

Service User-Led Healthcare Provider

Education Programme

Welcome to our second newsletter for 2018. In this newsletter we would like to introduce some of the **World of Difference** education team, responsible for delivering the new service-user led, contact-based healthcare education programme to 5th year undergraduate medical students, 6th year trainee interns, and 1st and 2nd stage and senior psychiatric registrars. The primary aim of our programme is to counter discrimination and promote recovery, social inclusion and respect for human rights of people who experience mental distress.

Our Education Team



Andrew McGregor

Kia ora, I'm Andrew McGregor. I have been working in the mental health field for a little over 10 years as a peer in crisis services and currently as a facilitator/peer educator where I work with people who experience mental distress and/or addictions and the wider community to counteract stereotypes, break down barriers and build up people's resilience, tools, sense of belonging, purpose and overall wellbeing.

I really wanted to be a part of the **World of Difference** project for two reasons. Firstly, to play a small part in breaking down stereotypes and changing attitudes which hopefully in turn will have some impact on the interactions and relationships future service users have, and secondly to challenge myself as a facilitator by delivering this material to students in the 'clinical realm'.

The biggest highlight for me, along with meeting the other peers in the project has been being a part of something that I see has the potential to shape services in the future, be it in a small part.

Clarissa Chandrahasen

As well as working in mental health as a consumer advisor, Clarissa Chandrahasen is an award-winning theatre-maker. Her debut solo show, *Committed*, is about her experience in the mental health system. Clarissa also regularly appears on Wellington stages as a stand-up comedian. Clarissa's academic background includes a degree in biomedical science and a graduate diploma in psychology.





Leo McIntyre

I was excited about the opportunity to work with medical students because they will powerfully influence the future of our health care services. Using the power of contact to connect with clinicians early in their careers will enable better understanding and more responsive and supportive services. I believe engaging with them in a learning environment will be the most effective way of influencing attitudes and behaviour. Providing a human rights-based perspective on the experience of mental distress and using services seems to work really

well.

The most encouraging event to date for me has been learning from the students that person-centred practice is at the core of their education overall. This was a key aim for some of the pioneering consumer advocates I worked with 15 years ago who are no longer with us, and is very gratifying to witness.

Scott Savidge

I do this work as part of my recovery and because I believe my experience has value. It's an opportunity to engage with people who will soon be in positions of power, and to remind them of their responsibility to our shared humanity.

A highlight of program for me is the positive feedback from participants and the collegiality of my fellow educators.



Serra Clark

I'm Serra Clark, a 37 year old first time mum, long time cat mum and social worker living on the peaceful Kapiti Coast. Having so much space around us and the ocean right here is such a big part of living a well life for me. Before my motherhood journey I worked at MIX, where we welcomed the medical students to come and learn about recovery and mental distress in a community setting where the staff are people with lived experience of distress. Returning to work I knew I needed less working hours, with more family time and this opportunity was perfect. I am still able to use my lived experiences

to hopefully benefit our new doctors and service users. It gives a purpose to all of the really difficult times. Over these years I have noticed such a shift in answers when we ask the students why they wanted to study medicine and if their reasons are still the same. Their answers now include their learning about patient centred treatment and the human side of medicine.





Suzy Stevens

Whether they are going to become general practitioners or specialise in another field, perhaps even psychiatry, it's really crucial for medical students to receive excellent training on mental distress from the perspective of those of us who experience it. They need to be able to empathise with us, understand what the impact of mental distress and discrimination can have on our lives and afford us the same respect as they expect to receive. These are some of the areas I teach when I facilitate training with them.

During the training sessions I have witnessed many of the students really grasping what recovery means and seen them develop the format for a recovery service that they would be proud to deliver/work in.

Treena Martin

Hi, my name is Treena Martin. I am very interested in sharing my experiences to facilitate learning around mental health distress. I have been a service user since I was a teenager, and have worked in Mental Health services for twenty years. I feel passionate about influencing attitudes in a positive way.



The highlight for me about training others, is when people are given the freedom to ask questions they would not usually have the opportunity to ask.

There are so many myths about living with mental health distress. If we can stand and present our story from a place of recovery, we can give a very powerful message that recovery is possible.



Our Research Team

We would also like to introduce the new *World of Difference* service user research team based in the Department of Psychological Medicine at the University of Otago Wellington, some of whom are also educators of medical students, psychiatric registrars and the police.



Dr Sarah Gordon (Project Lead / Senior Research Fellow)

Sarah's personal experience of mental illness shaped her university study with the areas of psychology, medical law, bioethics and psychological medicine being the focus through to PhD level. Combining this theoretical education and personal experience, Sarah has spent the last 20 years working and advocating for an improved mental health sector and societal perceptions of mental health from the perspective of a person who personally experiences mental illness. Her recent research has focused on two themes, reducing discrimination associated with mental illness among medical students and the Police and promoting recovery-focused services and resources, in line with the recent major reorientation of service delivery models in mental health in New Zealand and internationally. As a service user academic, she has done this through service user-led and co-produced research that involves meaningful service user involvement in all conceptual and developmental stages of the process, which has also been another research focus. Sarah has promoted the growth of the service user academia discipline in various ways and now has the support of four others who make up New Zealand's only service user academia team at the University of Otago, Wellington.

Rachel Tester (Programme Manager / Research Fellow)

Rachel currently works in two departments at the University of Otago Wellington: Primary Health Care & General Practice where she is a member of the Applied Research on Communication in Healthcare (ARCH) group, and Psychological Medicine where she is a member of the new service user research group *World of Difference*. Rachel completed her BSc and GradDipSci qualifications in psychology (social discursive) and uses her personal lived experience to inform her work. She has an interest in Jungian analysis and recovery from psychological trauma, and has been involved in several research projects with a mental health and addictions focus. Rachel is passionate about the power of story and personal narratives to help raise awareness about the social, cultural and political drivers of mental distress.





Dasha Fedchuk (Assistant Programme Manager / Assistant Research Fellow)

Having completed her MSc (Psychology) in 2017, Dasha is now employed by the university where she is a member of the **World of Difference** service user research group, and by Kites as a service user educator of medical students. Dasha operates from a service user-led perspective, which underpins her research and informs her work. Her previous qualitative research focused on understanding the mechanisms of non-

suicidal self-injury in members of LGBTQ communities. Passionate about changing damaging ideologies and stigmatising rhetoric, a common objective within her work is in improving approaches used by health professionals and other support services towards people experiencing mental distress. Her previous work experience involves working alongside vulnerable youth, peer support for individuals with lived experience of mental distress, and work with rainbow communities of Wellington. She is also interested in suicide prevention, and advocacy for service user employment in influential roles of both academia and the mental health sector.

Jeremy Tumoana (Service User Lead Responsiveness to, and inclusiveness of, Māori)

Jeremy (*Ngariki Kauputahi, Ngati Porou, Tuhoē*) works primarily for regional DHB Mental Health and Addiction management, and has a lived personal experience of recovery in which he applies in his work. Jeremy's personal and professional experience, including continuous research in the application of tikanga Māori models of health, is a key focus of interest to a wide range of research projects including anti-stigma and discrimination education programmes.



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