For more information:

Mr Faalolo Kurene

Project Co-ordinator

Email: faalolo_kurene@health.qld.gov.au

Developing a collaborative and sustainable approach to improve mental health outcomes for people from a refugee background

This year QTMHC will, among other innovations, be focusing on improving the mental health outcomes for people from a refugee background in the Princess Alexandra Hospital Health Service District (PAHHSD) and Mater Child and Youth Mental Health Service (CYMHS) catchment area.

Numerous capacity building activities are planned to be undertaken in partnership with PAHHSD Division of Mental Health, Mater CYMHS and the Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT) throughout the duration of this project.

These include:

- ▶ Further developing and consolidating partnerships with and between QTMHC, PAHHSD Division of Mental Health, Mater CYMHS, QPASTT and other key stakeholders in the multicultural and refugee sectors.
- ▶ Initiating and sponsoring improvements to current practices, as identified by project partners and other pertinent key stakeholders, particularly in relation to pathways to care, shared care co-ordination, working with interpreters and secondary consultation.
- ▶ Assisting mainstream mental health service providers to respond to the needs of people from a refugee background which meets international, Commonwealth, State and Queensland Health strategic direction, legislative and policy requirements.
- ▶ Recruiting and providing needs based training to bilingual/bicultural consultants from refugee communities, particularly African refugee communities in order to build the capacity of the Transcultural Clinical Consultation Service to respond to referrals relating to consumers from refugee backgrounds.
- ▶ Providing needs based training and ongoing support to specialist and mainstream mental health professionals, as well as representatives from key stakeholder agencies.
- ▶ Consult and liaise with refugee communities to build a relationship between mental health services and local communities, as well as ensure that unmet needs and issues are identified.
- ▶ Promoting the partnership between PAHHSD Division of Mental Health, Mater CYMHS, QPASTT, QTMHC and other key stakeholders as a best practice model designed to ensure equitable and culturally appropriate mental health care is accessible to people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, including people from a refugee background.
- ▶ Identifying future priorities and action.
- ▶ Providing links to related projects.

This project is an adjunct to a previous project, the *Early Intervention and Clinical Care Project for Refugees on Temporary Protection Visas*. The scope of this project has however been broadened to include all people from a refugee background within the PAH and Mater Mental Health Service catchment areas.

For further information please contact:-

Lara Denman

Project Co-ordinator

Email: lara_denman@health.qld.gov.au

News in brief

BRiTA PS. Work is currently underway to adapt the BRiTA (building resilience in transcultural adolescents program) to primary school aged children aged 9, 10 and 11. The adapted program called BRiTA PS will be piloted in schools in the Geebung Education District during term 3 of 2005. This phase of BRiTA PS is being conducted in partnership with the QUT Resiliency Project and the Brisbane City Council.

For more information, please contact kate_lemmerle@health.qld.gov.au

Mental Health Inventory in 13 community languages. The consumer self-rated mental health outcome measure, the Mental Health Inventory will shortly be available in Arabic, Farsi, Chinese, Vietnamese, Spanish, Khmer, Serbian, Croatian, Greek, Italian, Samoan, Indonesian and Tagalog. The QTMHC has conducted an extensive process of cultural contextualisation of the inventory through community focus groups and has worked through a translation and back translation process in order to ensure that the validity and intent of the measure is maintained in the translation process.

For more information, please contact penny_d'ath@health.qld.gov.au

Multimedia resources for aged care training. QTMHC will be developing a multimedia resource to complement the transcultural aged mental health training module which is in its final stages of development. The multimedia resource will focus on cross-cultural practice issues for those working with older people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

For further information please contact penny_d'ath@health.qld.gov.au

Framework for the implementation of the National Mental Health Plan 2003-2008 in multicultural Australia.

This framework was released by the Commonwealth Government at the end of 2004 to complement and expand on existing mental health policies, in particular the National Mental Health Plan 2003-2008. The framework acknowledges that despite increased awareness of the issues that impact on the mental health of migrants and refugees, that CALD people remain a population group that requires special attention within the current policy frameworks. The framework provides strategies for government and non-government organisations across the health and community sectors, to meet nationally accepted standards of service delivery and workforce practice in the provision of culturally competent and appropriate services.

Hard copies of the framework can be obtained from the National Mental Health Strategy Information Line 1800 066 247 or can be downloaded as a PDF file from www.mmha.org.au

TCCS update. TCCS has worked in partnership with the refugee project to recruit and train more bilingual mental health consultants to work with consumers from refugee backgrounds, particularly from African backgrounds. In addition, TCCS will be providing training over the coming months for all its bilingual mental health consultants on documentation and use of its assessment tool.

Cross-cultural perspectives in mental health seminars

<i>Filipino community's perspective</i>	10am - 12 noon	Thursday 14th April 2005
<i>Sudanese community's perspective</i>	10am - 12 noon	Tuesday 7th June 2005
<i>Bosnian community's perspective</i>	10am - 12 noon	August 2005 (Date to be confirmed)

To register your interest or to organise videoconferencing to sites across Queensland, please contact the Qld Transcultural Mental Health Centre on (07) 3240-2833.

What's on.....

20th - 22nd April 2005 - Australian Women's Health Conference: Reflecting on gender, confronting the evidence.

Venue: Carlton Crest Hotel, Melbourne, Australia. For more information, email: awhn@meetingplanners.com.au.

28th - 29th April 2005 - 10th National Conference of the Association for the Welfare of Child Health. Healthy solutions for children: Making the right choice.

Venue: Parramatta, NSW, Australia. For more information, Ph. (02) 4572-3079 or email: sharyn@mob.com.au.

1st - 3rd June 2005 - 5th Nordic Health Promotion Research Conference 2005.

Venue: Esbjerg, Denmark. For more information, email: 5nhprc@health.sdu.dk

23rd - 24th June 2005 - Respecting cultural diversity: innovations in healthcare delivery.

Venue: Hilton on the Park, Melbourne, Australia. For more information, Ph. (02) 4924-0900 or email: admin@archi.net.au.

7th - 9th July 2005 - Before the Bough Breaks: Working with infants, families and communities. Australian Association for Infant Mental Health

Venue: Gardens Point Campus, Qld University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia. For more information, Email: aaimh2005@qut.edu.au.

12th - 16th September 2005 – International Association for Suicide Prevention: XXIII Congress.

Venue: Durban, South Africa. For more information, email: iasp2005@ukzn.ac.za.

17th - 19th October 2005 – Diversity in Health 2005.

Venue: Hilton on the Park, Melbourne, Australia. For more information, Ph. (03) 9457-7130 or email: info@amf.net.au.

LAST CALL FOR REGISTRATIONS!

Introduction to Transcultural Mental Health

Negotiating and problem solving towards positive mental health outcomes is challenging at the best of times! Culture and language differences add another layer of complexity to ordinary processes. Considering how language and culture permeates all facets of our lives, failing to factor these issues in creates headaches for everyone involved.

We all know our community is diverse, so “*Introduction to Transcultural Mental Health*” is a great place for workers to start accounting for that diversity in their practice and clinical reasoning. But you’ll have to get in quick!

The course is a series of eight interactive “train the trainer” day workshops complete with training notes, power point presentation and handouts.

1. Cultural Factors in Mental Health and Mental Illness (8 March)
2. Language Matters in Mental Health Care (9 March)
3. Transcultural Assessment & Diagnosis (5 April)
4. Transcultural Treatment Issues (6 April)
5. Migration & Settlement Issues in Mental Health (3 May)
6. Developing Culturally Responsive Mental Health Services (4 May)
7. Acculturative Stress, Trauma and Mental Health (7 June)
8. Transcultural Issues in Child & Youth Mental Health (8 June)

Participants may enrol in any or all of the workshops as a UQ elective postgraduate subject or for professional development. The course is free for Queensland Health staff or \$110 (incl GST) per module for external agencies.

For learning objective, handbook and registration form, contact:-

Ms Clarissa Wilson

Education & Development Co-ordinator

Email: clarissa_wilson@health.qld.gov.au

Queensland Multicultural Mental Health Plan 2003-2008

The QTMHC is currently undertaking a range of activities relating to scoping and analysing the resource and service impacts of the **Queensland Multicultural Mental Health Plan 2003-2008** which was endorsed by Queensland Health last year. The major thrust of the plan is the provision of support by QTMHC to District Mental Health Services to enable them to provide equitable services to our multicultural communities throughout Queensland.

Service responsiveness to cultural diversity is generally informed by service utilisation rates and local demographics. There is now a considerable body of evidence which shows that people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds have considerably lower rates of mental health service utilisation when compared to non-CALD. However, the fact that people don't utilise a service does not necessarily mean that a need does not exist. Rates of service utilisation are only a part of the picture and can give a false picture of service need. Identifying population need within a population health approach and examination of local demographics is also required. The *Queensland Health Strategic Plan 2004-2010* requires District Health Services to examine the cultural demographics and ensure that service planning, development and delivery reflects these demographics. Current research being undertaken by QTMHC shows a negative disparity between cultural demographics and service utilisation rates for most Health Service Districts across Queensland, as well as under-representation in the continuum of mental health interventions, from maintaining mental health to dealing with serious mental illness.

The purpose of the *Queensland Multicultural Mental Health Plan 2003-2008* is to outline specific areas of action required in Queensland, in line with the *Queensland Mental Health Strategic Plan 2003-2008*, to promote inclusion and prevent exclusion of people from CALD backgrounds in the provision of mental health care and the promotion of their mental health and wellbeing.

The key priority areas in transcultural mental health in Queensland for 2003-2008 are:

- Improved data collection systems
- Development of a needs based planning and funding formula accurately reflecting population needs across district mental health services.
- Building the evidence on culturally appropriate strategies for mental health promotion and prevention and increasing networks to undertake mental health promotion and prevention in CALD communities.
- Workforce development and cultural competency
- CALD consumer and carer participation
- Culturally appropriate clinical care and co-ordination and integration of care

For more information on the the *Queensland Multicultural Mental Health Plan 2003-2008*, contact:

Mr Greg Turner
Statewide Project Officer
Email: greg_turner@health.qld.gov.au

Mental health week 2004

In keeping with the themes of Mental Health Week which were about "exploring the wisdom within" and exploring the relationship between physical and mental health the QTMHC in partnership with Harmony Place worked with the nine communities involved in the community participation project to host a forum where each of the communities presented their community cultural approaches to staying mentally healthy. In addition the forum also heard from a number of guest presenters about the key themes of the day.



Above: The Chinese community displaying Yuanji dancing, a set of movements that combine Yuanji static and dynamic Qigong.



Above: The Sudanese community showcased a traditional dance which signifies strength, inner wisdom and good health.



Above: The Arabic-speaking community showcased belly-dancing.

QTMHC Library new additions

Books

Brisbane City Council. (2004) *Islam in Brisbane*. Brisbane City Council: Brisbane: 12. (ISLA.4)

Chown, P., Kang, M., Bennett, D. and Sanci, L. (2004) *Adolescent health. Enhancing the skills of general practitioners in caring for young people from culturally diverse backgrounds. A resource kit for GPs*. Transcultural Mental Health Centre NSW: NSW Centre for the Advancement of Adolescent Health: North Parramatta: 112. (ADOL.6)

Drozd, E., Szczepanska, E. and Wiench, M. (2004) *The understanding and prevalence of depression in the Polish community*. Australian-Polish Community Services Inc: Melbourne: 14. (POLI.4)

Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission. (2004) *A last resort? A summary guide to the National Inquiry into Children in Immigration Detention*. Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission: Sydney: 72. (CHIL.19)
www.humanrights.gov.au/human_rights/children_detention_report

Lemerle, K. (2004) *Promoting mental health & resilience in young people from culturally & linguistically diverse backgrounds: A self-directed learning program for school-based youth health nurses*. Qld Transcultural Mental Health Centre: Brisbane: (FOLDER 31)

Multicultural Mental Health Australia, National Ethnic Disability Alliance, Australian Mental Health Consumer Network and Commonwealth Department of Health & Ageing. (2004) *Reality check: culturally diverse mental health consumers speak out*. Multicultural Mental Health Australia: Parramatta, NSW: 26. (REAL.1)

Multicultural Mental Health Australia. (2004) *In their own right: Assessing the needs of carers in diverse communities*. Commonwealth Dept of Health & Ageing: Canberra: 50. (CARE.8)

National Multicultural Mental Health Policy Development Steering Group and Multicultural Mental Health Australia. (2004) *Framework for the implementation of the National Mental Health Plan 2003-2008 in multicultural Australia*. National Mental Health Strategy, Canberra: Canberra: 55. (NATI.9)

Nastasi, B.K., Moore, R.B. and Varjas, K. (2004) *School-based mental health services: creating comprehensive and culturally specific programs*. American Psychological Association: Washington DC: 232. (SCHO.3)

Ramirez, E. (2004) *Report on the Mental Health Week 2004 event: Exploring the wisdom within cultures*. Qld Transcultural Mental Health Centre & Multicultural Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing Inc: Brisbane: 19+. (MENT.17)

Seabrooke, V. and Milne, A. (2004) *Culture and care in dementia. A study of the Asian community in North West Kent*. Alzheimer's and Dementia Support Services & The Mental Health Foundation: UK: 57. (DEME.1) www.mentalhealth.org.uk/

Audio visual

Goldie, D. and Dahdal, S. (CD016) *Long journey...young lives*. Australian Film Commission and Media: Australia. (English) (CD016)

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. (2004) *Ismae - Listen: National consultations on eliminating prejudice against Arab and Muslim Australians*. (English, Arabic) (CD015) www.humanrights.gov.au/racial_discrimination/isma/index.html

North East Region Migrant Resource Centre. (VID085) *Through our eyes: Aragtidayada*. (Somali, English) (VID085)

Qld Transcultural Mental Health Centre. (Vid087) *Exploring the wisdom within cultures: Mental Health Week 2004*. (English) (Vid087)

Qld Transcultural Mental Health Centre and QPASTT. (2004) *Effort program: Men's exercise program*. (English) (CD014)

Vivienne, S. (VID086) *Mo Long Voi Nhau: Opening our hearts. May our love bring us together. The art of making families work*. Vietnamese Community in Australia: Woodville: SA. (English, Vietnamese) (VID086)

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