

* Arts Therapy-changes to systems through alternative health and wellness



Priority Areas for System Change agreement between MDHS & funding body GPIR	
1	Improve the interface between clinical and community mental health services
2	Improve the physical health and dental health outcomes of the GPIR target group
3	Increase access for those living rurally or remotely with mental illness
4	Increase the capacity of the service sector to respond to members of the local refugee community with mental illness
5	Building the capacity of GPIR clients to manage their self-care, including psychological distress
6	Building the capacity of GPIR clients to attend day programs

Methodology

- Social science research analysis of both regions by Department of Rural Health The University of Melbourne Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10) found a quarter of respondents experience moderate (16%) or high (10%) levels of psychological distress. (2)
- Central Victorian Primary Care Partnership (CVPCP) found Persons with a high/very high degree of psychological distress 20.3% Central Goldfields, compared to the state average. (3,4)
- Community consultations raised concerns regarding local access to services supports and advocacy for their chronic health conditions. (5)
- Wellness Centre proposal for MDHS communities to provide information support and alternative therapies locally. Committee formed and fundraising began in earnest to open a space in Maryborough. Officially opened in September by the Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews in Sept 2015.
- Pilot Arts Therapy program 6 weeks August-Sept 2015 indicated positive benefits for participants.
- Grant funding application to support and facilitate continuation of the Arts Therapy program for local communities. Commenced in Jan 2016 ongoing.

Outcomes

- Weekly Arts Therapy programs for people with chronic and persistent mental illness at MDHS Wellness Centre and township of Avoca outer most town in the region.
- Improved Case Coordination between clinical and community mental health services and other community supports to deliver 'wrap around' individual care.
- Better working relationships with mental health teams and participants GP's.
- Participants facilitated access to all community health programs such as physical fitness, dental health, mindfulness relaxation, tai chi, community nursing, dietetics, physiotherapy. Most programs are offered in the Wellness Centre, promoting connections with the community giving opportunities for other social connections.
- Arts Therapy has been evaluated to enhance participants capacity to manage their self care, including psychological distress by working through challenges, developing better coping skills to manage emotions and feelings, which leads to emotional regulation, resilience and self-actualization.

Summary

- Arts Therapy program aims and priority areas for systems changes have been achieved by; strengthening partnerships with regional organisations, including mental health services, clinical and community support organisations responsible for delivering services to the Arts Therapy target group. Improved referral pathways that facilitate access to a broad range of services and supports for participants.
- Arts Therapy promotes a community based recovery model that underpins all clinical and community support services delivered to people experiencing severe and persistent mental illness with complex needs.

ARTS THERAPY DVD PRESENTATION 2016



References:
 (1) Commonwealth of Australia. CommunityMatters: Working with Diversity for Wellbeing. Carlton South (AU): Curriculum Corporation;2001.
 (2) Health in Central Goldfields Community Report. Department of Rural Health. Vic. The University of Melbourne. 2015. 8 p.
 (3) Central Victorian Primary Care Partnership. CVPCP Health & Wellbeing Profile-Updated September 2016. (internet) Vic. 2016
 (4) Community Needs Analysis Grampians Pyrenees Summary. Grampians Medicare Local. 2016. Report. 4 p.
 (5) Community Services Client Experience Survey 2014. Maryborough District Health Service. Vic. Report 1 p.