Helen Le Gresley

Helen Le Gresley is a team member from the Rural Adversity Mental Health Program of the University of Newcastle’s Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health (CRRMH).

The Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health is based in Orange and is a major rural initiative of the University of Newcastle, Faculty of Health, and the NSW Ministry of Health. CRRMH aims to bring quality education and research programs to all rural areas of NSW through effective partnerships. The Centre improves the mental health of rural and remote communities through academic leadership, collaboration and achievements in research, education, service development and information services.

The Rural Adversity Mental Health Program (RAMHP) is managed by the Centre and commenced in 2007. The key aim of the program is to build individual and community capacity that supports the mental health and wellbeing of rural and remote communities during periods of adversity. RAMHP emphasises building community resilience through partnerships with local services and agencies in alignment with the aims of the CRRMH.

Helen is a research associate with RAMHP, undertaking research projects that inform the program’s capacity to support the mental health and wellbeing of rural and remote communities during times of adversity.

With over 15 years’ experience as a community psychology practitioner, Helen has worked in both the UK and Australia in a number of sectors including not-for-profit, private equity, secondary and tertiary education, and local government. These roles have spanned a number of diverse areas including communications and web design, community cultural development, strategic planning and lecturing, and all have shared a focus on inclusive, strengths-based and participatory methods.

As an emerging researcher Helen favours the development of socially relevant, co-constructed knowledge which encourages shared and mutual learning and delivers authentic and meaningful outcomes for the participants and broader community. Her Masters thesis focused on the social construction of fatherhood, inspired by her time working with families at a family resource centre in Western Australia. In the near future Helen hopes to embark on a PhD exploring the facilitation of empowering community settings in the area of mental health and wellbeing.

She is a member of the Australian Psychological Society and the Society for Community Research in Action (Division 27 of the American Psychological Association).