

Standardisation of Residential Services

Last year, the Tresillian Council approved the standardisation of Tresillian's residential services to a 4-night, 5-day program. Tresillian Willoughby will continue to be Monday to Friday, however our Centres at Canterbury and Nepean will remain operating 7 days a week and take admissions every day, but the program will be 4-nights and 5-days.

The rationale for the standardisation of residential programs within Tresillian was:

- To establish a pattern of continuity across residential services
- Facilitate increased admissions to the service by the reduction of program

length and facilitating effective utilization of existing beds.

Planning for the implementation occurred between June and December 2006 with a planned commencement date of 8th January, 2007. This allowed for the promotion of the transition to health professionals and families.

All policies and procedures relating to residential services were reviewed. All services; nursing, social work, psychologists, clerical, cleaning and catering practices were reviewed to ensure that a standardised service with increased throughput of clients could be managed. We are hoping that

Canterbury Residential will increase its throughput by 42-45% and Nepean by 21-23%.

While we have standardised the Residential Stays at Tresillian to a 4-night, 5-day program, families who require an extended stay are able to do so after assessment by clinical staff.

An extensive evaluation process is in place until June. This includes a Client Satisfaction survey, a Staff Survey and an Outcomes Study. At this early stage there is one notable identifiable outcome, a definite decrease in the waiting list, which can only be a benefit to families.

Tresillian introduces Centralised Intake

Last year the Tresillian Council gave approval for Tresillian to proceed with a Centralised Intake System for the Outreach, Day Stay and Residential services across Tresillian's four Centres.

The rationale for this proposal was:

- To provide a single entry system into the organisation for all referrers.
- Ensure a more effective utilisation of existing financial and human resources
- Allow consistency in management for intake staff.

A working party was formed to plan for the implementation of a Centralised Intake service.

During the planning phase, clinical staff were involved in reviewing policies, procedures and clinical practice to incorporate a Centralised Intake system. A communication strategy was developed to inform health professionals of the new referral pathway to Tresillian and this involved the introduction of a new referral form.

The Centralised Intake System commenced on 12th February 2007. Initially there were some difficulties however these have been worked

through and now referrals are coming in at a regular rate.

A continual evaluation process is in place and adjustments to the system are ongoing.

Tresillian Council and the Executive

Management Committee would like to thank all staff who have worked tirelessly to ensure a smooth transition of both the new Centralised Intake System and the changes to the delivery of residential service.

Education packages for Staff

To enhance our clinicians' skills, the Education & Research Unit have worked collaboratively with management including the Clinical Nurse Consultant, to develop a 2 day education package. These packages will be delivered to staff throughout 2007 in a series of workshops.

To ensure all staff are given an opportunity to attend, each package will be repeated three times at Canterbury, Willoughby and Nepean.

The program consists of two separate sections:

1. **Keys to Care Giving** covers newborn infant behaviour and its effect on caregiver-infant interaction and gives clinicians ways to effectively translate this knowledge to parents.

2. **Mental Health for Child and Family Health Clinicians** which introduces staff to the concept of mental health and psychosocial assessment. It introduces skills in mental state examination, addressing the specific needs of mothers who have or are at risk of experiencing mental health issues especially depression. This program also covers risk assessment and management when a parent becomes acutely unwell and provides helpful resources for nurses in the discharge process. All Tresillian staff are encouraged to attend these workshops.

Partnership in Practice Conference

3, 4 & 5 May 2007

Darling Harbour, Sydney

Planning for the *Partnership in Practice* Conference is in its final stages. Delegate registrations have nearly reached the cut off point as there are now almost 700 registrations. This large number of delegates is very exciting for child and family health nursing as this is sure to be an Australian record for the number of Child and Family Health Nurses at the one conference. No doubt there will be a wonderful buzz in the air as we all come together to learn and have fun.

This Conference has been a partnership between the Australian Association for Maternal, Child and Family Health Nurses (AAMC&FH), Karitane and Tresillian Family Care Centres. The Child and Family Health Nurses Association NSW (Inc) have been responsible for representing AAMC&FH on the organising committee. The planning process has been guided by a conference organiser.

There have been two committees

responsible for the conference planning. The management committee consisting of C&FHNA representatives Jenni Jones, Jennifer Reed (treasurer), Virginia Hunter, from Karitane Robert Mills, Monica Hughes and Vicki Samson, and from Tresillian David Hannaford, Ann Paton and Cathrine Fowler. The management committee is responsible for the major decisions of venue, food, entertainment, conference dinner and sponsorship. Jennifer Reed has had the very difficult job of keeping the account books and asking the hard questions about how the money is being spent. Jenni Jones has worked hard as the chair keeping the rest of us in line and making sure decisions are made and kept. Thank you Jennifer and Jenni.

The Content Committee has been responsible for the Conference program. This committee chaired by Prof Catherine Fowler, was responsible for reading over 120 submitted abstracts for the con-

current sessions and making the very difficult decisions about who would speak and who would be offered the opportunity to display a poster. The quality of abstracts was extremely high which made the culling process even harder. As you can imagine many hours were spent completing these tasks, often in the committee member's own time. The committee was Cathrine Fowler Carolyn Briggs, Deborah Nemeth, Jenni Jones, Heather Mackinnon (rural representative), Monica Hughes, and Virginia Hunter. Remember to check the conference website on <http://www.corporatecommunique.com.au/partners/> for information on the conference program (plenary and concurrent sessions).

The conference dinner is shaping up to be a wonderful party and celebration for conference delegates. The Bollywood theme will provide lots of colour, music and dancing. A special ticket will be provided to ensure everyone becomes part of the overall experience.

Clinical Supervision at Tresillian

As part of current trends in quality improvement to service provision, Tresillian Family Care Centres is supporting nursing staff by providing opportunities to access group clinical supervision.

This is an exciting development for nursing staff working within Tresillian and currently six external facilitators and three internal facilitators provide group supervision for more than sixty nurses across the organisation. The feedback from the staff has been extremely positive.

What is clinical supervision?

Clinical supervision is a voluntary, formal process of professional support and learning which enables clinicians to assume responsibility for their own practice. It is carried out in a confidential relationship between a group of clinicians and a skilled facilitator encouraging staff to reflect on their professional practice, furthering their understandings of themselves, their impact of interactions and relationships with clients while simultaneously supporting and challenging each other. It focuses on identifying solutions to problems, improving practice, and increasing the clinicians understanding of professional issues therefore enhancing client outcomes.

Congratulations to Ann De Belin

Congratulations to Ann De Belin from Tresillian's Education & Research Unit. Ann was successful in obtaining a NSW Health Mental Health Scholarship to undertake a postgraduate certificate in Adult Mental Health at the Institute of Psychiatry. These scholarships are usually given to mental health nurses who merit support because of their existing good work in mental health. We are very proud of Ann and we also happy to see that even without being recognised and funded as a mental health service, Tresillian's work in this specialist field is being acknowledged.

Developing a Client Outcome Questionnaire

During 2006, a team of Tresillian staff developed and tested a new questionnaire designed to find out how clients fared once they return home from a residential stay.

Although we know from previous surveys that the clients make considerable progress while they are in the residential units, we have less systematic information on whether these improvements are maintained after discharge.

The Tresillian team was taking part in a Clinical Practice Improvement program, run by Sydney South West Area Health Service. They developed a questionnaire, to be completed by clients within the residential unit on three occasions (admission, discharge and 6 weeks after discharge).

The questionnaire consisted of 13 statements and clients were asked to record how often they agreed with each of the statements (ranked from "all of the time" to "never"). Each question was linked to a particular issue such as parent-infant attachment, mental/ emotional health, parental confidence, problem-solving ability and support networks.

The questionnaires were tested with clients admitted to residential units during August 2006. A total of 82 clients completed the questionnaire on all three occasions. Their answers have proven a valuable source of feedback on their experiences once they return home and face the realities of daily routines, domestic life and the developmental milestones that their babies reach.

Clients reported significant improvement during the time they were in the Tresillian unit. More clients, most of the time were happier, more confident and understood their babies better. Fewer reported feeling depressed or anxious. This supports earlier surveys that illustrate the considerable positive impact that the residential program made on their parenting skills.

Many of these changes were maintained once the clients returned home, especially in terms of their knowledge and skills,

parental confidence and competence, emotional health, and some aspect of attachment.

With the other questions, clients' responses were more favourable than they had been at discharge, showing that they continued to "improve". This was the case for several items indicating coping capacity, self-esteem and parental confidence/ competence. Most clients reported feeling happier and less anxious, even compared to their levels at discharge.

In a few cases, clients were coping less well than they were at discharge. Many of these clients had experienced problems once they returned home (such as illness, financial or employment difficulties; several moved or renovated their homes).

However, the team was encouraged that these clients were still faring better than they had been when they were admitted to the residential unit.

The results of the Trial are currently being reviewed by the Tresillian Executive. The findings link to other Tresillian initiatives such as the home visiting program and the implementation of the Keys to Care-Giving program.

Acknowledgements

Tresillian is most grateful to all clients who took the time and the effort to participate in this Trial. The team appreciate the efforts and commitment of the staff at the three residential units who helped in the administration of the Trial.



Messenger Mums Research Grant

Tresillian was successful in its application for a Commonwealth grant of \$50,000 to provide training in mental health issues to Clinicians working with parents on-line.

Nowadays, many parents are choosing to seek help through the internet because it may be more practical, quicker, and more age-appropriate but also because they have the option of remaining anonymous. Some parents have emotional problems that they do not feel comfortable or safe discussing face to face or even over the phone.

Tresillian Clinicians are frequently confronted with parents' emotional distress on-line. They cannot see the upset or depressed mother; they do not know her name or address or the name of her baby. They cannot use their usual counselling skills to pacify, comfort, reassure and guide her through the turmoil. Instead they must use written communication skills to assess the situation accurately, engage with the distressed parent and provide the best intervention in the most sensitive manner to ensure the safety and well being of the family. And all this without frightening the parent who can disconnect at any time without having received vital information that could help them.

The funding will help us not only to adequately educate our staff but it will also enhance Tresillian's expertise and leadership in this new mode of intervention.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE CENTRES

Canterbury

Sadly in Residential, **Julie Hawke** (Mothercraft Nurse) has resigned. Julie was with us for nineteen years. **Sharon Sinclair** (Endorsed Enrolled Nurse) has left for maternity leave. **Pam McLennan** (Nurse Unit Manager) has resigned from her full-time position and is working three days per week as Site Intake Officer.

Nives Crvenkovic has joined our team as part-time Social Worker. Nives works on Saturdays and this has been enthusiastically received by dads and families.

In Day Stay, **Carol Launder** (Nurse Unit Manager) is retiring to be replaced by **Lorraine Palmer**, who previously worked at Hope Cottage.

Welcome to **Jackie Walker** (Registered Nurse) who has commenced working three days per week.

In Outreach, **Karin Birkner-Cochrane** (Registered Nurse) is on maternity leave following the birth of her son, William.

Angela Weremy (Registered Nurse) will complete her Home Visiting Project in May 2007. Angela will take extended leave in April 2007 to travel around Europe and then join our Outreach team.

On the Parents Help Line we welcome two new Registered Nurses: **Shelley Lamotte** and **Ann Fenton**.

Welcome to two new staff members working in Messenger Mums, Registered Nurses **Kathy Chapuis** and **Michelle Leto**.

Welcome to our Acting Centre Manager, **Marianne Blenkhorn** who will cover the Canterbury Centre Manager position for twelve months while **Christine Fraser** enjoys some well earned leave.

Wollstonecraft

Louisa Took has taken on the full-time position of Receptionist / Secretary / Administration Clerk, and has settled well into the position.

Following **Kathy Lascelles** departure for some leisure time in France, **Anne Moore** has now joined us permanently as part of the Outreach team. Upon her return to Australia, **Kathy** will complete a Mental Health Course at Rozelle Hospital.

Occasional Care's **Kim Jarvie** has made the move into Family Day Care, so **Linda Ritchie** has come aboard from Royal North Shore Hospital, to join Maryanne

Willoughby

Willoughby Residential has the following staff completing external studies:

Susan Noisen, Social Worker is continuing with her Masters in Counselling through the University of New England; **Jane Bodnar**, EN is in her second year, of a Graduate Diploma of Infant Mental Health through the Institute of Psychiatry;

Sue Gray RN has commenced a Graduate Certificate in Child and adolescent Mental Health Through the University of Technology and **Sue Mansfield** RN is continuing with a Bachelor degree of Psychology with Honours at the University of New England.

Nepean

A welcome addition to our staff team at Nepean is **Susan deWindt** as the Centralised Intake Officer, Sue brings with her many years of experience. We sadly farewell **Sharon Booth** who was the Psychologist seconded whilst **Kerri Fort** was on Maternity Leave. We look forward to Kerri's return from Maternity leave shortly and **Sonja Griggs** also. We welcome back **Karen Blowes** from her long service leave and are delighted to have her back on the team. **Debbie Moon** and **Sharon Ludlow** have taken 12 months leave without pay and we wish them luck in their time away.

Guthrie Child Care Centre

Welcome to **Vanessa Hernandez** as a full-time Early Childhood Teacher in the Bilbies room. Vanessa started on the 2nd April and is already very part of the team. **Katerina Kados** will continue to juggle University and work casually for us. We thank her and **Nicole Pickering**, for the fantastic job they have done in the Bilbies room while we have been searching for an Early Childhood Teacher. **Robin Allen** will continue to be a regular casual for us.

About YOUR NEWSLETTER

If you have anything you would like included in the next newsletter, please contact:

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Tresillian Family Care Centres are located at Belmore, Willoughby, Wollstonecraft and Nepean. For information on services contact our Head Office in McKenzie Street, Belmore, on (02) 9787 0800. Parenting advice is available by calling Tresillians 24 hour Parents Help Line on (02) 9787 0855 or Freecall 1800 637 357 or go online at www.ninemsn/messengermums or visit our website at www.tresillian.net



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