



PULSAR Newsletter

OCTOBER 2016

Welcome to the October PULSAR Newsletter

This newsletter is for everyone involved in PULSAR including mental health service staff, GPs and other interested people. It is our way of keeping you in touch with how the project is going. If you don't wish to receive this newsletter, just email us at admin@monash.edu and we will remove you from the mailing list. Please visit our website for previous editions: www.pulsarrecovery.org.au

Spotlight – Lived Experience Advisory Panel (LEAP)

SALOME ARGYROPOULOS AND ROSE COULTER

Salome and Rose are members of the PULSAR Lived Experience Advisory Panel (LEAP) who meet monthly and offer advice and recommendations on aspects of the PULSAR project to the PULSAR team.

What was your experience of being a part of LEAP?

Salome: It was useful. I didn't know there was a consumer driven group that was aimed at giving consumers better prospects. Sometimes with advisory groups you don't know where your work goes, you are there more as a token gesture as someone with lived experience because they feel that it was something that they are supposed to do. It wasn't like that with PULSAR. It has been a genuine consultation. It has been a worthwhile privilege and honour to be involved.

Rose: I have really enjoyed being a part of LEAP. I would have liked if more people could attend so I could make better connections but it has been a really good panel and I have learnt a lot. Our suggestions are taken seriously and we are listened to. I feel really proud, so well done Monash. It has been a good experience. I am interested in continuing to be involved.

What do you think of the PULSAR every day consumer workbook?

Salome: The workbook is necessary and needed. It fills a gap and I am proud to be a part of it. We would like you to come along



Salome Argyropoulos and Rose Coulter.

and talk about it to some of our groups because they are very interested in it.

Rose: The workbook has found a lot of interest. It is wanted by various people, not just consumers, but clinicians are also interested. It has been a worthwhile project and I am glad PIR (Partners in Recovery) could assist.

What is recovery-oriented practice and the PULSAR project?

Recovery-oriented practice involves supporting people to build and maintain a meaningful life and personal identity regardless of their ongoing symptoms of a mental illness. The Principles Unite Local Services Assisting Recovery (PULSAR) project encompasses the delivery and evaluation of a training intervention in recovery-oriented practice for General Practitioners (Primary Care) and Specialist Mental Health Service workers (Secondary Care) in Melbourne, Victoria. The training intervention is intended to optimise personal recovery in people with mental health issues presenting to GPs and Secondary Care staff participating in the study. We aim to evaluate the effectiveness of the PULSAR training by conducting two cluster randomised controlled trials over a four year period between 2013 and 2017.

Meet the PULSAR project team



Associate Professor Penelope Weller

Each newsletter we want to introduce members of our project team. This issue we feature Associate Professor Penelope Weller, who is one of the Chief Investigators on the PULSAR project. Penelope is the Director of the Juris Doctor program in the Graduate School of Business and Law at RMIT University. Penelope's specialist research area is Mental Health Law. She previously served as the Deputy Director of the Centre for the Advancement of Law and Mental Health in the Faculty of Law at Monash University. Outside work, she enjoys gardening, reading and making artisan bread.

PULSAR Primary Care

GP SPOTLIGHT

Dr Humera Rasool, Rye Family Clinic

Rye Family Clinic is a family owned bulk billing medical clinic employing four diverse and highly experienced GPs and a number of allied health professionals.

Why did you join the PULSAR project?

Mental Health has been always my favourite subject. Since I started working in general practice, I have been looking after patients with mental health issues in an area with a large population of retirees. To me, retirement should be enjoyable, peaceful, healthy and happy. Therefore, I was looking for a program that could help me to support my patients by giving them extra care or a way to express their preferences which may help others and themselves. The PULSAR research project seemed perfect for that.

What is your experience of the PULSAR project?

The PULSAR project enables me to engage patients to take better care to improve their own recovery. This program has opened up a whole new comprehensive approach to recovery and supporting patients that I could not have imagined before participating. In particular, coming from Kashmir where I had seen a large percentage of mental health



Dr Humera Rasool.

patients with minimal support, this revolutionary program makes me proud that I am taking care of my patients at the highest level. With strong support from the PULSAR project team and continual updates, the concept of recovery for my patients makes me happy. My patients are encouraged and feel better looked after with this approach.

What methods do you use for recruiting patients?

I inform patients about my ongoing participation in the project. That provides me with a chance to highlight the importance of completing the questionnaire, and the gift voucher makes it more appealing. Often patients are happy to participate due to the exciting nature of the project. How this program engages patients towards recovery and support also helps my practice to recruit more patients.

PULSAR Primary Care Project Status

 **30** GPs

 **16** CLINICS

 **24** GPs TRAINED IN RECOVERY ORIENTED PRACTICE

 **208** SURVEYS RECEIVED FROM PATIENTS

 **3** SURVEY COLLECTION PERIODS (T0, T1 T2)

 **5** INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH GPs

GP PALS NEWS – PULSAR Active Learning Sessions

What is PALS?

GPs and other professionals who have received PULSAR training are invited to drop in for monthly online sessions with our consultant specialist psychiatrists to review, reflect and share their experiences in the implementation of recovery-oriented practice. These sessions provide an interactive learning environment for supporting practice based implementation of learnings from the PULSAR resources and training package.

PALS are currently running at these times:

- Tues 6pm - 7pm – 4th week of the month
- Wed 6pm - 7pm – 1st week of the month
- Thurs 4pm - 5pm – 3rd week of the month
- Fri 12pm - 1pm – 3rd week of the month

For more information or to register for PALS, contact us on 9902 9695 or pulsar.admin@monash.edu

New initiative for PULSAR GP PALS!

The PULSAR team has taken on board feedback that some GPs find it difficult to attend PALS due to work and family commitments. We are therefore excited to announce that we are building a social media-based version of our PALS education sessions. This platform will contain resources on recovery-oriented practice and provide the opportunity for GPs to engage in active online discussions on how to use recovery-oriented practice in their work with patients. Information on the launch date will be circulated to all PULSAR GPs and feature in the next newsletter.

We are very pleased to have Dr Louise Stone join the PULSAR team to lead this initiative. Louise Stone is a GP and first worked at Monash University in the 1990's when she co-ordinated the Masters of GP Psychiatry and worked as a GP in Foster in Gippsland. Since then, she's continued her clinical, educational and research interest in GP Psychiatry. She believes that mental health care in General Practice is very different to psychiatry or psychology; General Practice patients have complex, undifferentiated problems that often combine medical and psychiatric disorders alongside psychosocial trauma and suffering. Louise has a particular interest in caring for patients with medically undifferentiated illness, and completed her PhD in 2014 exploring the way experienced and novice GPs assess and manage patients who suffer from these illnesses. She hopes to bring her online learning and teaching experience to work with GPs extending their skills in recovery oriented practice. She is currently Senior Medical Advisor, General Practice Education and Training and Conjoint Senior Lecturer, ANU Medical School, Academic Unit of General Practice.



Dr Louise Stone.

PULSAR Secondary Care

Secondary Care Training Update

During June and July 2016, over one hundred secondary care staff participated in two days of PULSAR training. The first day of training provided staff with an overview of recovery-oriented concepts central to the PULSAR intervention, such as the CHIME framework. The second day focused on coaching and how recovery concepts can be used in a practical way during day-to-day work with consumers. The training was well received with comments such as 'all applicable for my working practice', and 'the importance of language to empower, not disempower consumers'. Additional training was conducted in October 2016. Please contact Vrinda Edan vrinda.edan@monash.edu for any future requests for training.



CHIME Framework.

Interview with PULSAR Secondary Care Trainer, Nita Mahbubani

Can you tell us a little about yourself and how you came to be involved in the PULSAR project?



Nita Mahbubani.

As an occupational therapist (OT) I started my career when the consumer movement began to gain momentum, hence I have always had the voice of the consumer front and centre of my clinical work. As Discipline Senior for the Adult and Community OTs, I have professional governance and work hard to instill this ideology in my clinicians. An opportunity to work closely with a consumer academic and further this work motivated me to be part of the PULSAR Secondary Care Training.

How have you found the PULSAR training from the perspective of a trainer?

Being a trainer on both periods of the PULSAR project I have had the opportunity to give feedback on the structure and have noted with satisfaction the change that has been made incorporating feedback from presenters, trainees and team leaders. The current training

is much more practical and a great improvement on the first.

Has the PULSAR training changed your day to day practice with staff and consumers and if so, in what way?

My experience on the PULSAR training gave me the opportunity to further question my professional value system, have conversations with Vrinda Edan (PULSAR Consumer Academic and trainer) and further my readings into the work of consumers. I find the Coaching Model has started changing the supervision model I have been using previously. I almost never start any project without consulting with a consumer and encourage my clinicians to do the same. To quote Patricia Deegan, "the concept of recovery is rooted in the simple yet profound realization that people who have been diagnosed with mental illness are human beings" (Deegan, P, 1996, Recovery as a journey of the heart, *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*, 19 (3), p.92).

PULSAR Secondary Care Project Status

 **18** SITES

 **3** SURVEY AND INTERVIEW PERIODS (T0, T1 T2)

 WE ARE CURRENTLY IN **T1**

 **642** SURVEYS RECEIVED FROM CONSUMERS

 **200** INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH CONSUMERS

 **10** REPEAT INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH CONSUMERS

What is PULSAReveryday

PULSAReveryday is a consumer-led subproject of the PULSAR Project Implementation Group. The aim of PULSAReveryday is to develop a range of tools based on the PULSAR principles to assist consumers and their families/carers to better understand recovery-oriented practice.



PULSAReveryday News

After many months of collaboration and consultation, the PULSAReveryday team is pleased to announce that the PULSAReveryday workbook and materials have now been finalised and published. The workbook was specifically developed for consumer use, and contains information on core PULSAR recovery concepts including the CHIME framework and working practices, as well as a number of self-directed exercises and additional resources. The workbook was recently presented at the TheMHS

conference in New Zealand and was very well received, with multiple requests for copies from conference attendees. Workbooks are available for distribution to consumers and specialist mental health care staff. We hope to gain further feedback on the content of the workbook to guide the design and delivery of future workshops. If you would like a workbook to be mailed to you, please email your name and address to Michelle Kehoe at michelle.kehoe@monash.edu

PULSAR Secondary Care

PULSAR-SMART Collaboration

PULSAR recently partnered with the team from the Self-Management and Recovery Technology (SMART) project at Swinburne University of Technology to collect follow-up data from our T0 (baseline) Secondary Care consumer participants. In total, 151 consumer participants, across all 14 participating services within Monash Health, Mind Australia and Ermha, were invited to take part by mail and/or telephone. Participants were asked to complete two questionnaires about personal recovery and their relationship with their mental health worker. Seventy-nine participants agreed to take part, with 46 returning their questionnaires by mail and 33 completing them by phone. Telephone interviews were conducted by Rebecca, Katrina and Kristi, research assistants from the SMART project, as part of the collaboration.

About the SMART project

Like PULSAR, SMART is funded by the Victorian Department of Health Mental Illness Research Fund. The SMART project is about the development and evaluation of recovery-focused online resources for people who experience psychosis. In particular, one sub-project called SMART-Service is investigating how these resources may be integrated into consumers' regular appointments with their mental health workers.

The data collected from this collaboration will help the PULSAR team to understand whether and how our participants' views of personal recovery have changed over the 18 months since baseline. In addition, participants from PULSAR non-intervention sites will be matched to SMART-Service participants on



age and diagnosis, providing a comparison group that has received routine care in mental health services. This will help to inform the SMART team's understanding of how personal recovery and the consumer's relationship with their mental health worker may be influenced by use of the SMART resources.

To read the article online see:
<http://bmcp psychiatry.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12888-016-1024-1>

PULSAR study on the cross-cultural relevance of a mental health recovery questionnaire (the QPR)

The Questionnaire about the Process of Recovery (QPR) is a self-report instrument developed to assess consumers' experience of personal recovery. This instrument is the primary outcome measure for the PULSAR project and is being used, together with other measures, to assess the outcomes for patients of the GP recovery-oriented training. However, the extent to which the QPR is relevant among culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities in Australia has not been established.



documents, such as the flyer, QPR and Participant Information and Consent Form (PICF) have been translated into the local languages, with interviews also conducted in the local languages. The project is based

at two PULSAR sites with large CALD populations: Dandenong Superclinic and EACH Social and Community Health Clinic in Ringwood.

This study is a PULSAR sub-study conducted as a University of Melbourne Master of Public Health project. We hope that findings from this study will contribute to improving mental health service delivery by providing evidence on how to further develop and evaluate culturally responsive mental health care



interventions focused on personal recovery. These pilot findings may inform a larger-scale study evaluating personal recovery interventions in culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Contact PULSAR

Please contact us with feedback, questions or to unsubscribe from this newsletter:

Phone: (03) 9902 9695

Email: pulsar.admin@monash.edu

www.pulsarrecovery.org.au