

SOCIAL WORK FUTURES

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NEXT EDITION

Contributions for the Winter 2019 issue will be accepted until 10 June. The theme is **Social Work Research and its Impacts**.

AASW members whose articles are published in *Social Work Focus* can claim time spent to research and prepare them towards CPD requirements, specifically Category 3. We accept up to 10 articles in line with each issue's social work theme.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The AASW respectfully acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians, and pays its respects to Elders past and present.

Join us on social media:



Looking to the future

AASW calls on social workers to connect and converse with us

Welcome to this edition of *Social Work Focus*, with the 'focus' this time on social work futures. When we consider social work futures, what are we talking about? Lessons from practice? Research? Social work education? Emerging issues and the implications of changes in government policy on our modes of delivery? Grand Challenges? Lessons from the past?

Looking to the futures of social work encompasses an examination of all of this and more, including an understanding that we are not talking about one single future – but 'futures' plural.

The challenge of being future ready, of identifying new challenges and issues and preparing for them is not new to social work. Social work theories and practice have a history of evolution and change, however social work ethics and values remain constant and require us to think carefully and prepare for future challenges.

As social workers, we play a critical role in working with individuals and communities who bear the brunt of the unjust social, economic and political systems. We have always been deeply committed to addressing and challenging these systems and their consequences on the lives of those we work with. In Australia and throughout the world, these systems and the states, governments and large corporations that perpetuate them show little – if any – signs of change and as a result the demand for social work services is growing.

As social workers, one of our strengths is that we sit in a space of both agreed values and contested ideas. To meet the challenges of the futures of social work, we need to hold true to our shared values, while we respectfully discuss and debate those contested ideas.

What does the future hold for social work and social work practice? What issues will social workers be dealing with

over the next ten, twenty or thirty years, and how can we ensure that we position social work well for these changes and challenges? These are the questions that guide our work in the AASW now and into the future.

We can't predict the future, but we are aware of some of the emerging issues and we need immediate, medium- and long-term strategies to address them. Such issues include the increasing disparity between the rich and the poor; climate change and its impacts on the lives and livelihoods of individuals and communities; and the advance of technology and what it means not only for our profession but the inequitable effects of the digital divide.

Global migration, the likes of which we have never seen before in this world, is another issue that must be addressed, not only in terms of implications on the lives and livelihoods of individuals and communities, but also around the ways in which it has fostered a politics of fear and given rise to a new wave of systemic racism and human right abuses.

Closer to home, we need strategies to address issues of colonisation that remain unresolved and result in racist practices that continue to harm Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and perpetuate human rights abuses within many of our systems – especially our welfare system. Another such issue is the rise of case funding models and their impacts on social work practice and social work priorities. The effect of case funding models on those we work with must also be considered; although they are often

the most vulnerable in society they are now clearly positioned as 'consumers' and sold the idea that they have greater choice.

And finally, registration of the social work profession is another emerging issue. It feels like we are on the brink of achieving this, but what will this mean for social work in Australia and for those who use our services?

The AASW has a huge role to play – as it always has done – in preparing for the future of social work and social workers. Over the next year there are several projects on the go including: a review of the *Code of Ethics* to ensure that it better reflects some of these emerging issues; an updated ASWEAS and the beginnings of a larger project around social work education including a national conversation on field education; work with members on registration to ensure that we work to what we need in this space; an ongoing project to explore the career trajectory of a social worker from student days to retirement and the role of the AASW in this journey; and working with others on an agenda for social work research. All future focused activities.

The AASW is us, all of us. When the call goes out for social workers to engage in these important conversations we all need to participate. To be forward-thinking about the implications of these challenges means we can ready ourselves and our future social workers to be able to operate in, and exert influence over, this increasingly complex environment.



CHRISTINE CRAIK
AASW National President

Leading the AASW into the future

Advocacy on registration, social justice and professional excellence



CINDY SMITH
Chief Executive Officer

Since our last edition of *Social Work Focus* the AASW has continued to contribute to discussion on the registration of social workers in South Australia. On 30 January, AASW Board Director Anita Phillips, AASW Social Policy & Advocacy Manager Debra Parnell, AASW South Australian Branch President Patricia Muncey and I addressed the South Australian Parliament Joint Committee on the Social Workers Registration Bill 2018.

Our attendance provided the opportunity to outline our case for registration of social workers and our support to the South Australian government proposal. We also made recommendations for amendments that we believe will strengthen the Bill. The Committee is still accepting submissions and will continue to conduct hearings. The AASW will present again at the conclusion of this process.

In the meantime, we have sought meetings with relevant ministers and shadow ministers in each state and territory to further our advocacy position to build and maintain the momentum and support generated in South Australia on this important issue. Anita was interviewed by the ABC's Steve Chase and spoke about how important it is for those working with vulnerable Australians to be held accountable to a regulatory framework. You can listen to her interview here: www.abc.net.au/newsradio/content/s4945406.htm.

All our members are accountable to the Code of Ethics, but of course membership is voluntary. We can see from our website statistics that our Code of Ethics is one of our most downloaded documents and viewed webpages. It is great to see that upholding professional standards is so important to our members.

World Social Work Day falls on 19 March 2019. The theme for this year is

Promoting the Importance of Human Relationships. World Social Work Day is when we celebrate and recognise social workers as champions for social justice, self-determination and human rights. Our branches will host a range of local events, details and resources are published on our website.

I encourage you to also review the resources the IFSW and AASW created for organisations and individuals around Australia to host their own World Social Work Day events. Embrace and celebrate the valuable work of our social workers and the significance of that work for our most vulnerable members of the community.

The AASW's newly released Empowering Excellence program offers a range of online, contemporary and evidence-based CPD, targeted to social workers. The program comprises 16 courses, offering opportunities to enrich your practice skills, and broaden your social work career options through continued, applied learning. The program has a strong mental health and clinical focus, drawing on the expertise of leading academics and clinicians across core domains of practice (including Focussed Psychological Strategies for Accredited Mental Health Social Workers). Core topics include Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Mindfulness, Interpersonal Psychotherapy, family violence, Narrative Therapy, cultural practice and the transition into management.

The complete program is now available on the [AASW website](http://www.aasw.org.au).

The Accredited Family Violence Social Worker credential was launched in 2018 with members submitting applications for this credential. The development of the Accredited Clinical Social Work credential is progressing, with an expert advisory panel currently finalising the capability framework following consultations. Work is on track to launch this credential in March 2019.

The Accredited Disability Social Work credential expert advisory panel is currently considering the feedback following closed consultation with the aim to publish a draft capability framework for open consultation. It is expected that this credential will be launched in April 2019. The expert advisory panel for the Accredited Child Protection Social Worker credential is currently being considered. Further information regarding our work on credentialing will be published in our National eBulletin.

Save the Date for our Conference 2019 – **Challenging inequality: Working together for a just society.** The Conference will be held in Adelaide, 7-9 November. We are currently reviewing our e-newsletters to ensure we are providing you with current relevant information that will assist you in your practice. We will shortly relaunch the Horizon Jobs Portal and will offer members free

Since our last edition of *Social Work Focus* the AASW has continued to contribute to discussion on the registration of social workers in South Australia.

Locum Directory listing as part of the new developments.

As a member, your suggestions, feedback and participation in our work is very welcome and I encourage you to contact me, our National Membership Engagement Manager Susan Woodman, our Student & New Graduate Coordinator Mariann Ivany, or our membership and branch teams if you have something you would like to contribute to the Association. We will continue to create opportunities for members to learn, connect and network through our broad range of events, social media and our branches.

We have recently welcomed a cohort of new graduate members and I extend my warmest welcome to those of you who have decided to Power Your Advantage and upgrade your AASW membership with us since your graduation late last year. We look forward to a long and happy association with you as you begin your career. To those who have graduated, but still haven't upgraded your membership with us, doing so is free and only takes a few clicks by logging into our website.

As I write this, I am about to meet the advisor to the Minister for Health Greg Hunt in order to inform the minister of the depth and breadth of the work Accredited Mental Health Social Workers do in addressing the complex issues relating to mental health. Our training as social workers

encompasses the full gamut of what people experience and what affects their mental health, making us true 'experts in complexity'.

The year has gotten off to a terrible start for many across the country, as social workers are assisting people deal with floods, bushfires and drought, while at the same time being personally impacted. My heartfelt best wishes to all social workers and their families. As the National President has said in her special message in our e-Bulletin and on our Facebook page, the Association is here to support our members in any way possible.

The Association attended the vigil for Aiiia Maasarwe, a young woman who was murdered on her way home from an evening out in Melbourne. I reiterate our message from last year's International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on 25 November #HearMeToo and our op-ed piece that was published in *Pro Bono* magazine that leadership from all corners is sorely needed to change the culture of gendered violence within our society.

The Association supports changing the date of Australia Day, which we reaffirmed on social media. I think I speak for most people in saying that I was appalled at media commentary surrounding the issue, and it shows that we have a long way to go when Indigenous people's views are not given the same airtime about

something affecting them directly. It also shows why it is so important for organisations to commit to a Reconciliation Action Plan, which we are proud to have done.

The AASW has released a [statement to the media](#), welcoming Victoria's announcement of a ban on so-called gay conversion therapy. Reports of this 'therapy' have become more common in the last year or so, and the AASW has been monitoring the situation closely. We have asked for all states and territories to follow Victoria's lead and for the Australian Government to fund the Safe Schools program, sending a clear and positive message to all LGBTIQ Australians.

•



70th anniversary of the UN Declaration of Human Rights

December 10, last year was the 70th anniversary of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. On this date, we called on the Australian government to take serious action to fulfil its human rights commitments.

AASW National President Christine Craik said, 'The AASW continues to have serious concerns over Australia's breach of human rights, including the treatment of people seeking asylum, and the systems abuses of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults and children, including their overrepresentation in the justice system.'

'Article One of the declaration tells us that 'all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights', and although Australia prides itself on values of respect, dignity and compassion, it is clear the Australian government is failing in this regard.

'For example, Indigenous Australians are 13 times more likely to be imprisoned, often for minor offences like unpaid

finances, than the rest of the Australian population, and Aboriginal women are the fastest growing prisoner demographic in Australia.

'Furthermore, despite being a signatory to many UN conventions that protect human rights, the Australian government appears undeterred by repeated calls by the UN to end offshore 'processing' of people seeking asylum. Not only this, we have people who have been held in indefinite closed onshore detention for almost 10 years.

'Social workers see firsthand the devastating consequences of government policies that neglect the freedoms provided by the Human Rights Declaration.

'People are sick of the political rhetoric and cruelty of the Australian government around people seeking asylum, and they will use their vote to show it, as we have seen in recent by-elections. This is very much an election issue now, and if the government isn't willing to act on this as a humanitarian issue then perhaps the threat of losing office will move them to action. The election is an important time for those in all political parties to show moral leadership, honour our legacy of compassion and not pander to the politics of fear and racism.'

The Association will continue to advocate against human rights violations and look forward to the day when the Australian government stops exploiting the public's fear, misconceptions and prejudices against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, asylum seekers and refugees for political gain, and becomes a global leader for human rights.

Australia currently has a seat on the UN Human Rights Council, which it took up in March 2018. The Association opposed Australia's bid to sit on the Council in our [letter to the Commissioner](#) at the time, Zeid Ra'ad Al-Husseini, dated 11 April 2017.



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AASW takes a stand on violence against women

The AASW has participated in several actions recently, taking a stand on violence against women. The Association was present at vigils for Melbourne women Eurydice Dixon in June 2018 and Aiiia Maasarwe in January 2019, who were both murdered while walking home at night.

The Association attended Reclaim the Night in October, which is held in several cities across Australia, to support women's right to walk the streets after dark, without the fear of being followed, attacked or murdered. It was also there on the Walk Against Violence in Melbourne city in November, two days prior to the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

Last year's theme on the UN's International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women recognised the #MeToo movement, asking the community to also listen, adding the word 'hear': #HearMeToo, on 25 November.

Leading up to the day, the Association supported the Australian government's *Stop It at the Start* campaign on social media, which is aimed at challenging community attitudes to the disrespect of women, which ultimately leads to violence against them. You can access

the resources, including videos and other resources at the website: <https://www.respect.gov.au/>

AASW National President Christine Craik took the opportunity to remind us that violence against women is not a women's issue:

'Let this not be another occasion on which women speak only to each other about the devastating consequences of gendered violence. To those who cause harm: we believe in your capacity to change. Only you are accountable to your choice to use violence, and to the pain and fear inflicted in the lives of women and their children. Only you are responsible for seeking support for your behaviour. Today, we implore you to seek support.'

'To those in positions of power, capable of beginning the huge cultural change we need in our society to end this violence against women, today we also



implore you to have the courage and enact that change.

'Gendered violence is common, but it is not inevitable. Gendered violence is a systemic issue, driven by gendered inequality, and it can be addressed by cultural change.'

'This can only occur when there is a concerted effort, and adequate investment, toward that end. We need a national coordination of prevention, early intervention, crisis and recovery.'

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Yarning about trauma

AASW WA Branch Trauma-informed Care Symposium

In November, social workers from across Australia gathered together on Whadjuk Noongar Country in Western Australia to understand how to respond to trauma in all its forms.

The Symposium began with a powerful Welcome to Country from Noongar Elder and social worker Elizabeth Hayden who highlighted the ongoing trauma First Nations people have experienced since colonisation. Elizabeth then joined Noongar social workers Glenda Kickett and Dr Michael Wright in a powerful Yarning about Trauma session led by respected Noongar Jim Morrison of Yokai *Healing our Spirit*.

Discussion covered the developmental trauma suffered by successive generations and thousands of children removed from their families, communities and cultures under the 1905 Act and continuing to 1975 until the enactment of the WA Racial Discrimination Act. It included PTSD and its very high frequency in Aboriginal communities as well as the compounding complex trauma transferred intergenerationally. The panel responded to questions from social workers and highlighted the resilience of the community. The

panel commended the AASW on its proactivity in conducting this Symposium through its understanding of the nature and continuing impact of complex trauma on the lack of comparative emotional and social wellbeing of Australia's First Peoples today and in the future.

This powerful session set the scene for the address by AASW National President Christine Craik (pictured below with the panellists) and Michael Berry WA branch President. Christine highlighted the importance of social workers taking advocacy and leadership roles in organisations during complex and conflicting times. She went on to remind us to be vigilant that our social work practice challenges rather than perpetuates abusive systems.

Dr Alicia Boccellari from the University of California San Francisco then outlined how Trauma Recovery Centres incorporate assertive case management, clinical supports, and



Dr Alicia Boccellari, University of California San Francisco, addresses the symposium

medical management to provide comprehensive, high quality responses to people who have experienced trauma. Alicia also reflected on the ability and uniqueness of social work approaches to social justice.

Dr Ann O'Neill from angelhands shared her framework for practice developed out of her PhD research. This engaging presentation showcased Ann's determination to bring evidence-based research alongside



Dr Ann O'Neill

kindness and intelligence to ensure that people who have experienced trauma are supported. Ann was also featured on the [ABC's Australian Story](#). She is also the founder and Patron of [angelhands](#), a charity which helps people affected by extreme violence (including homicide), which also provides services to family and friends for as long as they need it.

In the afternoon, registrants chose from a range of presentations in three concurrent streams: therapeutic models and interventions, best practice frameworks and models, and research and policy. Presenters shared diverse knowledge, skills and expertise in areas such as planetary trauma, vicarious trauma in Aboriginal interpreters, and responding to trauma at all levels.

The feedback has highlighted that the Symposium was an outstanding success where people learnt a great deal and enjoyed connecting with other social workers. This success was in no small part due to the dedication of the WA branch manager Charmaine Lobo and Michael Berry, WA branch President and the WA BMC.

The Association also encouraged attendees to live tweet with the hashtag #AASWTrauma.

This Symposium was supported by
Diamond sponsor: The Department of Communities

Silver sponsors: Anglicare WA, angelhands, Ruah Community Services, Indigo Junction, and Slater and Gordon Lawyers.

Emeritus Professor Maev O'Collins awarded Life Membership

Emeritus Professor Maev O'Collins became a Life Member at the AASW AGM in Perth on Friday, 9 November last year. National President Christine Craik made the presentation.



Maev's career in social work has been devoted to the development of the social work profession in Australia and internationally. Maev began her social work career in 1952 as a Community Development Worker for the Melbourne-based Catholic Family Welfare Bureau. She went on to undertake her Doctor of Social Welfare at Columbia University, graduating in 1972.

Her long and distinguished social work career has encompassed child and family welfare, academia and international aid and development. Her role as Professor in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at the University of Papua Guinea challenged Maev to establish new social work and welfare programs that prepared graduates to work with complex social issues often in very remote locations in the PNG Highlands. Her expertise in cross cultural social work and welfare practice was often tested as she sought to develop new educational programs within colonial, institutional contexts. Maev went on to utilise this valuable experience in her work in a range of aid projects, including training peacekeepers in the Solomon Islands.

In retirement, Maev has devoted herself to the development of the social work course at the Australian Catholic University. This has involved membership of School Advisory Committees, being a member of Course Review Committees and AASW Accreditation Panels, undertaking the supervision of PhD students, teaching and mentoring students and presenting at conferences. Most recently (in 2015) Maev provided financial support to the University for the establishment of a [scholarship](#) to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social work students.

Why interior design for therapeutic spaces matters

BY ROBERTA BARUZZI

A well-designed and considered therapeutic environment has positive benefits for clients of, and staff working in, small counselling practices or large community organisations.

Research confirms that the design of a therapeutic environment influences client well-being, assisting a client to feel emotionally safe, and more comfortable in sharing their story. The design of a therapeutic environment can also assist clients to better manage heightened emotions and distress (Liddicoat, 2016, 70). These factors have a proven positive effect on therapeutic outcomes (Pearson & Wilson, 2012, 3).

Therapists spend up to eight hours a day in the same room, in the same chair, often listening to client narratives that are sad and horrific, leaving them emotionally and mentally drained. A considered therapeutic space supports

a therapist's capacity to maintain high levels of empathy towards clients, and this can enhance the effectiveness of therapy (Pearson & Wilson, 2012, 4).

Waiting rooms and reception areas are also an important consideration of a client's experience of attending therapy. This space is often their first impression of a service, and it may influence their decision to return or not. Comfortable and accessible chairs, current reading materials, views to the outside, art, plants, and levels of confidentiality assist clients to feel valued and more relaxed, while waiting for an appointment. This is relevant for small practices as well as larger organisations with multiple programs.

Staff and client well-being can be increased by ensuring comfortable and ergonomic furniture, and appropriate lighting. Furnishings, finishes, colour schemes and layouts, in addition to sensory aspects within the room, are considered when planning a new, or updating an existing, therapeutic space.

The input of staff is a valuable consideration when planning a therapeutic space. They are integral to the successful functioning of a service, and there is an established connection between the pleasantness of an environment and job satisfaction. Consideration should also be given to the age of the client group, as a



fit-out for older clients should be markedly different than one for young people.

The relationship between you and your clients and staff is the most important aspect of the therapeutic situation. If this takes place in a well-considered and comfortable environment, it will have tangible benefits for everyone.

Roberta Baruzzi is a South Australian Accredited Mental Health Social Worker and interior designer of Sala Interiors. roberta@salainteriors.com.au

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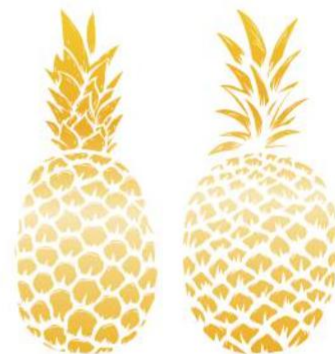
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Take your pineapples out

A poignant motif in honour of a beautiful friend

Queensland Accredited Mental Health Social Worker Gabbey Prosser began a 'Take Your Pineapples Out' social media campaign to be acknowledged on 3 May each year to raise awareness about suicide prevention, after the suicide of her best friend Kyeema McIntyre in November 2015.



First of all, why pineapples?

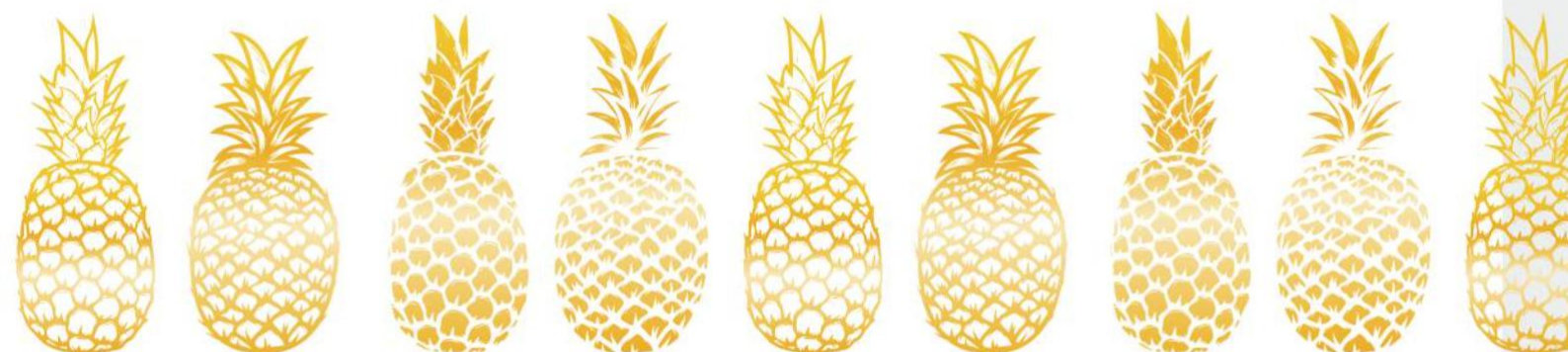
When Kyeema died, there was no funeral (there is just still too much stigma associated with suicide). As we had no physical 'body' to say goodbye to, I kept trying to come up with ideas on something to offer the ocean to say goodbye to my best friend of 20 years. Flowers were too 'normal', Ky was so unique it needed to be something that really symbolised her. I thought maybe a bunch of grapes or some prunes but that still didn't feel right.

So I asked my son, who was 12 at the time, who had grown up knowing Kyeema as 'Uncle Ky' (another one of her quirks) what should we offer to the ocean in her memory, he immediately said 'A pineapple' and it just felt perfect. We had so many random memories of her with pineapples – like the time she was going to ride to Tasmania to raise awareness for depression and take a pineapple with her for company or the time she crashed her car at her sister's property and a pineapple fell out the door (they weren't all happy memories!) or the time she left a voicemail on my phone telling me she just cut up a pineapple in the main street of Noosa with a machete and everyone was staring at her but she was so desperate to eat it she couldn't wait and a machete was all she had. So that is where the pineapple started.

Losing your best friend must have been such a traumatic experience - how did you find the strength to create a beautiful campaign such as yours to help others?

This might sound weird but I was so fortunate to be where I was when she died. I was working in a frontline mental health role for an NGO with people who were actively suicidal. So in my work I was faced with suicide on a daily basis. Due to this, naturally, my organisation needed to know I was safe to return to work so they put extra resources into my supervision so I had regular external supervision and my supervisor was fantastic.

That massive dose of exposure therapy to suicide made me realise just what a crisis we have on our hands here in Australia and that, as a social worker I had skills I could use, as a survivor of suicide I had skills I could use, and Take Your Pineapples Out just kind of evolved and I've been able to incorporate both of my sets of skills to help shape it into what it is today.



How do people engage with your campaign?

So one thing I really like to make clear is that it is an awareness and prevention campaign – raise awareness and get people talking about an issue and therefore you can begin to prevent suicides. It is not a support campaign. So I don't offer support to people who are suicidal or bereaved by suicide.

People can engage in the campaign by following the social media pages (Instagram or Facebook) and also by actively engaging in anything pineapple-y to spread the message. Whether it is sharing posts from the pages, taking a pineapple to work, taking a photo with a pineapple and then uploading it to social media with the hashtag #takeyourpineapplesout – there are an infinite number of ways people can engage with the campaign and no one needs to ask permission – if you have an idea, go for it. The more we can raise awareness, break down the silence and stigma, get conversations happening.

How has the local community supported your campaign?

Honestly it's not just the local community, it is Australia. They have been amazing. It has been fantastic to see so many people taking initiative and finding their own way to get involved in this campaign. That is what I love about this campaign, I might have started it, but I have no ownership over it, and it is what people make it. I get lots of people contacting me asking what they can do, but because it is online, there are very few tasks involved, really what people can do is find a way to Take a Pineapple Out and share it around. It's that simple.

What is contained in your Take Your Pineapples Out support packs?

With the support packs people get a support card – this lists some of the main national support lines – Suicide Call Back Service, Kids Helpline, Lifeline, Mensline, BeyondBlue and it also lets people know about Standby Support After Suicide service. They get a BeyondBlue fridge magnet, a BeyondBlue wristband, a Take Your Pineapples out mini badge, a bumper sticker, a regular sticker and a coaster.

I want to thank the Integrated Family and Youth Service for their support – they have made and donated the Support Cards, Bumper Stickers, Stickers and Coasters. The packs are 100% free.

To receive one, send a message to the Take Your Pineapples Out Facebook or Instagram pages with your postal address. Or email your details to: info@takeyourpineapplesout.com

How can people find out more?

Our website is: www.takeyourpineapplesout.com. Follow the Facebook and Instagram accounts 'Take Your Pineapples Out'.

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Gabbey Prosser is the owner of [Hope and Healing Social Work and Counselling](#) on the Sunshine Coast.

At the time of writing, five Indigenous girls aged under 16 died by suicide in January. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are taking their own lives at more than double the rate of the rest of Australian society. Among 15- to 34-year-olds, it is triple, and for those aged 5 to 17, the disparity is fivefold.

In 2017, intentional self-harm was the leading cause of death for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 15 to 34.

These are tragic events, which have devastating consequences for families and communities.

AASW Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Representative Director Linda Ford says that both the Indigenous and the broader Australian community must stop this from happening.

Ms Ford said, 'It needs to begin with supporting our young people and connecting them to family, community and culture. Everyone has a role in preventing more tragic deaths.'

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Designed by: Martha Rothblum

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19TH MARCH 2019**



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How social workers can benefit from ongoing business training

BY BEN FOOTE, CEO of The Australian Institute of Management

There are many talented social workers in Australia who are looking to expand their horizons by starting their own private practice. This is an exciting prospect and comes with an immense sense of freedom.

However according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 60 per cent of new businesses are likely to fail within the first three years of business. This trend has surfaced within the health sector, as young businesses face a wave of challenges that go beyond their industry-specific expertise.

Taking the next step and setting up your own private practice can be a challenge. While you may be an industry leader in your profession, are you are equipped with the knowledge and experience necessary to successfully start and run your own business?

Social workers starting up their own business can be met with an early downfall should they lack the essential skills and qualities needed by business leaders.

Health professionals looking to overcome stunted career progression through opening their own practice can greatly benefit from acquiring business training, where they can develop the skills and knowledge needed by successful business leaders.

Foundational sales skills

More than ever, new practices struggle in managing their time, missed sales goals, and lost opportunities. As a new business owner, foundational selling strategies and tactics will be pivotal in the success of a new practice. Building strong sales skills will help social workers to uncover the wants and needs of their client base, in order to provide maximum value and get the most out of each sales opportunity.

Finance for non-finance managers

Moving from the role of employee to employer requires a critical skillset that understands the financials of business and managing budgets. Social workers need to learn how to analyse financial data and understand all aspects of financial management from planning through to budget review and reporting.

Digital marketing for non-marketers

In the first stages of managing a business, money is tight and the last thing you want to think about is marketing. However, marketing can be the life or death of a new business. It is important to develop a foundational understanding of marketing in the digital age. Learning how to navigate through digital marketing in terms of strategic planning and reporting is extremely beneficial to any new practice, particularly in bringing in new clients.

Innovation in the business

To uphold the quality and safety of health services offered by your practice, it is important to encourage innovation in the business. Business training can offer new ways of analysing industry trends and issues that allow you to identify, validate and implement opportunities that can improve your practice.

There are also many ways to teach employees how to identify, validate and implement innovations that drive business improvement. Employees



who can offer new and better ways of doing things, whether it be a service offered or a business operation, are invaluable to any business.

Performance management

Understanding the ins and outs of performance management can be a challenge for workers moving into business management. By learning the best performance management practices, there is a significant improvement of work practice and client outcomes. Mastering performance management will enable you to manage your own workload and goals while also developing a culture of learning and growth necessary to create a successful new business.

If you're ready to take the next step in your career and open your own practice, remember that while you have a vision, this is not a business plan. For social workers, investing in business training and developing the skills and knowledge is the only way to secure the success of your practice.

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About AIM

Australian Institute of Management Education & Training (AIM) is a Registered Training Organisation and TEQSA approved Higher Education provider listed on the national register. Founded in 1941, AIM Education & Training is the trusted career partner of Australian managers and leaders at every stage of their career journey. Every year, 20,000 professionals take part in over 80 training programs and study towards Vocational Qualifications in locations across Australia.

www.aim.com.au

Environmental sustainability, social workers and mums in need

St Kilda Mums CEO Jessie Macpherson awarded the Order of Australia



St Kilda Mums, Geelong Mums and Eureka Mums, are all the brainchild of Jessica Macpherson, who started the charity to connect Victorian mums with everything they need when a new baby comes along. The service started in 2009 when a group of five mums, including Jessica, attending St Kilda Maternal and Child Care Centre on Chapel Street noticed baby goods stacked in the photocopying room that had been donated by local parents in the area.

Jessica volunteered to sort, launder and package the preloved goods for families who need them. Demand grew from there, and Jessica started the charity more formally.

The purpose is to reduce waste when babies and toddlers outgrow prams and clothes, encourage sharing and provide for parents in need.

For her efforts, Jessica was recently honoured with the Order of Australia Medal for her services to the community and not-for-profit sector.

It's fantastic that St Kilda Mums incorporates environmental sustainability as part of its ethos, as well as helping mothers in need - why was that important to you?

When my kids grew out of their baby things, I really wanted to give them to someone in need. I had spent hours researching, bought the best quality items I could possibly afford and had taken great care of everything, but I had no one to pass things onto. I tried to track down a women's shelter, which is not easy to do! I finally spoke to someone at the Women's House at the Sacred Heart Mission but they did not need anything at that time and had no storage to speak of.

My donations were rejected by all the local op shops - they simply don't sell most baby gear. I refused to accept that the only option was selling or giving it away. I was determined to find a mum in need to help. The baby bonus means that there is still a huge

amount of excellent quality baby goods in circulation. Pram handmade with steel frames. Built to last for generations. I wanted to ensure that every baby got what they needed to sleep and travel safely, and that these valuable items has a second lease of life. Nothing existed, so we had to start something new.

It did not take long to realise that not only was a service like this needed but that there were lots of people who felt just like me and really wanted to find a home for their baby things and make a difference. We all know how tough it can be with a new baby, even with all the money in the world, a loving partner and a generous extended family. We wanted to offer support and encouragement to those mums without all that support, to let them know we care. We wanted to stand in for the sister or aunt they were missing. It is such a simple idea.

How did you come to expand the service to Geelong and Ballarat? Are there plans for further expansion?

Some pretty amazing people from both cities contacted us and we decided to join up and extend our reach. We have no plans for further expansion. We have amazing economies of scale and can ship to any address in Victoria from St Kilda. We figure we cover 85 per cent of the population in the three cities we are already in and can service the remainder from any of our three locations.

How do you work with social workers to deliver to mums in need?

We provide free material aid to social workers and maternal and child health nurses, midwives and other health professionals for the families they are supporting. Because we rely on donated stock, so we don't always have every item requested for every single order. But we always do our best to provide the essentials, before the arrival of the baby where possible.

Once you are registered for our service, you can place orders on our website. The form prompts you to think about everything your family might need. Its important to know the height and weight of each child for prams and car seats. Once we have collected all the items, we let you know when the order is ready for pick up and you can pick up and deliver same day. We try and make stock available ASAP for babies already born and juggle the remaining orders according to the due date.

As a charity dependent on fundraising and donations from the community we have to run wait lists for expensive large items like cots, prams and car seats. Some clients are eligible for government funding/brokerage/nursery equipment program etc. Please check these options first, so that we can focus on supporting families who have no other support in the community like asylum seekers.

Do you take social work volunteers?

Yes - volunteers are always welcome! (Please sign up on our website). We



don't deal with any families directly, however our volunteers serve social workers, help them choose and load their cars, so it is a great way to network.

How can the community support your cause?

Please follow us on social media, sign up for our newsletter, make a donation online or hold a fundraiser. You can also hold a donation drive amongst your friends, request a speaker for a conference or event, bring a team in from your workplace - in fact the ways you can support us are endless!

Congratulations on your recent Australian honour. How does it feel to be a recipient of the Order of Australia Medal?

It's a tremendous honour and a true reflection on the efforts of every single volunteer who makes St Kilda Mums, Geelong Mums and Eureka Mums such a wonderful place to be! Thank you!

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Find out more: www.stkildamums.org

Social workers can access the service by registering and booking a collection time request@stkildamums.org

Debbie Creed, SalvoConnect

Debbie Creed, tenancy worker in the Young Families Connected Program, uses St Kilda Mums's essential baby goods in her practice with clients.

What is your background as a social worker?

I started working in the welfare sector 11 years ago, working as a residential support worker in out-of-home care. I worked at two different agencies doing this for around five years. I was also team leader of several houses at the second agency I worked for, again in out-of-home care.

Seven years ago, my husband and I also fostered a then 14-year-old girl.

How did you originally connect with St Kilda Mums?

Eureka Mums is the Ballarat component of St Kilda Mums. When the group started to operate here we were contacted and advised of this service. We have been using it ever since.

How much easier does having access to a service like St Kilda Mums make a positive difference to your clients?

Being able to access this service to assist our clients, whom are from the homelessness sector, makes a major difference to the clients in being able to provide for the needs of their children and new babies. Without this service, we would struggle to provide for the needs of the children through other services. Often, the children would potentially get items from others i.e. second-hand from family, online etc that may not be safe and meet Australian safety standards.

Knowing there is this service and support makes clients less worried and stressed about where the goods are coming from and they can concentrate on other aspects of their lives.



AASW

Australian Association
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Membership Team on T: 1800 630 124 or E: membership@aasw.asn.au

Connect With Us



Achievements inspire at student conference showcasing social work initiatives

Tales of hope and dignity energised guests across four campuses as Orange Sky chief executive Jo Westh delivered the keynote speech at the School of Allied Health Final Year Student Conference on 1 November.

More than 40 soon-to-be social work graduates from Australian Catholic University (ACU) demonstrated how their four years of study would translate to the workplace at the National School of Allied Health student conference on 1 November.

'It's my most enjoyable and proudest day of the year,' Head of School Professor Christine Imms said. 'This conference is all about celebrating the achievements of our soon-to-be-graduates, and to acknowledge the contributions they have already made and will continue to make as graduates from our multidisciplinary school.'

The attendees were inspired by the work of Orange Sky Australia, a mobile laundry and shower service for the homeless that was created four years ago by 2016 Young Australians of the Year Nicholas Marchesi and Lucas Patchett.

Ms Westh shared powerful stories about 'friends on the street' Dave and Nev whose experiences underline Orange Sky's importance for people experiencing homelessness.

'I like to think that I've encouraged you to think about people, whether they be homeless or not, as individuals and unique,' she said.

'Each of them has its own shape and colour, texture and fabric, each with its own tears or stains or imperfections. But each of us has a story that's unique and worthy of respect and being listened to.'

Social work professional development sessions and student oral presentations were among the wide range of work showcased on the Brisbane, Sydney and Canberra campuses.

Students presented case study and community development data from placements undertaken at public

sector and non-profit community organisations. Throughout their placements, they interacted with clients, communities and colleagues to make a difference from a variety of theoretical perspectives, in a broad range of health and welfare contexts.

Two students reported on projects undertaken with rural communities while based in Broken Hill.

Kate Rankin worked for Lifeline Broken Hill, a suicide prevention organisation, where she had the opportunity to travel to rural towns across South Australia to co-facilitate suicide awareness and prevention training for community members.

Her project, 'Translating Social Work Theory to Outback Practice', focused on the role, rewards, and challenges of social work in a rural setting.

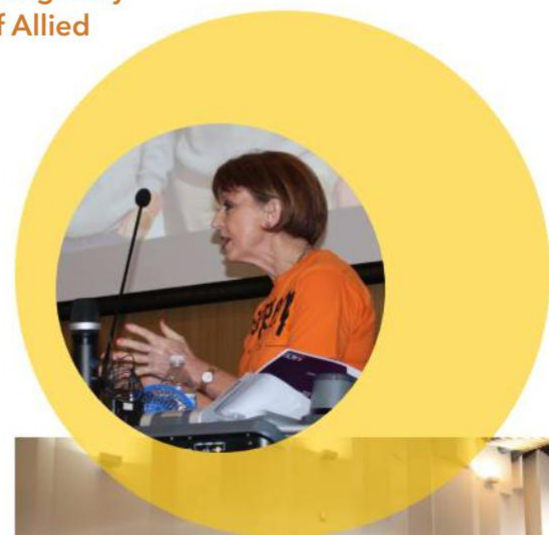
'Rural social workers have the opportunity to be the bridge connecting communities to policy developers and strategy planners through getting to know individuals and the community, collating information and advocating for their needs,' she said.

Likewise, Ross Driver said his placement at the local high school in Broken Hill was fulfilling. He co-facilitated DrumBeat, a Cognitive Behavioural Therapy group program, aimed at developing participants' social, emotional and behavioural skills.

Throughout his project, titled 'The Rhythm of the Outback', Ross worked with 13 to 15-year-old boys.

'My main task was engaging in clinical consultations with students exhibiting mild behavioural and emotional regulation problems,' he said.

Other projects were in diverse fields, including with Indigenous agencies and those dealing with domestic and



Keynote address by Jo Westh at Orange Sky Australia

Social work students at ACU Sydney

family violence, child protection, mental health, aged care and disabilities.

'I'm impressed to see how our students have drawn on their theoretical knowledge and practice skills to make a difference in the agencies where they have been placed,' Professor of Social Work Debbie Plath said. 'They have demonstrated that they are ready to make the transition from social work students to social work practitioners.'

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By School of Allied Health, Faculty of Health Sciences, Australian Catholic University

Message from 2018 Mary Moylan Award winner, Josephine Lee

What a wonderful year I have had! Winning the Mary Moylan Award was the most magnificent highlight and from there followed the brilliant opportunities I have had. I want to thank AASW for the support you have shown and the opportunities I have been given. I am deeply grateful. My social work journey is even more cemented now, and it is what I'm in, for the long haul.

I chose social work for being the vehicle to carry out change, change being addressing social justice issues in our society. I grew up in an environment that gave me an acute awareness of social injustice and the level of racism in our society, particularly towards Aboriginal people, First Nations people of Australia. I am of mixed heritage of Aboriginal, German and Irish. I strongly identify as an Aboriginal person, a Gudjala woman from North Queensland. I now claim the Northern Territory as my home and I'm married to a Larrakia man. We are proud to be Aboriginal.

As an ambassador for this year's award, I was invited a few events ago to contribute to the oral stories, particularly around NAIDOC and the International Day of the World's Indigenous People. I have always been able to tell a good story, to have a yarn. I believe the ancestors dreamed this for me, to have a big mouth and be a truth teller. To be a truth teller you must have courage and determination, and that I have a deep reservoir of.

As an acknowledgement of my contribution to social work in the Northern Territory, I won \$1,000 to contribute towards professional learning activity. I chose to use this on the registration for the **8th Healing Our Spirit Gathering**. I have been fortunate to attend conferences across Australia and overseas. This gathering was outstanding for many reasons. The following were some of what made this a stunning experience for me:

- The focus on healing – all of humanity is on a healing journey!
- The four key principles of Honour, Respect, Love and Care – start with yourself, then you will do better at the four principles with others

- We are dreamed into being. We are the dream weavers to the future generations
- The impact of colonisation and intergenerational trauma that is the legacy – sorrow, deep grief and loss. But also a recognition of incredible resilience and the ability to revitalise culture
- Reminder of Daddiri – the unique gift of deep listening
- The deep spring within all of us – time to rebirth
- We have to move from the deficit model to the strengths-focused – to rise, to heal, to celebrate, to live a life of meeting potential
- Indigenous people worldwide pleading for the following: to have strong foundations for a strong future, creating the right story, culturally responsive service systems, trauma informed and competent caring, and a compassionate society.

There was much talk about what is good about being Aboriginal. Please view this as unrealised opportunity. Please view us as a contribution we can be. Reprioritise what is important – relationships. Cease the single approach and take a more holistic approach. Aboriginal people can drive change in ourselves, our families, our peers and our communities. Disconnection is the disease and reconnection is to heal. We want to be thriving – not just surviving. There is a better way forward, a relational approach that encompasses cultural humility.

There were so many brilliant moments in this gathering, words of wisdom



(L-R) Northern Territory Administrator Vicki O'Halloran, Josephine Lee and her husband, Jason Lee

shared, so much courage in the room, and much kindness. My mind and soul was nourished.

Thank you again to AASW for providing me with these opportunities and for acknowledging my contribution to social work in the Northern Territory.

Thank you, Josephine Lee

NT Administrator Vicki O'Halloran posted this message to her Facebook page on 21 December 2018:

'I welcomed Josephine Lee, winner of the 2018 Northern Territory Mary Moylan Award for excellence in Social Work, and her husband Jason, to Government House this week to personally thank her for her ongoing commitment to helping others in our community.

Social workers dare to speak what has not yet been said and they dare to challenge the powerful and intimidating. The social work profession in Australia is broad and diverse but consistent to all practice is a commitment to human rights and social justice.

Josephine, you are a remarkable [#Territorian](#) and the work you do is of great value to the community. Thank you.'



Social work resources

Here are the latest resources for social work practice:

National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence – 15 March 2019

With the school year now underway, there are resources to address bullying and schools can sign up to National Day of Action: <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au>

More anti-bullying resources can be found at www.esafety.gov.au, www.studentwellbeinghub.edu.au and www.beyou.edu.au.

Alannah and Madeline Foundation's eSmart Digital Licence

Created by cyber safety experts, teachers and psychologists, the eSmart Digital Licence is an online safety education program that teaches children good behaviour and how to deal with bad behaviour online.

Using real life scenarios, this is a course designed to help children to learn and remember. Featuring eight key topics, the eSmart Digital Licence includes elements to encourage children to stay focused while they're learning: a quiz, the ability to re-take sections, text to voice and more. There are three different quizzes that are aimed at younger primary, older primary and high school-aged children. It is available for purchase for parents and teachers.

Find out more: www.digitallicence.com.au

ThinkUKnow: Cyber safety education

ThinkUKnow is the Australian Federal Police's (AFP) online safety program. Established in 2009, it is Australia's first and only nationally-delivered, law enforcement-led crime prevention program.

The cyber safety presentations cover a range of topics including sexting, cyber bullying, online child exploitation, online privacy, and importantly what to do when something goes wrong. Presentations are aimed at parents, carers, teachers, service providers and young people from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

Find out more: www.thinkuknow.org.au

Headspace's Digital Work and Study Service

Headspace has a digital platform to assist those aged 15-24 with work and mental health issues. There is a chat facility on the website, videos and other resources.

Find out more: <https://headspace.org.au/young-people/digital-work-and-study-program>

Lifechecks.gov.au – free quiz for those 45 and over

The Australian Government has launched a new website asking Australians who are over 45 to take a free online 'Life Check', as part of the More Choices For a Longer Life campaign. The areas the quiz focuses on are health, finance, work and social life.

Take a LifeCheck: www.lifechecks.gov.au

The Daybreak Program: An app to address problematic drinking

Hello Sunday Morning is an online community of people supporting each other to change their behaviour around alcohol. The Daybreak Program is a treatment and early intervention mobile app that provides online support to individuals seeking assistance in reducing their alcohol consumption.

The mobile app offers assistance on two fronts:

- access to a professional health coaching team that responds to requests for help
- peer support network groups that offer an anonymous and supportive community.

Over the next three years, the Daybreak Program will be funded to provide early intervention support for more than 20,000 Australians who need help to cut back their drinking, take a break or quit altogether.

Find out more: www.daybreakprogram.org

The Fathering Project

The Fathering Project is a program to improve engagement between fathers and their children. The Fathering Project was founded in Western Australia in 2013 to tackle the problems of child substance abuse, suicide and self-harm. It has recently received funding to roll the program out nationwide.

Find out more: www.thefatheringproject.org



2019 Trauma Education

presented by Dr Leah Giarratano

Leah is a doctoral-level clinical psychologist with 24 years of clinical and teaching expertise in CBT and traumatology

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Two highly regarded CPD activities for all mental health professionals: **14 hours for each activity** Both workshops are endorsed by the AASW, ACA and ACMHN – level2

Clinical skills for treating post-traumatic stress disorder

Treating PTSD: Day 1 - 2

This two-day (8:30am-4:30pm) program presents a highly practical and interactive workshop (case-based) for treating traumatised clients; the content is applicable to both adult and adolescent populations. The techniques are cognitive behavioural, evidence-based, and will be immediately useful and effective for your clinical practice. The emphasis is upon imparting immediately practical skills and up-to-date research in this area. **In order to attend Treating Complex Trauma, participants must have first completed this 'Treating PTSD' program.**

9 - 10 May 2019, Melbourne CBD
16 - 17 May 2019, Sydney CBD
23 - 24 May 2019, Brisbane CBD
30 - 31 May 2019, Auckland CBD
13 - 14 June 2019, Perth CBD
20 - 21 June 2019, Adelaide CBD
22 - 23 August 2019, Darwin CBD
(minimum numbers must be achieved by 30/4/19 for Darwin)

Clinical skills for treating complex traumatisation

Treating Complex Trauma: Day 3 - 4

This two-day (8:30am-4:30pm) program focuses upon phase-based treatment for survivors of child abuse and neglect. This workshop completes Leah's four-day trauma-focused training. The content is applicable to both adult and adolescent populations. The program incorporates practical, current experiential techniques showing promising results with this population; techniques are drawn from Emotion focused therapy for trauma, Metacognitive therapy, Schema therapy, Attachment pathology treatment, Acceptance and commitment therapy, Cognitive behaviour therapy, and Dialectical behaviour therapy.

27 - 28 June 2019, Auckland CBD
1 - 2 August 2019, Melbourne CBD
8 - 9 August 2019, Sydney CBD
15 - 16 August 2019, Brisbane CBD
29 - 30 August 2019, Darwin CBD
(minimum numbers must be achieved by 30/4/19 for Darwin)
5 - 6 September 2019, Perth CBD
12 - 13 September 2019, Adelaide CBD

Program fee for each activity

Super Early Bird \$600 each if you register more than six months prior to the workshop date

Early Bird \$690 each if you register more than three months prior to the workshop date

Normal Fee \$780 each if you register less than three months prior to the workshop date

Program fee includes GST, program materials, lunches, morning and afternoon teas on both workshop days.

For more details about these offerings and books by Leah Giarratano refer to www.talominbooks.com

Limited places available at each workshop so register early to avoid disappointment

Please direct your enquiries to Joshua George, mail@talominbooks.com

Registration form: AASW Members

Please circle the number of workshop/s you wish to attend above and return a copy of this completed page via email

Payment method is Electronic Funds Transfer. An invoice with our banking details and payment reference will be emailed to you

1.Name:

1.Dietary Requirements

1.Address:

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EFT payment for two people or events is required. Simply complete the information above, scan and email this page to mail@talominbooks.com

A receipt will be emailed to you upon processing. Attendee withdrawals and transfers attract a processing fee of \$66.

No withdrawals are permitted in the ten days prior to the workshop; however positions are transferable to anyone you nominate.

SOCIAL WORK FUTURES

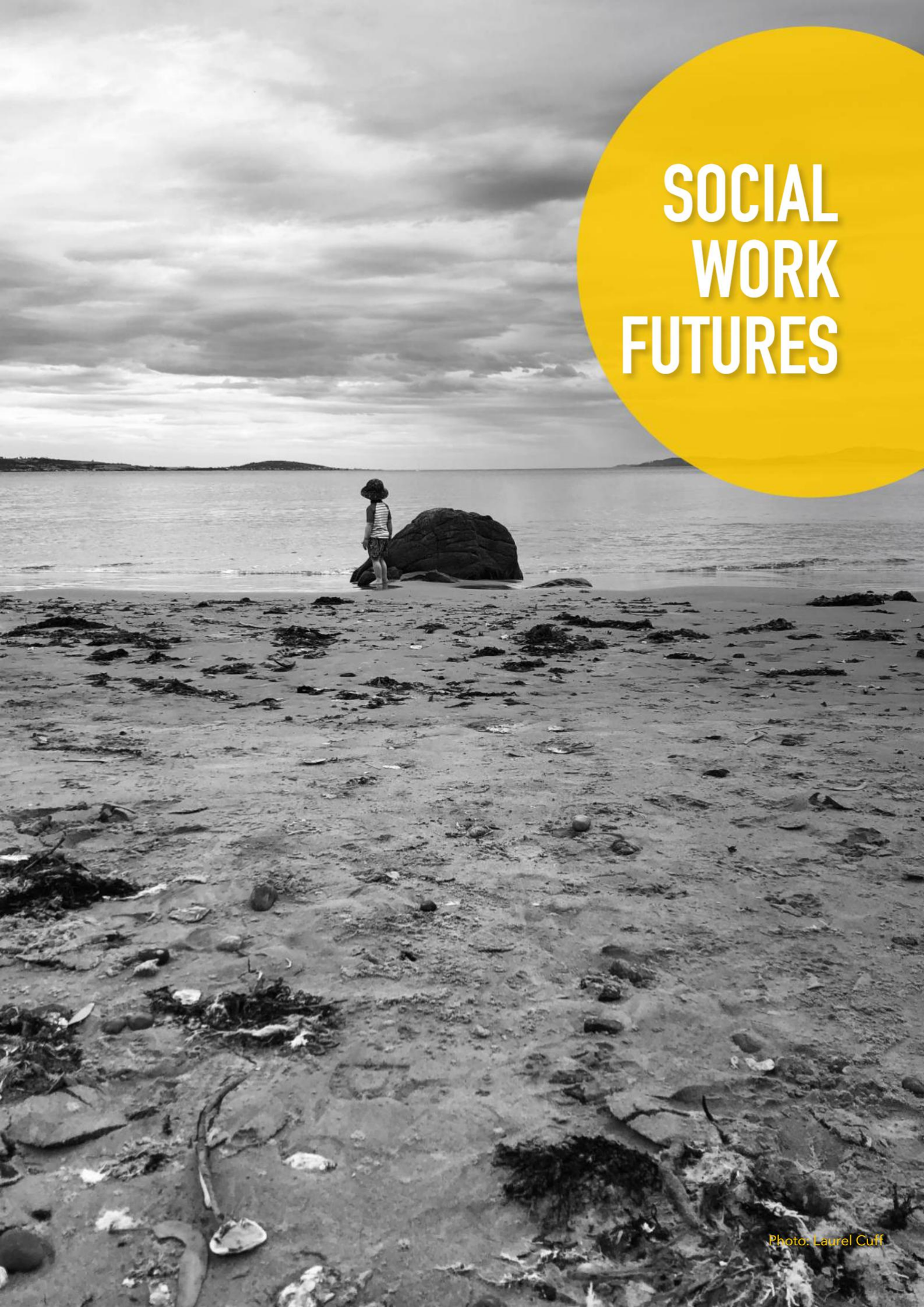


Photo: Laurel Cuff

Social work research

Its future impact on improving wellbeing

CLARE TILBURY

THE RESEARCH TEAM

Professor Clare Tilbury, Leneen Forde Chair of Child and Family Research, School of Human Services and Social Work, Griffith University.

Professor Christine Bigby, Director Living with Disabilities Research Centre, La Trobe University.

Professor Mark Hughes, Professor of Social Work, School of Arts and Social Sciences, Southern Cross University.

Professor Mike Fisher, Institute of Applied Social Research, University of Bedfordshire, UK.



About the author

Clare Tilbury, School of Human Services and Social Work, Griffith University. Clare's research has a policy focus on child protection and family support systems, outcomes, accountability, and performance measurement. She has been a social work academic since 2004 and prior to that, worked in various practice and policy roles for twenty years. Email: c.tilbury@griffith.edu.au

A solid research base, an ambitious research agenda, and a research-capable workforce are essential to increasing the standing and effectiveness of social work into the future. Clare Tilbury and colleagues report on a project about Australian social work research and its real-world impact.

Research helps us to quantify problems and what solutions are likely to work. It helps us to justify what we are advocating for with governments. (Manager, non-government agency)

A national study on the impact of social work research in Australia is underway (www.griffith.edu.au/criminology-institute/our-research/our-projects/social-work-research). One strand of the study features case studies from 12 leading social work researchers about how they engage with policy and practice. Another strand involves interviews with research end-users; managers, policymakers, and practitioners in human services agencies. The upside is that agencies value research and are keen users of research. And social work researchers are actively engaging with agencies to influence directions and highlight opportunities for change. The downside is that we need to do more to bolster the quantity, quality, and visibility of Australian social work research. It is limited in methodological range and there are few sustained programs of research. There are many reasons for this: under-investment in social work research and the infrastructure necessary for its translation into practice; inadequate workforce education and development; and tensions between research and practice. Through the example of leading social work researchers and feedback from industry, we can develop strategies to maximise the capacity of social work research to generate positive change into the future.

What are users of research saying?

Research end-users in government and nongovernment agencies from three fields (child protection, disability services, and ageing and aged care) told us that they value research. They use research to implement evidence-based interventions, to develop new ways of thinking and working, and to put the case for reform to government. One practitioner stated: 'Research gives me confidence. It's what I base my practice on. I'm always looking for new research, I want to be up to date'. We also heard about barriers that limit the use of research.

- 'There is no time to pause to keep up-to-date with research'.
- 'Service delivery is the priority, not research'.
- 'Life is busy and heads are down... organisations have reduced budgets... researchers need to help [us] action their findings.'

Lack of access to published research, funding, and specialist staff limits their capacity to translate research into practice, and to be innovative and research-informed in practice and advocacy. Although research end-users recognised that social work research brings positive benefits in systems-thinking and a focus on social justice and consumer views, they could identify only a small number of social work research projects or researchers in Australia. This low profile may be attributed to the prevalence of multidisciplinary research, but it also signals cause for concern.

The value of research

The fields in which we work are changing, and service delivery arrangements are more complex. Increasing the quantity and quality of social work research is central to creating knowledge for the profession. It will strengthen social work's mission to promote social justice and wellbeing. It will enhance our visibility and status in the community and in universities. A more research-informed and skilled social work workforce will be better equipped into the future to work with the complexities of people's lives and relationships and mobilise resources to enhance their rights. Research with high impact is needed. That's exactly what the highly productive researchers interviewed for this study are producing. They are engaged with policymakers, practitioners, and service consumers in various ways, providing evidence to assist in advocacy and reform, to influence organisational policy and programs, to raise awareness about issues to prompt public action, and more.

How are social work researchers striving to achieve real-world impact?

All of the research programs included in our project aim to improve individual and community wellbeing. Many have identified systemic factors contributing to harm and hardship, and included industry partners and consumer perspectives in the research. In addition to disseminating research findings through scholarly publication and other academic activities, social work researchers are achieving influence and impact through:

- making submissions to public inquiries
- developing practice tools and resources
- providing professional development and training
- writing research reports to post on public and agency websites
- using the media (including social media) to get their messages out
- being members of industry advisory bodies
- cultivating long-term industry partnerships.

Two noteworthy examples of social work research achieving real-world impact.

The Assets, Ageing and Inter-Generational Transfers Research Program

Assisting older people with their finances is one of the first care tasks for family members. The deliberate or inadvertent financial abuse that older people can be subject to when family members take on the management of their assets has been explored by social work academics Professor Jill Wilson and Associate Professor Cheryl Tilse and colleagues. Research by this multidisciplinary research team over a 16-year period, has demonstrated that those who have access to their assets, either informally or formally using substitute decision-making legislation such as Enduring Powers of Attorney, can abuse the trust of older people. The research has led to recommendations about legislation and processes of appointment of attorneys to reduce such abuse. The research team has achieved considerable impact on policy and practice, evident in:

1. The enduring partnerships they have formed with Public Trustees, lawyers, and aged care providers in many jurisdictions.
2. The uptake of the research by Public Trustees and aged care organisations to improve substitute decision-making and will-making processes.
3. The influential submissions they have made to government inquiries and agencies.
4. The regular professional and service provider education events they participate in throughout Australia, aiming to assist practitioners to identify and prevent financial abuse.

Strength to Strength family program

Professor Grahame Simpson is the Director of the Brain Injury Rehabilitation Research Group at Liverpool Hospital Sydney. Grahame has a longstanding focus on improving family caregiver wellbeing and resilience in the field of neurotrauma. Grahame and a group of senior social work clinicians from metropolitan and rural neurorehabilitation centres in NSW servicing people with traumatic brain injury or spinal cord injury, developed a manualised intervention program called Strength to Strength (S2S). S2S is uniquely social work, being the first psychoeducational intervention internationally that aims to build family resilience in neurorehabilitation. The program was developed and evaluated over an initial five year period (2008–2012) with the assistance of major hospitals and other industry partners. The success of the trial has enabled the scaling up of S2S nationally. The i-care Lifetime Care and Support Scheme now funds the delivery of S2S as a part of routine practice by social workers in neurorehabilitation services. Since 2013, 70 staff from services in NSW, Queensland, Victoria and South Australia have attended one-day training workshops to learn how to deliver S2S.

Social work's research future

The aim of our research is to generate a future-oriented, international research agenda from which innovative responses to social need in Australia can prosper. With input from leading social work researchers and industry partners, we are looking to develop strategies to increase social work research capacity. We want to ensure that the social work profession is aware of its existing strengths in research and injects its voice into the continuing dialogue in Australia about priorities for human services. The challenge for the 21st century is to strengthen the social work research base and find ways to ensure research is accessible, well translated with clear implications for policy and practice, and utilised by governments, educators and professionals. Research can be a major tool in influencing decision-makers to advance the rights and wellbeing of people with whom we work.

Observations of two Royal Commissions

Lessons learned about ethical decision-making and assessing risk

GAIL GREEN

The reports of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and the Royal Commission into Misconduct in the Banking, Superannuation and Financial Services Industry have revealed commonalities about the conduct of individuals within institutions and in turn suggest some ethical implications for social workers working in large organisations.

Both in the areas of child safe practice and fiduciary responsibility, it appears that individuals run the risk of being overwhelmed by the culture of an organisation and of losing their moral way. Reviewing commonalities may suggest areas for future focus for social workers.

People in power in both types of institutions appear to have lost touch with the purpose of their respective institutions and become ensnared by self-interest. Maintaining power and control (and vested interests) took precedence over delivering service offering support to those in need of protection, including children. In the financial field, higher level managers who often received huge salaries, commissions and profits from shares lost sight of the struggles of those reliant on the institutions to run businesses, own homes and obtain insurance cover.

In both cases many levels of management lost sight of the ethics of their decision-making. Their sense of entitlement to have power and to make judgements about others failed to take into account the skewed power relations intrinsic to both sets of organisations. Many acted as if they had a 'divine right' to rule others' lives.

A third commonality is that in both types of institutions there were no shortage of policies and procedures to guide behaviour. The failure was that

those in power did not feel obliged to use them or to apply them to their own or their employees' behaviours.

Being ethical in both fields seems to have been something that powerful people thought others should do - that somehow truly paying attention to honourable behaviour at the personal, institutional or community level was not relevant for institutional leaders or CEOs.

Institutional culture, based on privilege and 'common' corporate knowledge with a leadership focused elsewhere, not only failed to protect the needy, the vulnerable and even the everyday user of the service but often actively worked against the needs of the paying customer.

These are just a few quickly identified similarities. So, what lessons are to be learnt from these failures in other fields for those of us in the social work profession, especially when working in larger organisations?

Firstly, we must never lose sight of the institutional circumstances in which many of us operate and the capacity of such institutions to control and manage us and our clients. We pride ourselves on our advocacy roles but should also keep in mind the internal ways in which the organisations for which we work may fail to protect clients and colleagues against



About the author

Gail Green is an Accredited Mental Health Social Worker with 40 years' experience. She has worked in government and non-government mental health and trauma services with clients of all ages. She recently completed five years assisting people involved in the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

What are the Grand Challenges for Australian social work?

Time for a national conversation and a united Australian social work practice and research agenda

SUSAN GAIR

In her Editorial in *Australian Social Work* in January 2018, Professor Karen Healy, argued that the Australian social work profession is at a 'critical juncture in the development of its research profile and capacity' (2018, p.1), and that there are opportunities on the horizon to advance a meaningful social work research agenda. As a part of her vision for a united social work research excellence agenda, Professor Healy pointed to the work of the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare (AASWSW) and their *Grand Challenges for Social Work* initiative.

institutional and systemic control and abuse.

We should always be sceptical about decisions made by people in power and remain open to considering who benefits from decisions. We all need built in refreshers about ethics and to consider whether day-to-day activities in the institution actually reflect its stated ethical positions.

We should spend less time writing policies and procedures with subclauses that cover every possible circumstance and make sure our organisations commit to broad and clear ethical positions. When we do have policies and procedures, every level of the organisation should be regularly measured against and held responsible to them.

Measuring safe practice should be a regular requirement at every level of an organisation and assessors should ask 'How will this assist our clients and support our staff?', rather than 'How will this assessment keep us out of trouble with the regulators?'

And finally we must have ways to review organisational culture including ensuring the organisation has a process of renewal and remains open to current community standards. Organisations must maintain a balance between maintaining corporate memory and endless reinvention, as both stultification and organisational chaos allow poor culture to flourish.

Available information identifies that the United States Grand Challenges for Social Work agenda was spearheaded by the AASWSW as a bold, collective intervention to help address entrenched, critical social issues and advance a social work vision for the future. Modelled on a similar agenda launched by the national American Academy of Engineering, the quest of the AASWSW was to take an innovative, ambitious, step up to tackle persistent social issues such as family violence, homelessness, poverty, rising numbers of children in state care, closing health gaps, and promoting social responses to environmental issues.

This AASWSW agenda was about researchers and practitioners demonstrating increased, visible social work leadership in tackling and transforming social issues, and achieving measurable benefits for the society within a decade. The inaugural executive committee convened in early 2013 and it took several years, using an inclusive, bottom-up approach, for the identification and selection of

12 Grand Challenges. It is clear that the entire agenda demonstrates an ambitious quest that encompasses key social work practice-research partnerships, inclusive of service users and also undergraduate and postgraduate research training. The culmination of a lot of hard work appears to be successful funding applications that have facilitated multidisciplinary research to address known social problems.

To begin, they invited strong, shared leadership and innovative thinking, which then led to invited foundational papers, and the development of creative, focused networks at several agenda-setting conferences. Strong coalitions were formed and a powerful way forward was announced. Other countries are now stepping up to implement their own Grand Challenges for social work agenda, for example, Canada and the United Kingdom.

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In the abovementioned Editorial, Professor Healy asked whether the AASW might find ways to replicate this agenda, or at the very least begin a national conversation about a unified approach to advancing Australian social work research excellence. She proposed that one option for such an agenda was that it be sponsored by Australian College of Social Work. She noted that there may be hurdles to taking exactly the same path as AASWSW, because of existing differences in the way the Australian College of Social Work has been established under the auspices of the AASW.

Nevertheless, it seems timely to me, as we continue our future work within a climate heavily influenced by market-driven individualism that in turn provokes the erosion of solidarity and activism, that we have this national conversation about grand challenges for Australian social work. Informed by social work values we could begin, in 2019 to take somewhat similar steps to those taken by AASWSW – to pursue a grand agenda for united solutions to entrenched Australian social issues. (For further information on the work of AASWSW on Grand Challenges for Social Work, see <http://grandchallengesforsocialwork.org/>).

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About the author

Susan Gair is Associate Professor at James Cook University. She has undertaken research in areas including child adoption policy and practice, cultivating empathy and teaching culturally respectful practice with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. She also has undertaken research on maintaining grandparent-grandchild connections after child protection intervention, and a national study highlighting student poverty.

Enhancing environmental sustainability

Practice insight into the future of social work

LAURA WILSON

Social work is becoming increasingly engaged with ecological issues due to large numbers of clients facing harmful impacts, for example as a result of disaster events, food insecurity, and rising energy costs. In particular, there is a growing body of evidence suggesting that climate change has disproportionate impacts on Australians already facing disadvantage.

People living with mental health issues, migrants, children, older people, and people who are homeless have reduced capacity to prepare for, to evacuate during, and to recover from extreme weather events. People experiencing disadvantage are also likely to live in areas of high risk, are more vulnerable to associated rising expenditures, such as energy and water costs, and more likely to experience health issues during weather events, such as heat waves. Given that the intensity and effects of climate change are predicted to worsen in the coming years, it is important for the profession to become more ecologically-responsive and to promote social and ecological justice.

Moves towards a more ecologically informed profession have been made in Australia by the incorporation of clauses dealing with the natural environment into the Australian Association of Social Workers' *Code of Ethics*. The *Code of Ethics* aims to provide a guide for ethical practice and identifies the professional obligations of social workers. The natural environment is specifically referred to in five instances, for example, 'Social workers will advocate for and promote the protection of the natural environment in recognition of its fundamental importance to the future of human society' (AASW, 2010, p. 20, Section 5.1.3, clause m). Statements such as these highlight the profession's commitment to incorporate the natural environment into practice and place an ethical imperative on practitioners to promote sustainability as part of day-to-day practice.

Motivated by our profession's Code of Ethics, I became involved in a Participatory Action Research (PAR) project led by Dr Heather Boetto and Professor Wendy Bowles from Charles Sturt University. In total, 10 local practitioners joined the research team to experiment with the implementation and evaluation

of eco-social work practice strategies. As a PAR project, our skills, knowledge and wisdom as practitioners were acknowledged as being integral to building an evidence-base for eco-social work.

We participated in three face-to-face workshops, and through the process of critical reflective practice, brainstormed eco-social work strategies that might be relevant to our workplaces. After developing a practice plan, we experimented with implementing these strategies into practice. Finally, we had the opportunity to reflect on our experiences within our workshops, including factors that both enabled and impeded our approaches to eco-social work.

As a group, we made considerable changes to our practice and implemented a wide range of eco-social work strategies. We advocated for change among our colleagues, became educators about the importance of sustainability, and adopted eco-leadership responsibilities. We also incorporated the natural environment into practice with individuals and groups, for example by introducing aspects of the natural environment into counselling and group work approaches. These included:

- Incorporating the benefits of nature as part of staff training for trauma-informed care

- Developing a calming space in a backyard for a young person to de-escalate household violence
- Making plans to build a backyard greenhouse with a family to address food security issues
- Facilitating outdoor nature-based mindfulness activities with young people from refugee background, and
- Facilitating mindfulness groups in an outdoor courtyard, within a mental health inpatient unit.

It is important for the profession to become more ecologically-responsive and to promote social and ecological justice

Many of us also became more consciously aware of our personal impact on the natural environment and were motivated towards reducing our carbon footprints. Nevertheless, we also experienced challenges,

including a lack of time due to high workloads, and organisational constraints. Overall, we valued the opportunity to share in a community of practice with like-minded practitioners whereby we were able to learn from one another about how to develop a more ecologically-informed approach to practice.

We advocate for further action devoted towards the inclusion of practitioners in the development of a more evidence-informed approach to eco-social work.



About the author

Laura Wilson is a senior social worker practising in Wagga Wagga, NSW, and works in the area of mental health.

Laura is involved in a range of local social work activities, and is interested in developing eco-social work as part of mainstream professional practice.

EMDR

A valuable social work tool in challenging negative beliefs

HELEN BASILI

Helen Basili, an Accredited Mental Health Social Worker, uses Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) in her practice with clients in 'Sydney's diverse inner-west'. EMDR is not only for cases of post-traumatic stress but, as she points out, may be used to 'heal the wounds caused by oppression on the grounds of gender, race, disability, age or LGBTIQ status'.

Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) therapy is a treatment for trauma that works by harnessing the client's rapid eye movements to integrate neurologically-isolated trauma memories with neural networks associated with other experiences in the client's life that are more adaptive to the client's current circumstance. The negative core belief that reinforces the trauma memory is desensitised along with the sensory and somatic aspects of the memory. A positive belief is then 'installed' in its place.

The social work profession has long been concerned with achieving social justice through systemic change and this is enshrined in our Code of Ethics. However, these values are increasingly threatened by conservative governments who have steadily eroded funding for community development projects while redirecting their focus to the limited provision of individual therapy. This is a trend that is likely to continue in the future.

The risk for clients accessing therapy through government-funded services, such as the Primary Health Networks, is that psychological distress will be inadvertently pathologised and construed as an individual deficit. The power structures that facilitate the perpetration of violence against women, children and minority groups, which is an underlying factor in most cases of psychological distress, can be dangerously obscured. This

process is now recognised by the British Psychological Society in its ground-breaking 2018 report, *The Power Threat Meaning Framework* www.bps.org.uk/news-and-policy/introducing-power-threat-meaning-framework

How can mental health social workers use evidence-based clinical interventions without colluding in this process? How can we empower clients by ensuring that they are aware of how their personal suffering is linked to the broader political context and abuses of power?

EMDR therapy offers some solutions to this dilemma. Endorsed by the World Health Organization and Melbourne University's Phoenix Centre (formerly the Centre for Post-Traumatic Mental Health), the efficacy of EMDR has been demonstrated by more than 30 randomised controlled trials.

The beauty of EMDR is that it can be used far more broadly than to treat trauma experiences and symptoms that correspond with the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual 5 (DSM-5)* criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Mark Nickerson, a United States-based social worker, has described how EMDR can be used to address the suffering that is often experienced by women and minority groups exposed to relentless micro-aggressions, systemic abuse and other forms of oppression.

In his 2017 book, *Cultural Competence and Healing Culturally Based Trauma*



About the author

Helen Basili is an Accredited Mental Health Social Worker and an Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) practitioner registered with the EMDR Association of Australia. Her interests include promoting diversity, addressing the impacts of discrimination on mental health and effective altruism.

with EMDR Therapy, Nickerson and his talented colleagues provide fascinating insights into using EMDR to heal the wounds caused by oppression on the grounds of gender, race, disability, age or LGBTIQ status.

Nickerson's book is of interest to me, as a white social worker in private practice in Newtown, in Sydney's diverse inner-west. More than half of my clients are from non-European cultural backgrounds and/or LGBTIQ and two-thirds are female or non-binary. Nickerson and his colleagues provide guidance on using EMDR effectively with these clients. This requires adopting a position of humility, to hold myself accountable for my white privilege and to examine other aspects of my cultural identity.

My clients do not routinely report, or seek treatment for, the impacts of culturally-based oppression. They have usually been referred because of a more egregious hate crime such as rape and/or physical abuse. Paradoxically, it requires a deeper level of trust for many clients of minority backgrounds to acknowledge that they have responded to systemic abuse by internalising its racism, homophobia, ableism and/or misogyny.

Nickerson and his colleagues detail how EMDR can be used to transform these self-denigrating beliefs into core beliefs of pride and empowerment. This requires the therapist and client to select the most salient memory that corresponds with the negative belief and identify its somatic component before using eye movements to desensitise the trauma. The memory is then reprocessed, also using eye movements, to strengthen the client's desired positive belief.

For example, a client of non-European ethnicity was referred to me after experiencing an extremely brutal home invasion. It soon became evident that the suffering he experienced in reaction to the home invasion was being exacerbated by his current experience of racial harassment and discrimination at work. The core negative belief that reinforced his distress was 'I'm powerless'. After desensitising past and recent

experiences that evoked the 'I'm powerless' belief, a new belief was introduced: 'I can make wise decisions to empower myself'.

Soon after completing EMDR treatment, the client reported one of the key perpetrators of the workplace abuse to his human resources department. The ensuing investigation found in his favour and penalties were imposed on the perpetrator. The client then advocated for, and introduced, more robust anti-discrimination policies and training in his workplace. This was evidence that he had internalised the belief that he could make wise decisions to empower himself.

It is not unusual for me to work with women who experience gender-based shame. These women are often acutely aware of the disappointment experienced in their families because they were born female. This disappointment may have been communicated to them directly, with overt statements, and/or indirectly, through the preferencing of male offspring. These clients represent European and non-European ethnicities.

One of these clients requested EMDR for the impact of child sexual abuse by a family acquaintance. During the assessment process it was revealed that the abuse took place within a family culture that devalued her as a female. The client identified a particularly painful childhood experience, when she witnessed the attention lavished on her brothers and realised she was neglected because she was female. The negative belief associated with both the neglect and sexual abuse was, 'As a woman, I'm worthless'.

The memory of the child sexual abuse was desensitised first since the client found that memory the most disturbing. As the desensitisation process unfolded, the client said that the vivid image of the abuse that had been etched into her mind for several decades was changing. She described the image as becoming more distant, like a very old photo. The desensitisation process was complete

when the client reported visualising the old photo transforming into a parrot fish that swam away, liberated. Her chosen positive belief, 'I'm a valuable woman' was then installed.

It is important to remember that not all clients who identify as minorities consider themselves as oppressed. For many, their minority status is a source of pride that has engendered incredible resilience. I once worked with a First Nations woman whose cultural heritage was a powerful tool in the healing process. I provided her with space to reflect on the cultural teachings of her parents, who were deceased, as well as using imagery to assist her to reconnect her with sacred places in her country of origin. These were the only resources she needed to re-engage with the world and to function as she wanted.

Renowned feminist psychiatrist, Judith Herman, has written about the importance of finding a 'survivor mission' for people recovering from trauma. This helps them to make meaning of the violence inflicted on them as they see the political or spiritual aspects of their experience and transform it into social action.

A survivor mission should never be imposed on a client by a social worker, but the social worker can explore the potential healing qualities of social action with their clients. When using EMDR, clues for an appropriate survivor mission may be found in the client's desired positive belief.

It can also be helpful for social workers to consider how we might engage in broader social action, as an antidote to the sense of hopelessness that sometimes arises from witnessing human suffering on a regular basis. EMDR on its own will not change the power structures responsible for injustice, but it is a tool that can make a valuable contribution. Complementing EMDR with other social action approaches can help us build rewarding lives for ourselves and our clients.

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New free service for social workers working with veterans

JANE POOL



About the author

Jane Pool is an Accredited Mental Health Social Worker who provides consultation to practitioners about a range of veteran mental health and specialist family issues. Jane has 27 years' experience in the field of mental health, trauma, and working with families. She has held numerous senior positions within Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS) and non-government organisations providing mental health services.

The Centenary of Anzac Centre offers a Practitioner Support Service which provides support and guidance to practitioners who work with veterans with mental health problems and their families. These veterans, writes Jane Pool, often 'have complex needs that can benefit from a holistic social work approach'.

As social workers, we work with clients across all spectrums of life and in varied situations and environments. One of the client populations that we may work with are military veterans with mental health problems and their families. Frequently, veterans with mental health problems have complex needs that can benefit from a holistic social work approach inclusive of the family.

In March 2018, the Department of Veterans' Affairs' (DVA) treatment population was 191,267 recipients. Of this a significant number of clients are ageing, with 113,236 (59%) being over 70 years of age. There are currently 47,056 (4.6%) Vietnam veterans and 12,254 (6%) East Timor, Afghanistan and Iraq veterans (combined) receiving DVA benefits (Department of Veterans' Affairs website, Accepted Conditions for Veterans).

From a mental health perspective, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is one of the most common mental health diagnoses in the veteran population receiving DVA benefits. Other mental health problems include alcohol dependence and abuse, depressive disorders and anxiety disorders. The majority of veterans with a mental health problem have more than one condition that they're dealing with.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs provides a number of avenues for veterans and their families to seek free mental health support and/or treatment, including Open Arms (previously known as the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service - VVCS), DVA-funded outpatient group treatment programs in public and private hospitals, and self-help e-resources such

as the At Ease and High Res websites and High Res and PTSD Coach Apps.

However, veterans and their family members also often seek assistance through mainstream services. As social workers we are in a prime position with excellent skills to offer services to the veteran population and we can start this by asking the simple question, 'Have you ever served in the Australian Defence Force or are you an immediate family member of a serving or ex-serving Australian Defence Force member?' as part of our client assessment.

Practitioners who work with veterans with mental health problems may at times need expert information and support to assist them in their work. To this end, DVA has funded the Centenary of Anzac Centre, an initiative of Phoenix Australia - Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health. The Anzac Centre is dedicated to improving the lives of Australian veterans with mental health problems by providing expert guidance, advice and support to practitioners, organisations and others who work with them.

The Practitioner Support Service

The service is a free, nationwide service, providing expert multidisciplinary guidance and support to health practitioners and other professionals and organisations working with Australian veterans with mental health problems.

A multidisciplinary team of expert consultants in veteran and military mental health is available to provide advice. The team includes specialist clinicians and clinically trained researchers, with complementary skills

and experience. They have varied expertise in clinical psychology and neuropsychology, general practice, social work, family therapy and psychiatry.

On initial contact, an intake clinician will take your details and respond to your query. This may involve offering information on the spot, sending resources or providing referral advice. For more complex enquiries, further information is collected about your client in order to direct your enquiry to the most appropriate team member or to arrange a consultation with a multidisciplinary panel of experts.

Services offered

Case consultations

Consultations can be via phone or email on any veteran mental health-related topic including:

- engagement with veterans
- assessment and diagnosis of mental health problems
- physical and psychological comorbidity
- effective psychological and alternative interventions and treatments (including pharmacotherapy)
- relationship issues
- service system questions and referral options.

Online resources

Resources are available on veteran, trauma and general mental health topics including:

- information and practical tools on understanding military culture and services
- clinical and client resources on treating the impact of trauma, including tools for screening, assessment, diagnosis and treatment
- latest research on a range of veteran mental health and wellbeing topics
- best practice treatment guidelines and general treatment resources.

Professional development and networking opportunities

The Practitioner Support Service facilitates opportunities for professional development for helping professionals

supporting veterans, particularly those located in rural and remote regions of Australia. A range of free 2-hour education seminars can be provided to work places:

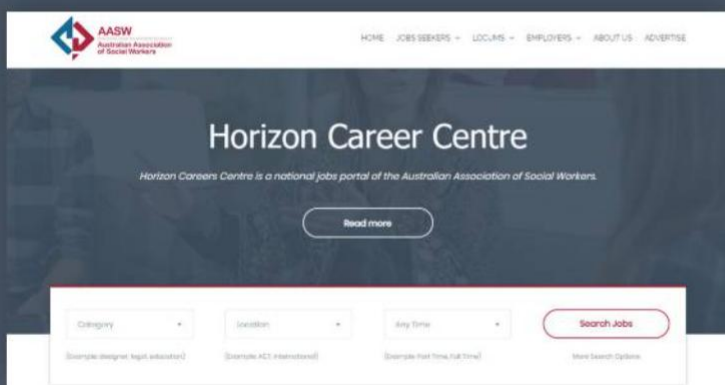
- Understanding the veteran experience
- Updating best practice - for specialist mental health and medical providers
- Medication information for non-medical practitioners - for specialist mental health providers
- Medication information for medical practitioners
- PTSD diagnosis: how to use assessment tools - for specialist mental health providers
- Brief interventions to manage distress
- Managing problematic anger
- Engaging with mental health professionals - particularly for ESOs and veteran advocates
- Neurobiology/neuropsychology of PTSD - for specialist mental health providers
- Working with families.

The Practitioner Support Service | Phone 1800 VET 777 | **Email** anzaccentre.org.au/enquiry | **Online** anzaccentre.org.au

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A new model for dedicated case managers in NSW prisons

JESSICA FOLLERS

The NSW Government has rolled out a new model for dedicated case managers in NSW prisons for the first time. Jessica Follers calls for more trained social workers to take this unique opportunity to work with offenders in reducing reoffending.*

The New South Wales Government's Reducing Reoffending reform package and plan for new case management units in NSW prisons, presents a unique opportunity for social workers to take a leading role in rehabilitative work with offenders, the likes of which has not been seen before in the state.

The latest NSW Bureau of Crime Statics and Research (2015) statistics tell us that almost 60 per cent of offenders in the system will reoffend within the next 10 years. Despite its unique challenges, offender case management can provide support to some of society's most disadvantaged and challenging individuals, at what has the potential to be a crisis or turning point in their lives.

At time of writing, I'm six months into my role as a custodial case manager, employed by Corrective Services NSW in one of the state's prisons. This comprises case managing a number of offenders, conducting assessments, coordinating the support services they receive, ensuring they access group programs that address their risk factors in reoffending, and doing some intensive one-on-one behaviour change work based on the strengths-based and Risk-Need-Responsivity models, as well as principles of motivational interviewing.

Let me be honest, I've found working with offenders challenging at times. I'm a young, softly-spoken female who works in a solely adult male inmate prison. I have a variety of Minimum, Medium and Maximum security offenders on my caseload, who have committed a broad range of offences.

Some of the individuals I'm working with have been in and out of the

system for years, for others it's their first time in custody; a rude awakening. Being statutory work, the individuals I work with are mandated to work with me. In reality, some couldn't care less about accessing services and support. They know the system, they know the rules, and for some, it's more comfortable than being on the outside.

As with all work of this nature, there are limitations and constraints. That's not to mention the challenges to your own personal values and the conflict with social work values that can occur daily. But there are also unique opportunities, which I believe social workers have yet to fully recognise. For some inmates, jail is a time for them to address their problems. They have the opportunity to access support that they may not have received on the outside, particularly for those individuals with more complex mental health and addiction needs.

For some individuals, when they are struggling to believe they can change, when they are up against seemingly insurmountable obstacles in society, when they have little hope, the fact that someone is present for them makes a world of difference. Even just to carry a little bit of hope for them for a period.

A few months in, I introduced myself to an individual I would be working with. He's a middle-aged man, with some prior involvement with the criminal justice system. I explained that I was his case manager and what that meant. I'm sure his response will stay with me for many years. He stared at me, shocked, for a moment, and then he responded, somewhat in awe, 'you mean, I get someone for me? Someone to help me get where I want to be? Me?' He told me he had never had



About the author

Jessica Follers, an MSW student at Charles Sturt University, completed an undergraduate degree in social policy before realising that there wasn't enough on-the-ground, intentional work with people to sustain her. Her love of social work began when she worked as a caseworker in the crisis and homelessness space for a large NGO. Recently, she took on a role as a case manager in a NSW correctional centre.

someone 'in his corner' before. It was an emotional encounter.

The introduction of the NSW custodial case management units has created 150 dedicated positions across the state to work with offenders while in custody. This is the first of its kind in the state; NSW inmates have never before had this kind of identified case management support. It is extremely exciting to be part of such a colossal change in thinking about correctional centres.

But the reality is, these positions aren't identified social work positions and very few have been filled with individuals from a trained social work background. With the complexity of needs and barriers that many of these individuals face and the history of corrections in Australia, social workers with a thorough understanding of

how to work towards change from a strengths-based approach are uniquely positioned to fill this immense gap.

The criminal justice system, and correctional centres in particular, have been relatively overlooked as a social work field of practice for too long. Traditionally, the criminal justice system seems to be brushed over in course curriculum, with few social work students given the opportunity to consider the importance of work in this area. Social workers, I believe, need to step up to the forefront of this unique opportunity to work alongside some of our society's most disadvantaged and oppressed individuals, lest the opportunity be missed.

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Social workers, I believe, need to step up to the forefront of this unique opportunity to work alongside some of our society's most disadvantaged and oppressed individuals

*This article a reflection of my own personal views and observations as a social work student and not the view of the Department of Justice.



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Gestalt therapy

An addition to the social work toolkit

PETER YOUNG



About the author

Peter Young is a Lecturer and Program Adviser for the Master of Social Work program at Griffith University in Queensland. He has been a social worker for more than 30 years, and has more recently added Gestalt therapy to his practice framework. Peter is a member of the Academic Governance Board of Gestalt Therapy Brisbane. He currently combines teaching with his private psychotherapy practice (www.peteryoung.net). Peter is contactable by email at p.young@griffith.edu.au

Gestalt therapy is a form of counselling that is well aligned with social work values – perhaps better so than other forms of counselling that tend to pathologise the client and their difficulties. While Gestalt therapy is generally not taught in Australian social work programs, I believe that it would make an effective, harmonious addition to the toolkit of Australian social workers into the future.

Prior to teaching social work I spent more than 30 years as a practitioner. After several leadership roles, I returned to direct practice social work later in my career, and it was at that time I realised that I needed further counselling training in order to be the practitioner that I wanted to be for my clients. Through research I found Gestalt therapy, and realised that this approach was best aligned with my own personal values and beliefs. After now completing a Master of Gestalt Therapy and having worked as a private Gestalt therapist for the last four years, I am also of the view that Gestalt therapy is well aligned with social work values, and makes a fitting companion approach to the social work profession.

Gestalt therapy is founded on the paradoxical theory of change, a term first articulated by Arnold Beisser in the seminal 1970 text, *Gestalt therapy now: Theory, techniques, applications*. Beisser believed that, 'Change occurs when one becomes what he [sic] is, not when he tries to become what he is not'. In other words, if we can make peace with who we are today, change is more likely and, ironically, less necessary – hence the paradox.

Making peace with who we are requires an exploratory process of self-discovery, as genuine self-acceptance requires knowing oneself. Without this process of

self-discovery, one is making peace with only limited aspects of oneself – most commonly the side of ourselves that we dare to show to others, or allow into our own consciousness. Therefore, Gestalt therapy is an active therapeutic process of building self-awareness and self-acceptance.

This affirming statement about the health and capacity of the client, which is at the core of Gestalt therapy, is what first drew me to this method of practice. And this positive, strengths-focused core belief aligns well with the core social work value of respect for person, as detailed in the *AASW Code of Ethics* (2010).

As social workers we are members of a profession that values all people equally. We don't see clients as deserving and undeserving. We understand unhelpful behaviours in the context of a person's environmental pressures, history, and in particular, past trauma experiences. Counselling methods that affirm rather than pathologise the human condition are, in my view, much better aligned with our profession's value base.

There is no single codified statement about practice characteristics or elements that together make up the Gestalt approach. Many authors will discuss four key pillars of Gestalt therapy, and these pillars have strong parallels with core social work theories.

PILLAR 1**A phenomenological approach**

This requires the therapist to stay close to the client's here and now experience in the therapy room. The goal of this attention to the present moment is to support the client to deepen their awareness, and to have the experience of feeling seen at a deeper level by the therapist. The therapist is guided by their curiosity - 'What is it like to be you right now?' The Gestalt therapist is not 'the expert' who interprets for the client. Gestalt therapy is very much an egalitarian form of therapy - two people meeting as equals. This aligns well with the core social work theories of anti-oppressive practice, as well as strengths-based practice.

PILLAR 2**Field sensitivity**

Through the lens of Gestalt therapy, 'the field' includes the internal world of the client, the space in the therapy room (including the relationship with the therapist), the client's relationships and world outside the therapy room, and also their past. All of these elements are relevant to the therapeutic process, and the therapeutic process is curious about the client's interactions with each of these elements. There are parallels between this pillar and ecosystems theory, and more broadly with the social work paradigm of the person in their environment. While social work will be more actively engaged in identifying pressures and resources in the field, and engages with the client to mitigate the pressures and recruit and enhance supportive resources, the emphasis on field awareness is another element of Gestalt therapy that is in harmony with the social work framework.

PILLAR 3**A dialogical or relational approach**

Safety in the therapeutic relationship is central to contemporary Gestalt practice, and a core element of Gestalt therapy training is that students must engage in personal therapy themselves in order to support the therapist's capacity to have a truly authentic and safe encounter with their future clients. Gestalt therapy emphasises authenticity in the client-therapist relationship, and this approach therefore moves beyond the simple use of skills and techniques to deeper relationship-building considerations. This valuing of authenticity is consistent with Person Centred Practice that many social work programs and theory text books promote, and the transparency and respect implicit in this pillar again aligns well with core social work values.

PILLAR 4**Experimentation**

This is a creative element of practice that helps to build and deepen awareness. The classic Gestalt experiment - sometimes referred to as 'the empty chair' - is just one of many ways that therapists respond creatively to the client-led process of Gestalt therapy. Experiments are carefully contracted with the client, and are undertaken without any expectations of what might emerge. Experiments are not a pre-prepared, scripted process that the therapist leads the client through, but rather a co-created process that emerges naturally from the therapeutic encounter. Again this focus on power considerations and on the client as the expert, are well aligned with the social work theory of anti-oppressive practice, and with the social work value of respect for person.

Given the strong alignment between social work and Gestalt therapy values and theories, it is perhaps surprising that Gestalt therapy is only touched on in the key social work text books used in most Australian universities. Gestalt therapy is also not commonly taught as a counselling method in Australian social work programs. This may be explained by the emphasis on counselling methods with stronger empirical groundings, and also on brief intervention methods designed for use in time-limited contexts. My contention is that we are perhaps poorer as a profession as a result of this omission. I am interested in hearing from other social workers who share my interest in Gestalt therapy. Perhaps there is a place for a social work future that includes elements of this transformational form of practice.

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Addressing climate change

Social workers facilitating and creating the jobs of the future

LAUREL CUFF

Social work is being called upon to power up its community building, reinforce its role in education, focus its advocacy and exert its influence over policy. There is an overarching issue at play in today's world that will change the nature and severity of the problems people face and the ways we work with them forever.

We social workers are a bit different, aren't we? Aside from the obvious predisposition for thinking outside the square, we are also unique in the way we are trained for, and interact with, our occupational worlds.

We are not simply qualified to do one job – specific in its tasks, focused in its outcomes, restricted in its clientele, predictable in its location – but are, perhaps more than in other vocations, equipped to work in an almost limitless array of circumstances. Some of us work with data, some with children. We work in the community, health, aged care, justice, education and other sectors; in councils, hospitals, community houses, schools, government departments, charities, NGOs and NFPs. We are remarkably widespread, and importantly, we are often embedded in communities.

The most interesting aspect of the profession for me, though, is the crucial underpinning grasp of the systemic social and political contexts around why people struggle. Unlike, say, psychology, in which practice is informed by prerequisite knowledge of how the brain functions, the crucial foundation of social work is an understanding of the outside world and all its structural inequities. Social workers, by definition, need to be informed.

When I think about what the future of social work might look like then, these two aspects – our extensive distribution throughout communities and our keen understanding of the prevailing systems that impact on people – converge, to reveal one clear and inevitable direction in which the profession seems destined

to head; to play a significant role in humanity's response to climate change.

So many of the impacts of this crisis are of course already core business for social workers; sea level rise and extreme weather events (and their associated natural disasters) cause homelessness, resource scarcity and civil unrest among a myriad of other consequences. Far from being simply an environmental problem, the social significance of climate change almost cannot be overstated. We are threatened, just like every other species on earth. However, aside from the obvious need for social work services in the aftermath of current and impending catastrophes, I believe we have an equally important part to play in supporting the tremendous change that is needed to mitigate further, ever worsening outcomes.

Social workers are trained to be able to facilitate, elucidate, support and temper change. It is no longer contentious to say that humankind needs to dramatically slow its consumption; of fossil fuels, of finite resources, of all resources. We, in the developed world first and foremost, must somehow learn to turn away from the fatally flawed 'infinite growth' economic paradigm and fundamentally alter the way we live on this planet. So, quite a bit of change then.

I say 'we' rather than 'governments' because as we know, it is now decades since the first serious acceptance of anthropogenic climate change, and our world leaders' progress on curbing emissions has clearly been neither substantial nor speedy enough. It appears that as long as this issue



About the author

Laurel Cuff has worked with families, young people and asylum seekers in her social work career, but is most powerfully motivated by the challenge of how the profession might help communities build resilience to climate change. She has degrees in social work and social ecology, and currently works in projects and research for Relationships Australia Tasmania.

remains partisan – rendered opaque by those political, industrial and private interests most threatened by the reality of our need to abandon reliance on fossil fuels – action (at least in terms of legislation) will be slow and difficult.

When it comes to dealing with the climate crisis anything that can divide us inevitably will. I have personally found that wearing one's political heart on one's sleeve is fraught, and is all too often alienating, divisive and obstructive to understanding. I was once an angst-ridden teenage activist, protesting against logging, the Iraq war, the gap between black and white Australia, the politics of Pauline Hanson when she was first elected in 1996 and even yelling 'go home' at a visiting Queen Elizabeth II from up a tree (I had decided I was very much a republican). However, at the age of 20 I peeled the Greens sticker off my car and became much more quiet and considered about my opinions. I had not found any satisfaction in stalemate, opposition, being blocked off to others' perspectives.

Although there will always be the necessity for people to stand up and fight for just causes, in situations where robust community dialogue is needed and some level of consensus is sought, it is imprudent to fly the flag of any particular political agenda. Social workers are more than capable of working with people in a way that consciously sets aside bias and political alignment and fosters inclusivity and authenticity to help communities move in the right direction for the future of the earth.

Rather than venturing onto the ideological battleground in our work then, in situations where motivation to 'act on climate change' is low (which may not be due to political leanings but rather poverty, chronic health concerns or other immediately pressing issues) I suggest we start by focusing on current and tangible projections and targets. We should use projections for future extreme weather events to work together with communities toward mitigating specific risks, while at the same time look at the actual targets set by our leaders and build the framework to be able to brainstorm appropriate ways of meeting them.

An example of what has been tabled in my own beautiful backyard of Hobart, is the City Council's laudable commitment to abolish landfill at the municipality's only refuse site by 2030. No rubbish tip. In 11 years' time. Whether or not this is a serious goal that the Council is ready to work towards is not yet clear, but it does provide food for thought on just how much change is needed for each specific target set.

Goals such as living without a rubbish bin also provide people with a source of motivation to change; not because they necessarily believe in climate change or even care about the environment, but because the systems around them are changing. Either by policy or by necessity (or probably both), we as citizens will inevitably shoulder a large proportion of the 'burden' of action. What a perfect place for social work to exist.

I acknowledge and am inspired by the many social workers (and people right across the board for that matter) doing incredible proactive things in the area of sustainability because it is intuitive for them and they have drive and passion to do them. Social workers can be agents of change within our workplaces, amidst our client groups and between our sector partner organisations, and at both practice and policy level.

However, we can't, and shouldn't, all be off-the-side-of-my-desk martyrs to the cause. We should be making the case for many more of these new-generation paid positions; sustainability officers, climate change communicators, specialised community development consultants, environmental social workers, climate event support workers and waste reduction officers, just to throw a few around.

In my view, there are three key ways that social work can support the great transition:

Policy and advocacy: If we represent and advocate for the most disadvantaged sections of society, then ambitious, comprehensive government action on climate change becomes all the more pressing; we know our clients will continue to be affected first and hardest by its impacts.

Education: Clear and sensitive communication is a key skill in our profession; we should be putting our hands up to run workshops, give presentations and generally break down walls of misunderstanding and political rhetoric.

Community development:

A good social worker can elicit and understand the real needs of people, strengthen networks and help to build robust and most importantly resilient communities. We can collaborate to initiate projects that localise economies and increase employment; set up social enterprises such as co-ops, repair cafes and urban farms; support the development of small scale renewable energy projects or help people use their collective buying power to obtain affordable energy efficiency mechanisms such as solar energy systems for individual households, and; whatever other locally grown ideas germinate.

Social workers are primed to mobilise and foster our community members' creativity, innovation, motivation and unique skills. We could wait for our world leaders to take the action needed on climate change, or we could combine the considered social worker with the teenage activist to heed the sage advice of *Rage Against the Machine*, and take the power back.



Where eco-social work and Indigenous world views intersect

A personal perspective on addressing the health and wellbeing of people and planet

LUCY VAN SAMBEEK

'Eco-social work is an area of practice that is still trying to find its identity. I have only very recently 'come out' as an eco-social worker and recognise there are many different approaches to incorporating eco-therapies into practice', Lucy Van Sambeek writes.



About the author

Lucy Van Sambeek is a trauma-informed, narrative eco-therapist who has practised social work in Aboriginal communities of the Northern Territory for more than a decade. Now living on the NSW mid-north coast, Lucy offers counselling in the outdoors, nature therapy walks, narrative art therapy group programs and nature-based corporate wellbeing services.

My eco-social work practice has been largely influenced by my Indigenous mentors and co-workers in the Northern Territory. Spending time on country with Tiwi Elders gave me insight into their culture, spiritual connection to the land and harmonious lifestyles. For those experiencing intergenerational trauma, mental health, drug and alcohol and domestic violence issues, the women often told me 'going bush is the best medicine for our people'. Essentially what the Elders were telling me is that land and connection to country is critical for social and emotional wellbeing, and must be part of a therapeutic plan for recovery. This is consistent with a 2009 Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATIS) paper, which says,

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health is viewed in a holistic context, that encompasses mental health and physical, cultural and spiritual health. Land is central to wellbeing. Crucially, it must be understood that when the harmony of these interrelations is disrupted, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ill health will persist.

Part of my therapeutic work involved taking families out on camping trips away from the stresses of their community. The strong women always took a lead in traditional healing ceremonies for their children and families on these camps.

Eco-social work practice requires us to expand our thinking beyond the

'person-in-environment' perspective to consider the earth as an ecological whole in which humans have always belonged. Eco-psychologists might argue that people and the planet are so inextricably linked that when one becomes unwell so does the other, likewise when one is healthy so is the other. According to the biophilia hypothesis, people have an innate affiliation with nature and if we separate from nature we will suffer psychologically.

This need for nature goes beyond exploiting natural resources for human gain, but is vital for human emotional, spiritual, aesthetic and cognitive growth and development. It could be that our evolution away from forests into the busy, stressful conditions of modern civilisation is contributing to the rapidly rising rates of mental health issues we are seeing globally. Richard Louv, who uses the term 'nature deficit disorder' to describe the impact of our separation, says children are spending so much less time outdoors than previous generations, that it is having a detrimental impact on their development. Rather than seeing ourselves as separate from nature, we must remember, we are nature.

To assist in the process of getting people to reconnect with nature for health and wellbeing, I did training in an eco-therapy called Nature and Forest Therapy (NFT). NFT is inspired by the traditional Japanese practice of shinrin yoku (forest bathing). The objective of a nature therapy walk is to give participants an opportunity



to take a break from the stresses of daily life, to slow down and appreciate things that can only be noticed when moving slowly.

The key is not to cover a lot of miles, but to walk through nature with intention and just 'be'. This mindful approach to nature connection can be likened to the Indigenous contemplative practice of Dadirri, traditionally practised while sitting on country. Miriam Rose Ungunmerr says 'Dadirri is inner, deep listening and quiet, still awareness. Dadirri recognises the deep spring that is inside us'.

On a guided group Nature Therapy walk, particular attention is paid to the practice of reciprocity. In supporting the development of human-nature relationships we foster the role of humans as givers, as well as receivers. I firmly believe that if we are more closely connected to Mother Nature, we are more likely to want to care for and protect her. People who engage regularly in forest bathing practices tend to spontaneously want to give back to nature or introduce lifestyle changes to tread more lightly on the earth. This is consistent with the Indigenous worldview that recognises the interconnectedness of all things.

In a counselling context, eco-social work can be as simple as conducting sessions outdoors or doing a 'walk and talk' session in nature. The relaxation effects of being in nature are immediate for our clients, regardless of what happens in the therapeutic conversation. If it is not possible to meet outside, nature can be brought indoors to enhance the healing effects. Introducing pot plants, nature landscape artwork and natural forest scents to your office all have health and wellbeing benefits.

Eco-therapists are implementing nature-based enquiries into their assessment processes using instruments such as the Sensory Awareness Inventory. Investigations into the sensory activities that give people pleasure often feature nature-based themes and provide insight into ways clients can move towards their therapeutic goals. Interventions such as sensate focusing allow clients to draw on the full range of sensory experiences to help them achieve a life of comfort, safety and joy. Using nature as a teaching or learning tool, nature-based assignments can be client or therapist-directed to help them draw on available resources and move towards change.

I believe eco-therapies will be the evidence-based focused psychological strategies of the future, as we begin to understand the interconnectedness between people and a planet under stress. Even putting aside for a moment what Indigenous people have demonstrated through their relationship with the land for thousands of years, there is evidence showing the benefits of nature and green space, to mental, physical, emotional, cultural, and spiritual health.

In bringing eco-therapy into my social work practice, I aspire to connect people back to their true nature, promote wellness and recovery from physical and mental ill health, and bring healing to those who have experienced trauma. By strengthening the human-nature connection, I am also indebted to the traditional, ancient wisdom of Indigenous cultures about the healing power of nature and our obligations to care for our planet.

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Hamro jivan ka kathaharu (Stories of our lives)

Narrative approaches in Nepal

VICKI HANNAM

Like most therapeutic practices, narrative approaches were developed in the Western world. Few studies have researched the possibility of whether narrative practices could be culturally transferrable in the context of Nepal, writes Vicki Hannam.

Over a five-year period, as a social worker and researcher, I held regular short-term social work training sessions with a small group of social workers, counsellors and teachers in a non-government organisation (NGO) in Nepal. This NGO receives Canadian funding and works with marginalised communities, including young girls who have been excluded from government schools due to emotional and behavioural issues and their families, youth residing in HIV/AIDS orphanages, and young men who are incarcerated in a juvenile justice facility.

A narrative training program was requested by the NGO and conducted in May 2017 in Pokhara, Nepal. This program consisted of six days of theoretically based sessions held at the NGO offices. This was followed by a two-day experiential activity-based workshop that was held at a nearby mountain village teahouse.

Data for this study was collected through a number of autoethnographic methods, including a daily reflection log and informal conversations with participants during this training. I also documented hindsight reflections on this collaborative process.

Counselling and social work training is quite new in Nepal. Problem solving or sharing of emotions has traditionally been conducted among peers and the village elders. The relationship between a social worker and a client in Nepal is very different to what it is in the West. The way of relating to people in Nepal is mostly guided by issues of

social hierarchy and the avoidance of conflict, perhaps as a consequence of the collectivist nature of this country.

Regmi and Sharma in their article 'Cultural challenges to psychosocial counselling in Nepal' (2005, p. 23) state that the terms 'social worker' and 'counsellor' are often applied to anyone who is working in a community setting, regardless of training. They point out that social work in Western models views the client as an 'active, autonomous agent of change with an internal locus of control, for instance in the case of goal setting within a problem-solving approach' (2005, p. 88).

Culturally, Nepalis live with the idea that success or failure in life result from sources outside their control or as located within an 'external locus of control'. This can manifest in the cultural interpretation of ill health or bad luck as resulting from witchcraft or spiritual intervention. This may impact on social work and counselling practice when working in Nepal, as unlike in the West, NGO staff and the clients they work with may not believe that they as individuals have control over outcomes in their lives (Regmi & Sharma, 2005, p. 89).

In the West, the client-social worker relationship is one in which the client is expected to lead within the process of change; however, in Nepal 'clients are not used to carrying decision power' (Regmi & Sharma, 2005, p. 87).

During informal discussion, NGO staff disclosed that, in their practice, they try not to give advice but rather



About the author

Vicki Hannam has worked in social work internationally and within Australia since 1990 in the areas of HIV/AIDS, sexual health, hepatitis prevention and treatment, alcohol and other drugs, mental health and cross-cultural development work. She holds a Master Social Work degree from the University of Sydney.

focus on rapport-building and setting goals. Therefore, working narratively with these participants required explanation and discussion around more abstract ideas and language.

The use of narrative terminology such as 'How did this story contribute to your identity?' and 'What value does this story hold for you?' (Carey & Russell, 'Re-authoring: Some answers to commonly asked questions', 2003) are examples that translate well into Nepali, however, the meaning attached to words such as 'concepts' and 'value' translated on a deeper, more meaningful sense during the two-day experiential workshop. After the session, staff told me that narrative training was an opportunity for them to have a future exploring deeper issues with their clients.

The participants in the training program were able to describe their varied stories and demonstrate how dominant stories in their lives could be re-authored. Brown ('Creating counter-stories: Critical practice and feminist narrative therapy', 2017) suggests that through dominant discourses within a culture, people 'often participate in their own powerlessness'. Some examples were discussed informally in the context of Nepal, such as, a woman is not a true woman unless she has children; once you are an alcoholic, you are always an alcoholic; and divorce is shameful.

The social workers and teachers understood the concept that 'the person is not the problem, the problem is the problem'. Through the use of narrative language and tenets, internalising stories such as 'I am an alcoholic' becomes 'when the urge to drink too much alcohol overwhelms me' which 'externalises the problem'. In the Nepali context, these tenets

are translatable and sympathetic to Nepali culture.

Writing therapeutic letters and documents has been part of Narrative approaches since inception. The aim of the therapist in writing a letter to the client is, in part, to summarise the key points of the practice that has taken place between therapist and client. The ability to translate this into the context of work practice had implications.

The participants cited two major problems, first, time restraints in the workplace and, second, that their clients would be embarrassed to reveal to them that they have limited or no written literacy. NGO staff stated that being illiterate in Nepal causes shame and may stop clients coming back to the service for counselling sessions. The social workers and counsellors spoke about the difficulty that this tenet of narrative approaches may bring to them in their practice.

One of the social workers told of how he lived at home with his extended family and must work in the garden and tend the livestock when he gets home from work. He commented:

I think it is a good idea to write a letter after the sessions with my clients but I will be too tired on the day and the next day I might not have the information 'fresh' in my mind. Also, most of my clients don't read or write. I could perhaps do this letter writing for the teenage or young clients I have, but where would they keep these letters? In a house where 10 people live, there is no privacy for the things I would be writing to them about.

The participants in this research found that this principle of narrative practice did not fit with either the workplace culture of the NGO or their clients' social context. Perhaps the importance of exploring this tenet, 'writing therapeutic letters', was not in the application of the tenet, rather, in the powerful reflections and informal discussion it evoked.

The narrative approach, like all Western-based frameworks, may be seen as a Eurocentric theory. However, the aim of this research was to examine whether this Western framework could be culturally transferrable and the narrative tools be of use to the participants of the study. Overall, the principles of narrative approaches could be socially and culturally applied to their practice with the exception discussed above.

In order to really work collaboratively in cross-cultural social work, I found it is important both in practice and research that social workers aim to support communities and the individuals within them toward self-decision-making and learning. Furthermore, Western-trained social workers must be mindful to practise ongoing professional and personal reflection in a social context that is different to our own. Collaborative practice, in its purest form, is in itself a lifetime journey.

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ADVERTISING RATES

		4-ISSUE package	
		Single issue rate (\$)	Price per issue (\$)
Full colour	Full page (inside covers)	1,050.00	945.00
	Full page (back cover)	1,260.00	1,134.00
	Half page (horizontal)	630.00	567.00
	Full page	892.50	803.25
	Quarter page (horizontal)	346.50	311.85

Prices are inclusive of GST and per advertisement.

DISCOUNTS - ADVERTISEMENTS

**AASW CPD-endorsed events

Advertisements for events that have been endorsed by the AASW for continuing professional development receive a 10% discount.

For more information about gaining CPD endorsement, contact 03 9320 1003

ADVERTISING DEADLINES

2019 deadlines

Issue	Bookings & artwork	Publication
Summer 2019	19 December	12 February
Autumn 2019	11 March	7 May
Winter 2019	10 June	13 August
Spring 2019	3 September	5 November

Prices are inclusive of GST and per advertisement.

ARTWORK

AASW will only accept final art that is supplied as a print ready, high resolution PDF with minimum 3mm bleed and crop marks. Minimum of 10mm margins are recommended for full page ads. All images must be 300 dpi.

Please send your artwork to editor@aasw.asn.au

Please check that the size of your advertisement reflects our specifications.

If your advertisement does not reflect the quality of our newsletter we will contact you before we make any changes to it.

ADVERTISING SPECIFICATIONS (SIZES)

Full page 210 x 297mm Plus 3mm bleed	Half page horizontal 192 x 148mm	Quarter page horizontal 192 x 74mm

KEY:	Artwork area
	Bleed (min 3mm)
	Page trim



Social Work **Focus**

SUMMER 2019 – VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1

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