

Bringing it all Together: Cross Sector Partnerships Addressing Women's Mental Health & Family Violence

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Northern Area Mental Health



Northern Centre
Against Sexual Assault

Nth Alliance Self Harm
Suicide Prevention
Strategy (PVCHC)



Women's Health in the North



Neami

Outline

- Background
 - Why
 - Structure
 - How we make it happen
 - Challenges & Opportunities
 - Future Developments
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Terminology

■ **Mental Health Problem**

- Broad range of emotional & behavioural difficulties
- Less severe

■ **Mental Illness**

- A person's **thoughts, feelings & behaviour** cause them or others **distress**

Family Violence

- Physical, sexual, emotional, psychological or economical abuse
 - **Threatening** or **coercive** behavior
 - Behavior that causes a **child to hear or witness** or **be exposed**
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Background

- NAMHS Partnership Project, 2005
 - Building partnerships between mental health, family violence and sexual assault services (DHS, 2006)
 - Integrated FV Service Development in Victoria, 2005/6
 - Family Violence Protection Act 2008
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Why are we doing this work?

Women with MI

- 50-90% abuse histories
 - Sexual abuse: childhood & adulthood
 - Family violence

Women & FV

- Just under half (47.6%) of all abused women: clinical depression (and anxiety)

Herman, 1992; Read, 1997; Golding, 1999; Everett & Gallop, 2001; Campbell, 2002; McLean, 2003; Read et al 2003; Thompson, 2003; Spataro et al, 2004

Mental Health Impact....

■ Family Violence

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Post Traumatic Stress Symptoms/Disorder
- Suicidality
- Drug & Alcohol (problematic dependency)

■ Child (Sexual) Abuse

- Anxiety & Depression
Increase Suicide Attempts
- Eating Disorders
- Post Traumatic Stress & Complex PTSD
Borderline Personality Disorder
- Psychotic Symptoms

Briere, 1997; Campbell, 2002; Goodman et al, 1997; Roberts et al, 1998; Briere & Jordan, 2004; Jones et al 2001; Campbell, 2002; Golding 1999; Briere & Jordan, 2004; Muenzenmaier, 1993; Paolucci, 2001; Read, 2001; Briere, 1994; Zlotnick 2001, Campbell 2002; Matsunga, 1999, Redford, 2001; Herman 1992, Golding, 1999, Leverich, 2002; Everett, 2001, McLean, 2003; Read et al 2003; Campbell, 2002; Thompson, 2003; Spataro et al, 2004; Everett & Gallop, 2001; Read et al, 2003

Consequences

- Contact with MH Services
 - earlier & more frequent
 - Access Acute Mental Health
 - Hospitalisation
 - longer, more frequent, longer time in seclusion
 - Receive more medication
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Specific Issues FV/CSA & Mental Illness

- Heightened vulnerability
 - Revictimisation
 - Disbelief by professionals
 - Access to services (lack of)
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NAMHS Partnership Project

- Provide leadership within local area to improve service access & coordination
 - Support staff in high quality service provision to people with MI & FV/SA experiences
 - Collaborative & Inter-sectorial
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Project Structure

- ❑ Partnership Project Group
 - Management involvement/ownership
 - ❑ Project Plan & Reporting
 - ❑ Working Group
 - ❑ Liaison Group: Psychiatric Inpatient Unit & Nth Centre Against Sexual Assault
 - ❑ Evaluation
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Project Activities (examples)

- Workforce & Resource Development
 - Secondary Consultation & Problem Solving
 - Honours Thesis: MH clinician skills & attitudes
 - Discussion Paper: FV & MH Policy Direction
 - Pilot: FV consultation for MH
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Links / Connection with

- Regional
 - Northern Integrated FV Services
 - State Government
 - Statewide
 - DVVIC (peak body)
 - State Government
 - Advisory & Steering COM
 - Interstate connections
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Making it happen...

- Resources
 - Project management
 - Financial
 - Management involvement
 - Utilising research
 - Building capacity
 - 'Sharing the issues'
 - Embedding into structure & practice
 - Workforce component
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Challenges and opportunities.....

- Working with difference & different paradigms
 - Resource development across sectors
 - Active participation of partnership group members
 - Common purpose and willingness to problem solve
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Future Opportunities

- Secondary consultation - fv for mental health: explore further opportunities



More Future Opportunities

State Government funding provided-enables

- Documentation of Partnership by FV Service
 - Practice Forum for FV Services:
 - current practice on working with women experiencing mental health problems/illness
 - Development of Practice Guidelines for FV

 - **AIM: applicable across state**
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The more whole the service system
is, the better chance the woman has
to be whole.

It is not her responsibility;
she shouldn't bear the split

(DHS 2006: project participant)

Thank you!

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