



WINTER 2019

mind view

Together we do better



How Mind works with its clinical partners

Around Australia, Mind's partnerships with clinical mental health services are improving mental health outcomes for people who are acutely unwell.

These partnerships in residential recovery services are successfully preventing avoidable admissions to inpatient units and reducing the length of inpatient stays. More importantly for the people using these services, they are empowering them to restore and maintain their lives in their communities, and their relationships with family and friends.

But how does Mind work with its clinical partners and how do we ensure that people using our services have safety and security during these critical periods of recovery?

In the beginning

Mind first partnered in residential services 15 years ago, in pilot programs in Bendigo and Mont Albert (Melbourne), which are still operating today. The model was deemed successful and from 2013 new Prevention and Recovery Care (PARC) partnerships were established across Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and Queensland.

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Dear friend,



I am so proud that building partnerships is widely recognised as a particular strength of our organisation. A key exemplar is that we work in tandem with 14 hospital and healthcare services across Australia to provide recovery focused support to people in sub-acute short term residential recovery services.

We feel honoured that more and more clinical mental health services are recognising our expertise and choosing us as their partners.

Most recently, we have been contracted by Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service to deliver support to residents in the Cairns Community Care Unit and the Adult Step Up Step Down service. In addition, we will be delivering outreach to individuals living in the community, and group based support from a new service centre. This means we can provide the Cairns region with mental health support across the spectrum of support needs. We have also been contracted by Queensland Health to deliver individual and group support services from a new centre in Mackay. We are proud to have been entrusted with this responsibility.

Sub-acute residential services – variously called Step Up Step Down

services or Prevention and Recovery Care services – enable people with significant mental health challenges to transition from hospital and go on to live safely and well in the community. Alternatively, a stay in one of these services may prevent symptoms escalating to the point that hospitalisation is required. To achieve this recovery, these services require clinicians and recovery focused staff to work together. This edition of Mind View discusses what Mind has learned in its 15 years pioneering such services, to ensure that today our partnerships are truly complementary, collaborative and well managed from the beginning.

In other news, additional funding has been announced to support the transition of clients from Partners in Recovery, Day to Day Living and Personal Helpers and Mentors support programs. This will provide additional time for people to transition to appropriate ongoing supports, including those who have not yet begun the process to apply for NDIS eligibility, those still in the process of getting the required evidence, and those awaiting advice that their application or plan has been approved. Mind has played an active role in advocating for improved processes for application for eligibility and assessment. We have been very

concerned about the large variations from one area to another in the proportions of people assessed as eligible. We believe the transition funding is critical given the lengthy delays for determination of NDIS eligibility, and the delays in people receiving plans.

Mind has now delivered its submission into the federal government's Productivity Commission Inquiry into the Social and Economic Benefits of Improving Mental Health, and our submission for the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System. Mind and Wellways collaborated on state-wide community consultations to give consumers, families, carers and friends an opportunity to have their say on the reforms needed in Victoria's mental health systems. Both organisations have used the experiences and insights shared in the consultations to inform our submissions to the Royal Commission.

Warm regards,

Robyn Hunter
Chief Executive Officer



'One team, one plan': Mind Service Manager Andree Sellars (L) and Monash Health Senior Clinician Coordinator Katie McKibbin (R) at YPARC Dandenong.

Mind's 'one team, one plan' model recognises that clinical treatment and personal recovery models have their differences but are complementary.

As Hugo Steinbergs, the Service Operations Manager of Mind's Sub-Acute Residential Partnership Services for Victoria, explains, time and experience have been the key to creating a practice model in which clinical and recovery focused approaches are complementary.

"The early PARCs used to be run like we were two different services. It would be 'go and see the clinical staff for this' or 'go and see the Mind staff for the other stuff', but we have grown together into a one team approach where people using the service don't differentiate between members of staff from either organisation," he says.

Our approach: collaboration and 'one team'

Mind's 'one team, one plan' model recognises that clinical treatment and personal recovery models have their differences but are complementary. When they are delivered in an integrated manner, like at our PARCs, the person they are supporting receives enhanced benefits.

Mind's methodology includes well defined protocols, document sharing, thorough handovers, communication strategies, and rigorous governance system. This methodology, underpinned by a clear understanding of the different service elements provided by each partner, ensure our working relationships are able to thrive.

"It has come a long way now and our partnerships are all much more collegial," Hugo says. "I think our partners today recognise our strong governance, the strength of our frontline teams and have high levels of confidence in our professionalism and service delivery. Mind respects our partner's role, and they respect ours, and together we work on the premise that cooperation is the optimum approach to ensure clients receive the best service possible."

Governance and safety

Effective governance is key to ensuring standards of safety and quality care and support are maintained. Mind has

established a governance structure with our clinical service partners that supports access to specialist mental health staff, integration with other mental health services and streamlining of referral processes into residential services, inpatient care, and exit-planning, as required.

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Hugo Steinbergs



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Mind cares for the environment and uses environmentally-friendly inks on recycled paper.



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Mind’s governance process supports our partnerships with protocols documenting medication management, conflict resolution and timely escalation of client risk and safety issues.

“We have robust and sophisticated governance systems and high levels of clinical experience and practice knowledge,” says Phil Dunn, Mind’s General Manager Sub-Acute Residential Partnership Services in Victoria.

“Our comprehensive quality and activity monitoring processes are backed by policies and procedures, which we review and update regularly. Mind has practice standards, clinical care standards as well as case noting and documentation standards. Case notes and other documents are constantly

monitored and reviewed, and our staff receive regular supervision and training to ensure we’re always improving.”

Mind’s governance process instils protocols and processes to support our partnerships. This includes protocols documenting medication management, conflict resolution and timely escalation of client risk and safety issues. These processes are articulated in shared operational manuals, developed collaboratively, and signed off at senior management levels by each party.



Partnerships in practice

Steve Mollet is the Service Manager at the PARC and Extended PARC in Narre Warren, Victoria. He has been with Mind for six years and says Mind’s one team approach to partnerships is a real strength.

“We can help identify each other’s blind spots and there’s an openness that has developed over time. If there’s a problem we are transparent with each other and work together for mutual improvement, rather than pointing the finger.”

Steve points to the physical health of residents as an interesting example of the collaboration. Being an extended PARC, some residents have been through a long period of non-support and their life skills have atrophied. They may not have cooked or cleaned for 15 years, so they need a longer period to develop skills for independent living.

“We can have recovery workers teaching someone to cook for themselves for the first time and suddenly the resident is making great headway making comfort food - but then they might start overdoing it and their health becomes a concern; for example weight gain or increased cholesterol.

“That’s a situation where you’ll see our clinical staff and recovery staff working hand in hand. Meal planning is done with the nurse or junior doctor, who advises on diet, while the recovery team helps the client shop well for healthy nutrition.”

“It’s not about compromise as such but bringing our respective areas of expertise to bear on an issue together rather than running two agendas.” ■





Andree Sellars (L) and Katie McKibbin (R)

A great partnership for supporting youth

Monash Health Senior Clinician Co-ordinator Katie McKibbin and Mind Service Manager Andree Sellars embrace the one team approach at the Youth Prevention and Recovery Care (YPARC) service in Dandenong to ensure the young people it supports receive the best service possible.

“We talk about the YPARC team, not the Monash or Mind teams,” Katie says. The service, in Melbourne’s outer south-east, provides short term residential clinical and recovery focused support for young people (16-25 years) needing targeted mental health support.

“We meet and share information all day, every day,” Andree says. “We discuss what’s going on at the service on a daily basis and there is a lot of honest feedback both ways about what we’re doing and how we can do things better – it’s definitely a one team approach.”

Andree says frank conversations and honest feedback are possible because there is a mutual respect between the two providers. Staff know that difficult conversations take place to deliver the best possible service and to achieve the shared goal of supporting clients in the service.



“We talk about the YPARC team, not the Monash or Mind team.”

“It’s really nice working within a recovery setting; it puts the client front and centre of their treatment.”

“We avoid clinical and non-clinical language and the team works really well in terms of collaborating on decisions,” Katie says. “Clinical decisions are informed by the opinions and observations of the community mental health practitioners and everyone is involved in decision-making, including the client.”

Katie recently joined the YPARC team in Dandenong as maternity leave cover. Katie says she jumped at the opportunity, having previously worked with young people who had attended the service and who described it as an “overwhelmingly positive experience”.

“It’s really nice working within a recovery setting; it puts the client front and centre of their treatment and they become much more involved in their treatment,” she says.

“Clients are in the driver’s seat – they are involved in the clinical review, which we call the ‘recovery space’ – they are part of discussions on diagnosis, medication and direction of treatment.”

“The YPARC is a particularly good environment for young people to sort out some direction,” Andree says. “Young people say it’s like a family environment here and that’s something we’ve worked hard to achieve.”

“Growing up is challenging enough, without the added stress of mental ill-health. We hope to give young people a sense of empowerment and ownership of their recovery journey.”

“Young people say it’s like a family environment here.”



Catching the wave



“What we’ve learnt to do is capitalise on our staff’s particular enthusiasms to carry people along with them – and it’s working brilliantly.”

When people come to Mind for support they often need our support workers to provide the sense of hope for their future until they are well enough to carry it themselves. We call it ‘holding the hope’.

The team at our residential youth service in Dandenong have conceived a similar support they call ‘catching the wave’.

“When people come to us in distress or not feeling positive about their lives, they don’t have a lot of motivation for the everyday things, let alone groups”, YPARC Dandenong’s Service Manager Andree Sellars explains. “What we’ve learnt to do is capitalise on things our staff are excited and motivated about, so that this carries people along with them. They ‘catch the wave’ of motivation – and it’s working brilliantly.”

Whether it’s making music, car maintenance or exploring the outdoors, members of the team are using their own hobbies to inspire and engage clients and help them to move towards a psychological state more conducive to recovery.

The great outdoors
Jim Beers, a YPARC Dandenong peer practitioner, loves the outdoors and knows how much it has contributed to his own recovery from mental ill-health. Each week Jim takes a group to The Outdoor Experience in Kew, Victoria. In this bushland environment, people are taken out of their comfort zone, challenged to overcome their fears, build self-esteem and to work as part of a team on problem solving activities.

“I can see the benefit every week when the kids come back so excited at what they’ve achieved.”



YPARC Dandenong car group

Clients love the opportunity to get outdoors and experience things like kayaking, bushwalking and tree climbing. Working as a team to stack plastic milk crates into the highest possible towers is a particular favourite with groups.

“I can see the benefit every week when the kids come back so excited at what they’ve achieved”, Andree says. “They’re happy but they’re also calm in a way they weren’t before they went.”

Car-tastic
Another team member, Harin Witharana, is turning his passion for cars into practical life skills for clients. Harin takes the young people through every day mechanical issues like checking water and oil levels and how to change a tyre, using staff cars in the car park. He also takes groups out to Car City to begin to learn how to appraise the value of a car.

“The car group is something that empowers our clients. It teaches them some different life skills and to be more independent,” Harin says. “We also find they really open up and ask a lot of questions too. It breaks the ice a bit, which is the first step to recovery.”



YPARC Dandenong music group

Rockit
A self-confessed music obsessive, team member Tim Leach has helped people at the service find their voice, through a rockin’ music group. Clients love writing, playing and recording music and are even hoping to release an album later this year. The group has been a smash from the get-go.

“They were writing songs every day; I’d come into work and they’d just hassle me –

‘Tim, Tim, let’s write a song!’ or ‘let’s record!’ There’s so much positivity around it,” Tim says.

“Sometimes people come to us and don’t have much hope for the future or feel like they don’t have a lot of purpose. For many young people, discovering activities that elicit a sense of fun, achievement or meaning can be a pivotal point in finding hope and motivation for the future.”

In brief

New Mind services in Mackay and Cairns

Following a funding boost announced by the Queensland Government, Mind has been appointed by the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service to support people's mental health recovery in community settings. This will include the residential Community Care Unit and the residential adult Step Up Step Down service in Cairns, and community based care coordination and one to one psychosocial support through assertive outreach and group programs.

Mind has also been appointed by Queensland Health to work in partnership with Mackay Hospital and Health Service, to provide community based care coordination, one to one psychosocial support through assertive outreach and group programs in Mackay.

Working as one team in close partnership with clinical and non-clinical support staff means our clients will receive expert mental health assessment and psychosocial support. All staff working in the services know the clients, understand their needs, their important relationships and the other supports they require and have in the community – enabling smooth transitions from one service to the other as needed. In other words: one referral, one recovery plan.

The team includes family engagement workers who will, as agreed by the client, engage with family members and other carers to ensure they are appropriately involved in their loved one's recovery planning and that their own wellbeing is supported.

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“This is exciting news for Mind and a proud development in our continuing partnership with Queensland Health. We appreciate the recognition of our dedication to clients, their families and carers,”

said Mind's Executive Director of Operations, Bronwyn Lawman.

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Outreach across Victoria



EIPSRs is a new outreach support service.

Mind is partnering with five different Victorian health services to deliver a new outreach service providing person-centred recovery support. Mind has successfully tendered to operate the new Early Intervention Psychosocial Support Response Service (EIPSRs) for and with Melbourne Health, St Vincent's Health, Latrobe Health, Bendigo Health and Albury Wodonga Health.

The EIPSRs aims to foster independent living and recovery for clients of the clinical

mental health service system who have a severe mental illness and associated psychiatric disability. It also aims to reduce the likelihood of clients developing lifelong disability because of their mental illness, through early intervention.

The outreach service will also reduce avoidable need for more intensive acute mental health services and engage the use of the health system by providing integrated treatment and psychosocial recovery care in the community.

South Australia: National Psychosocial Support Measure

Mind is providing National Psychosocial Support, known locally as 'Country Wellness Connections', in the Riverland region of South Australia. Funded through the Country South Australia Primary Health Network, the service is designed to address existing mental health and wellbeing needs in the region.

The service targets people with severe mental ill-health and associated psychosocial disability who do not meet NDIS disability access requirements and require psychosocial support. Participants are eligible for up to 12 one on one sessions with a community mental health practitioner with the objective of supporting them with their goals and increasing their social connectedness and participation in the community.



Secure NDIS funding for Haven Frankston

Residents at the Haven Frankston are now moving in to their second year as participants in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Mind is continuing to co-design Supported Independent Living quotes with each resident to ensure funding is secured from the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). This means each resident is able to receive the one to one and shared supports that enable skill development and capacity building, so each resident can continue to live as independently as possible. This has been achieved by the strong relationship Mind continues to develop with the NDIA.

Optimising support for psychosocial disability

Mind is participating in a working group established by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) and Mental Health Australia to develop the new participant pathway for psychosocial disability in the

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

The working group will focus on the implementation of 29 recommendations for the development of the new pathway. These recommendations were developed in a Mental Health Australia project that brought together service data from community based mental health programs, consumers and carers for the first time, to present a picture of how people with psychosocial disability were supported in programs before the NDIS.

Mind also participated in that project, which has provided a rich and valuable evidence base to augment and influence the NDIA's work to deliver the most appropriate support to NDIS participants with psychosocial disability.



Mind is working to deliver the most appropriate support to NDIS participants with psychosocial disability.

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SANE Forums



Chat with people with similar journeys and experiences, with health professionals in the background to ensure everything is safe and supportive.

New topics every month for 'Topic Tuesday'.

Separate discussion groups for people with lived experience and for carers.

Check out this month's topics at:
mindaustralia.saneforums.org



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