

“Rehabilitation for Recovery”: Establishment of The MHCC Learning & Development Unit

Spring 2006: View from the Peak

The development of enhanced training services to be offered by the MHCC Learning & Development Unit is well underway! The MHCC has received a funding commitment from NSW Health for each of the next three years to subsidise the establishment of training services. We are most appreciative of this support as well as the ongoing recognition of the workforce development/training needs of mental health NGOs.

The goal of MHCC's Learning and Development Unit is to make available suitable training to help build clear career pathways for workers within the NGO mental health sector. It will offer accessible and relevant training for workers at all levels and in all areas of service provision across the sector, equipping people to most effectively work in their current roles as well as to gain skills to move into new roles if desired. The training offered will also provide valuable mental health education for workers in the wider community sector. Courses offered will include the Certificate IV in Mental Health Work (Non-clinical) and a variety of targeted short courses (both accredited and non accredited).

The first training package to be developed is “Rehabilitation for Recovery”. This face-to-face course targets workers in mental health NGOs that are new to the sector or do not have mental health specific training as well as workers from other community organisations who wish to better address the needs of people with mental health problems and disorders.

“Rehabilitation for Recovery” has also been developed in response to the proposed voluntary minimum training standard that has been supported in-principle by mental health NGOs. It is mapped to 7 of the 14 units of competence required to achieve the Certificate IV in Mental Health Work as follows:

- Orientation to mental health work - 2 days
- Provide support services to clients &
- Provide non-clinical services to people with mental health issues - 4 days
- Work within a legal & ethical framework - 1 day
- Provide, with consumers, support interventions to meet the needs of carers & families - 2 days
- Assess & respond to individuals at risk of self-harm or suicide- 2 days
- Assist with self medication - 1 day

Piloting of “Rehabilitation for Recovery” commenced 30 October with Catholic Community Healthcare who provide aged, disabled & homeless programs across NSW. A second pilot commenced 8 November with Paramatta Mission who provide a diverse range of mental health services in the Western Sydney area (eg, Lifeline, day programs, HASI & other accommodation support services).

“Rehabilitation for Recovery” course/s will be made available across the NSW community sector from early 2007 and there will be a focus on delivering the course in regional, rural and remote NSW.

While developing the various learning and assessment strategies & materials described above we have also been working closely with “RTO Support” who are helping us to become a Registered Training Organisation (RTO). This has involved the development of numerous finance and administrative systems as well as conducting an internal self evaluation as required under the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) standards. Our application to become an RTO will be submitted to the NSW Vocational Education & Training Accreditation Board (VETAB) in early November.