Country activities

Fiji

The new Mental Health Decree 2010 has been endorsed by Cabinet. This legislation stipulates that mental health treatment should be provided in the community, public health services, and general health systems, and includes the implementation of preventive and rehabilitative activities.

World Suicide Prevention Day 2010 was celebrated at the Fiji National University Open Day at its Pasifika Campus.

The Black Dog Institute has conducted CBT workshops with the Fiji College of General Practitioners and the Ministry of Health as part of the next phase of Fiji’s country project. A psychiatric registrar is currently completing a two month clinical attachment in Taiwan and another attended a one-week training course in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry in Mumbai in July this year.

Fiji has also formed a Fiji Association of Mental Health. This organization has not been formally registered yet but Fiji’s First Lady has agreed to become its patron.

Vanuatu

Dr. Jill Benson visited Vanuatu for the third time in July this year to conduct follow-up training in mental health for health workers. Participants were health workers who previously participated in training sessions that were conducted in April and October 2009 by Dr. Benson and Prof. Dimity Pond.
During this visit, Jill provided training on diagnostic and therapeutic skills for use in community-based services, and support for participants on clinical and other issues arising in their daily work environment. Jill has also helped to establish a group of local health professionals who can be involved in mentoring and teaching others, with strategic input from overseas health professionals.

Jill noted that participants were successfully implementing the skills learnt in training, and that their enthusiasm for mental health was evident in their clinical work, outreach activities, ongoing training of other professionals, and their desire to learn more about mental health.

Samoa

Dr David Chaplow attended the opening of the Goshen Trust in Samoa and provided the following description of the event.

“On the 17th September 2010 the ‘blessing ceremony’, to mark the establishment of Goshen Trust Samoa, took place in Apia, Samoa.

Goshen is a mental health (and addictions) NGO that will work in cooperation with the government provided mental health and addiction services in Samoa under the Samoa Umbrella of NGOs (SUNGO).

The blessing service was short but powerful. It was ably chaired by MC Tafuamaseufa Aloniu Breda Faitaua. The first speaker was His Highness, Head
of State, and Patron of Goshen, Le Afioga Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Ta'isi Efi. Other speakers were from Penina Trust (Auckland, NZ), Takanga a Fohe (Auckland, NZ), Ministry of Health (NZ), SUNGO and Samoa Families. Clergy officiated. Savea Fuatavai Tutogi Too (CEO, Goshen Trust) spoke movingly of her vision, the Samoa government provision of a cluster of five houses for the project, and of the challenges ahead.

Samoa government support for the project was further evidenced by the presence of the government Minister of Health Her Honourable Gatoloai Amataga Tofilau Gidlow at the blessing.

The blessing emphasised the importance of government services and community NGOs working hand-in-hand in the service of the mentally unwell not only in the assessment and treatment of disturbed individuals but in the education and support of those who are recovering from illness and disability and of their village-based families.

A remark stayed in my mind, "...in the decades past the emphasis was on infectious diseases; in the coming days the emphasis will now be on NCDs (diabetes, blood pressure, obesity etc) and on the mental health of the nation."

Truly, there is no health without mental health!

Our prayers and support go to Tutogi (CEO of Goshen) and her Board of Governance as they begin this important work."

Cook Islands

During November, Dr Deva Parameshvara was engaged as a consultant to train doctors and nurses in primary care mental health and to provide clinical support and supervision. He was supported by PIMHnet Facilitator Dr Frances Hughes. A range of participants attended the training, including health professionals, prison staff, the police, and NGOs. This training had a significant impact on attitudes and perceptions of mental health issues. An emergency nurse made the following comment after completing the training:

“now that I know more about people with mental illness, I won’t feel scared if someone comes in who is agitated and odd, and run away like I have done in the past”.

During the training, the Cook Islands media conducted a radio interview with Dr. Deva about mental health.
Graduates from the training with Rangi Fariu (PIMHnet Focal Contact for Cook Islands), Dr Frances Hughes, and Dr Deva Parameshvara

The Te Kainga Day Centre opened in May 2010 and has been a great success thanks to the great work by Mereana Taikoko, Te Kainga and friends and family. They have a stall at a local market, which is doing well selling products made by mental health service users and families in order to raise funds for Te Kainga

T-shirt stall at the Saturday market
On World Mental Health Day the Centre arranged a Suicide Prevention Campaign. The Centre sold t-shirts and arranged awareness activities, such as talk shows and press coverage about the mental health workshops that have recently taken place.

Members of the Centre also participated in an income generation programme, through collecting shells from the beach to sell. Other activities for members include group therapy, singing, cooking, and craft work.

**Collaborative partners update**

**Black Dog Institute**

The Black Dog Institute won an AusAID Australia Leadership grant to conduct training in mood disorders during October this year in Australia. A total of 10 fellows participated, representing 6 countries, including – Fiji, FSM, Kiribati, Niue, Samoa and Vanuatu. Two of our national focal contacts for PIMHnet – Keti Fereti from Niue, and Dr Amelia Andrews from Fiji, are participating in the training.

The launch function took place on 11 October at which Keti Fereti was able to speak and introduce the role and function of PIMHnet.
The WHO Pacific Islands Mental Health Network (PIMHnet)

Keti Fereti, Niue NFC with Ilse Blignault, Manager Developing Countries Project BDI

Fiji training participants at the launch with WHO Consul
New National Cultural Competency Tool for mental health service providers

Multicultural Mental Health Australia has developed a new resource to help service providers meet the mental health needs of consumers and carers from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

The ability to work within a transcultural framework is becoming increasingly important in the Australian mental health sector. This is due to the fact that more than 60% of immigrants to Australia come from a non-English speaking country, and more than 15% of Australians speak a language other than English.

The National Cultural Competency Tool (NCCT) for Mental Health Services is designed for all mental health service providers in all Australian states and territories, including service providers in the private and mainstream sector, as well as non-government service providers funded to deliver mental health programs.

The NCCT is a practical resource to support organizations to improve their cultural competency and is aligned with the Australian Government’s new National Standards for Mental Health Services, one of which relates to Diversity Responsiveness. It includes a set of National Cultural Competency Standards and a range of practical aids and strategies, including an organisational self-assessment checklist.

The NCCT’s self-assessment checklist will help service providers to effectively address and monitor the needs of the local CALD population. It will also help them to routinely incorporate cultural diversity principles in strategic planning, facilitate compliance with national accreditation standards, and improve risk management by ensuring culturally appropriate supports are in place for clients from CALD backgrounds.

If you are interested in more information:
Please fax your details to +61 2 9840 3388 or email: joyce.broughton@swahs.health.nsw.gov.au.
A PDF copy of the NCCT can be downloaded from Multicultural Mental Health Australia’s website: www.mmha.org.au
MH Gap intervention guide

The Mental Health Gap Action Programme (mhGAP) is WHO's programme to scale up care for mental, neurological and substance use disorders especially in low and middle income countries. WHO asserts that with proper care, psychosocial assistance and medication, tens of millions could be treated for depression, schizophrenia, and epilepsy, prevented from suicide and begin to lead healthy lives— even where resources are scarce.

On World Mental Health Day, WHO launched the mhGAP Intervention Guide (mhGAP-IG), which is available online along with a range of advocacy materials which can be used within countries. The guide for mental, neurological and substance use disorders for non-specialist health settings, is a technical tool developed by WHO to assist in implementation of mhGAP. The guide has been developed through a systematic review of evidence followed by an international consultative and participatory process.

The mhGAP-IG presents integrated management of priority conditions using protocols for clinical decision-making. The mhGAP-IG is a model guide and has been developed for use by health-care providers working in non-specialized health-care settings after adaptation for national and local needs.

The website for mhGAP-IG is:


Country summaries

Country summary documents are being developed for all the PIMHnet countries for posting on the WHO website. The summaries provide a detailed description of each country's mental health system, including contextual influencing factors such as the economic situation and general health system. At present, country summaries for Palau, Nauru and Niue are in the process of development, and
summaries have been completed for Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Samoa, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

**Human Resource and Training Plans**

The human resource and training plans have been completed in most countries and in-country support and training based on the plans is now taking place. Training is planned for the Cook Islands, Palau, Tokelau and the Marshall Islands and will be aligned with the content of the individual plans.

**Progress with new projects / donor funding**

**WHO**

Since the last newsletter, NZAID has indicated it will support funding PIMHnet for a further 3 years. WHO is currently working with NZAID on the funding agreement.

**Journal donation scheme**

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists, the New Zealand College of Mental Health Nurses, and the Australian College of Mental Health Nurses are all participating in a journal donation scheme for PIMHnet and have agreed to donate journals on an ongoing basis to our member countries. We also have a large donation of a range of different mental health journals dating back to 2005, which we will be progressively distributing to countries.

**Memory sticks**

We plan to distribute a range of resources to all countries on memory sticks. Please contact us if there is specific information / resources that you would like included on the memory stick.

Please contact us if you have questions or you need further information:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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