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July 2013

Our next major event will be our AGM at which your committee is elected. Please consider nominating on the form attached. It is very important for us to keep introducing 'new blood' so that we don't lose our relevance or enthusiasm. Membership of the committee is not onerous - we meet bi-monthly for a couple of hours and some committee members provide input on other regional committees, again a minor commitment but very important in providing a family perspective which might otherwise be overlooked. If you would like more information about a role on the committee please don't hesitate to call 9076 4713 and leave a message so that we can call you back.

HOUSING SURVEY June Newsletter

Nine people responded to our housing survey in the June newsletter. Five currently have satisfactory accommodation for their family member in either the public or private sector but four are still looking for something suitable. The model which was most favoured is cluster style in a small development with some support. But....'how to achieve it!' as one respondent expressed it. If there's anyone else interested who has not yet completed the survey please let us know and we will try to keep you in the loop.

Two people who responded mentioned an interest in *Soteria*. Whilst not necessarily the most reliable source, Wikipedia describes Soteria as a community service that provides a space for people experiencing mental distress or crisis. Based on a Recovery Model, common elements of the Soteria approach include primarily non-medical staffing; preserving resident's personal power, social networks, and communal responsibilities; finding meaning in the subjective experience of psychosis by "being with" clients; and no or minimal use of antipsychotic medication (with any medication taken from a position of choice and without coercion).

Soterias were open facilities for young psychotic patients, mostly at their onset. Loren Mosher, who founded the Soteria experience, showed that treating psychosis in the acute phase without using restraints is possible.

Soteria houses are often seen as gentler alternatives to a psychiatric hospital system perceived as authoritarian, hostile or violent and based on routine use of psychiatric (particularly antipsychotic) drugs. Soteria houses are sometimes used as "early intervention" or "crisis resolution" services.

ISFAF AGM Tuesday 13 August 2013 at 7.00pm

in the Dining Room at
Betty Day Centre
67 Argyle Street, St Kilda

to be followed at 7.30pm by our
Monthly Support Group Meeting

Speaker:
Kathryn Henderson, Manager,
Crisis Assessment and
Treatment Service (CAT) /
Psychiatry Triage

Kathy will tell us more about this important service and also the new cooperative MHICU service, a collaboration between Alfred Psychiatry, Victoria Police and Bayside Medicare Local launched this month at the Astor Theatre in St Kilda

CAT provide a 24 hour, seven day a week acute assessment and treatment program to people who experience a mental health crisis in the community living within Alfred Psychiatry catchment area. Psychiatry Triage provides a telephone referral service to the public and a

The concept has attractions but there is not enough evidence yet to support widespread use of such a model. Putting a number of people together who are withdrawing from medication creates a volatile mix hence the preference for accepting cases of first episode psychosis, before medication has been prescribed - however that requires appropriate referrals and a wider acceptance of the efficacy of the model. The following website provides observations of Soteria-Alaska on a blog by Daniel Makler: <https://www.madinamerica.com/2012/09/so-me-observations-of-soteria-alaska/>

Of perhaps greater interest is 'Open Dialogue', an approach which is creating a following in Europe. Aileen Burgess, Secretary of the Peninsula Carer Council sent us a DVD describing the model which has had very promising results in northern Finland albeit a much smaller community. Daniel Mackler is again the reporter and a trailer for his film on the subject can be viewed on U-Tube:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=aBjIvnRFja4

It goes without saying that one needs to tread very cautiously indeed whilst keeping an open mind towards various treatment options.

**The Mental Health Services
TheMHS - 23rd Annual Conference
Melbourne Convention Exhibition Centre
20 - 23 August 2013**

We have not heard from anyone wanting to attend this conference although financial support is available. Call our office on 9076 4713 or Violeta on 9076 4740 if you are interested. You will need to make the booking yourself and a refund can be provided on presentation of a Tax Invoice or receipt. The program for the Family and Carer Forum on Tuesday 20 August is attached. More information is to be had on:

<http://www.themhs.org.au/home>

**Action for Recovery Program (ARC)
Dual Diagnosis Program
at Family Drug Help/SHARC**

Tailored for family members trying to help someone with substance abuse issues, another Action for Recovery program will start shortly and take place over six consecutive weeks.

Dates: Tuesday August 27, Sept 3, 10, 17, 24 and October 1

Time: 6-8pm

Venue: 140 Grange Road, Carnegie

Cost: \$60 which will include course materials and light refreshments each evening.

There are still some places available and as said in our last newsletter, Angela Ireland, who runs the course, is an inspiration.

'People who have done the program described their 'change' in terms of their inward emotional response to the situation, describing observable differences in levels of self esteem, depression anxiety and guilt'. To book or make enquiries call 9573 1706 or email arc@sharc.org.au

**ALFRED HEALTH
ACCREDITATION**

At the beginning of July, Alfred Health was assessed and became the first major metropolitan health service in Australia to be accredited under the new National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards.

Jan McMahon, the surveyor who interviewed members of the Family and Carer Committee, Alfred Psychiatry, as part of the process, was keen to see more key performance indicators identifying the level at which consumers and carers had been included in the development of treatment plans. A detailed report as to the final recommendations is to be forwarded later and feedback will be shared.

**World Hearing Voices Congress
Melbourne 20-22 November 2013
Melbourne Convention Centre**

Voice hearers, consumers, service users, clinicians, community workers, carers and family, researchers and students will gather to build a better understanding of hearing voices and new ways of thinking about recovery.

'Three days of new ideas, collaborative conversations, innovative research and practice, and stories of hope and creativity'.

See:

<http://www.regonline.com.au/builder/site/default.aspx?EventID=1196422>

**De Castella Run
Sunday 25 August 2013
in support of
Monash Alfred Psychiatric
Research Centre - MAPrc**

Once again we are entering a team in the 5km Walk in support of mental health research. If you would like to sponsor us or join us on the walk see:

<http://decastellarun.gofundraise.com.au/>

It may be easier to simply register as an individual and find sponsors amongst your family members - Judith and I never find the website easy.

**Inner South Community Health
Service**

www.ischs.org.au

ISCHS, as most of our members would know, has sites in South Melbourne, St Kilda and Prahran.

GP services: at 240 Malvern Road, Prahran a GP clinic is open from 8.15am - 5pm which offers a Bulk Billing Service (No Fee). Call 9525 1300 for an appointment or simply visit the Clinic.

Dental Services: Health Care or Pensioner Concession Card holders can access low cost dental services e.g. Emergency dental care - \$25 per visit. General dental care costs \$25 minimum to a maximum of \$100 per course of dental care in most cases. Some specialised items or denture work may cost more. Telephone 9684 4222 for more information or an appointment.

Access Health Nutrition Clinic and Drop In

ISCHS Dieticians are available 4th Wednesday of each month 10am-12pm at the Salvation Army Crisis Service. Call the Access Health Program on 9536 7780.

A Freedom from Tobacco service is run for 6 weeks twice a year free of charge at various ISCHS sites. Call Kate Chester on 9525 1300

Under 65 Hydrotherapy Group - for people recovering from injury or with a chronic health problem affecting strength, flexibility or balance. Tuesday 12.00 - 1.00pm at Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre, Albert Park. Cost is \$5.10 concession per session. Call the ISCHS intake worker on 9525 1300 for further details.

Type II Diabetes Exercise Program - this community based, low cost program runs in 6 week blocks at local gymnasiums throughout the year. Contact an intake worker: 9525 1300

The Coffee Club - is a casual, friendly place where consumers of the ISCHS Mental Health Program get together fortnightly for a cuppa and a chat. Discuss with your Case Manager.

For a full range of the ISCHS very comprehensive program call 9525 1300 or visit www.ischs.org.au/

The South-Port Legal Service

Advice is provided free of charge on traffic offences, criminal matters, family law, tenancy issues, discrimination law, motor accidents and a free Will service. It can also help draft legal letters and assist with legal documentation.

Tuesday evenings from 7pm at the South Port Centre, 31 Coventry Street, South Melbourne

Wednesday evenings Corner of Liardet & Nott St, Port Melbourne from 7pm. Call 9525 1300

ARAFEMI CARER WORKSHOPS
Ground Floor, 270 Auburn Road,
Hawthorn

RECOVERY & HOPE

Saturday 10 August - 10am - 1pm

BUILDING CARER RESILIENCE

Saturday 28 September - 10am - 1pm

RECOVERY & HOPE

Saturday 26 October - 10am - 1pm

BUILDING CARER RESILIENCE

Saturday 9 November 10am - 1pm

For bookings & further information
please contact ARAFEMI HelpLine
1300 550 265 or email:

volunteers@arafemi.org.au

**The Mental Health Council of
Australia - Treatment Options**

The MHCA has put together two very sensible Checklists, one for Carers and one for Consumers, with suggested questions that you could consider asking your mental health practitioner. Copies can be accessed on their website or we can send you one by post:

<http://www.mhca.org.au/index.php/consumerscarers/consumers-and-carers-checklist>

Mind Carer Respite Calendar

Mind provide a range of short term, targeted support options to families and carers and have put together a program of 4 Day Respite and Day Outings - see attached flyer and call Mind Family and Carer services for further information.

Bayside Medicare Local

Finally, we would like to thank Elizabeth Deveny, CEO of Bayside Medicare Local for addressing our well attended June meeting. We will be encouraging members to develop their e.health records. Thank you for inviting ISFAF members to the launch of the Mental Health Integration and Coordination Unit (MHICU) at the Astor Theatre and to the film, *Silver Lining Playbook* with which many of us could identify and which was very much enjoyed.

It is most appropriate that Kathy Henderson is to be our guest speaker at our AGM on August 13 and will tell us more about MHICU and Alfred CAT of which she is the Manager. We hope that it will be warmer by then and that lots of you will come - **the AGM commences at 7pm.**

Penny Lewisohn

Convener, ISFAF