



**Loddon Mallee Housing Services Ltd**

**Mental Health Project – Supported  
Residential Services**

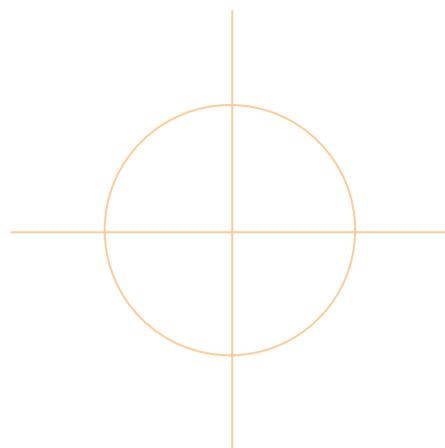
**Project Report – May 2005**

**By Oystein Sandvik**

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### **The Project in brief:**

In 2002, the Department of Human Services requested that Loddon Mallee Housing Services Ltd. ascertain the number and the needs of residents, with a mental health condition, who were living in Supported Residential Services within the Loddon Mallee Region.

The Department of Human Services provided \$50,000 to fund this project.

At the time of the request three Supported Residential facilities were in the process of closing their doors in the Bendigo area. During this period of disruption and relocation the Community Connections Program dedicated three days per fortnight (May 2002- December 2003) to ensure that people with mental health issues were linked into the community supports that they required.

Originally thirty people were identified having the profile specified above. Their needs included:

- Lack of contact from case workers
- Social isolation – lack of engagement in and contact with the broader community, families not visiting etc.
- Physical health needs not being met adequately (Eg eye care, dental health, proper medical assessment)

The Supported Residential Services - Mental Health project, as it operates now, is an initiative that is the logical iteration and continuation of ensuring connectedness into the community for these particular people. The project is designed to ensure that residents fitting this particular profile are linked into community supports in an ongoing way.

As of May 2005 twenty seven (27) clients fitting the profile have detailed Individual Program Plans that have been implemented. Ongoing supports are in place. This has resulted in a measurable improvement in the quality of life for these people.

### **History of the project:**

The initial phase of the Mental Health project, (June 2002 – December 2002) involved conducting a scoping exercise. Kevin Bowe of the Community Connections Program conducted this. Kevin was employed .3 EFT and funded by the mental health project in this capacity.

Kevin at that time visited all the Supported Residential Services in the Bendigo area and assessed the unmet needs of residents living in these facilities.

The objective was to develop a response for those clients identified as having a mental health issue in order to see what could be done to improve their quality of life and address any specific concerns of individual residents, in the light of closures of some of these facilities.

### **The aims of the project are:**

- To provide low level case management support to people, on pensions, with psychiatric illness living in Supported Residential Services
- To develop, implement and review the Individual Program Plans for each client, in such a manner that encourages and maximizes client participation
- To support residents that would like to relocate to another Supported Residential Service or other alternative setting of their choosing in the community, which satisfies the support needs and better links the resident concerned into relevant and appropriate services.

### **Outcomes**

A very effective working relationship with mainstream service providers has been established. This was achieved by using Supported Residential Services project brokerage dollars in collaboration with the Community Connections Program and by accessing additional resources provided by Cowbaw Community Health, The Y.M.C.A, Senior Citizens Clubs and Community Health Care Sunbury. A Dental Health Project has been accessed for both the Kyneton and Lancefield Lodge facilities. This service is funded through The Community Health Care Centre in Sunbury.

These programs have added a further estimated \$25,250 of dollarised value in service provision in the nine months July 2004 – May 2005.

## **General Observations**

As the scoping exercise proceeded from April 2003 – June 2004, it became evident that major changes would be occurring in the Supported Residential Service sector.

A Project Plan of nine tasks was implemented from July 2004 – June 2005. Two out of these nine tasks have been completed, four tasks are ongoing in nature and are being achieved and three tasks are yet to be achieved.

The project focused on seven Supported Residential Services in the Loddon Mallee Region, but due to the closures of Mildura and Talbot Lodge there are currently five Supported Residential Services in the region that accommodate 27 clients that qualify for support under the Mental Health Project scope. All of these clients have Individual Program Plans that are fully implemented and have been registered into the Quarterly Data Collection statistics for the Department of Human Services.

## **Advocacy**

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of October 2004 a Home Support Aged Worker and the Mental Health Project Worker attended a Supported Residential Services Research - Pilot Project launched by the Minister for Aged Care, Gavin Jennings, at inner South Community Health Services South Melbourne.

The S.R.S Research and Pilot Project is funding 21 packages approximately \$2800 per package to residents who are pension level and who have medium to high level of support needs. Loddon Mallee region was not included in these packages.

The workers voiced their concerns to the Minister in regard to the closures in Bendigo, Talbot and Mildura. He replied that he was familiar with the closure of Mildura and said he would look into these issues and consideration would be given for the next budget allocation to see if anything could be done in the Loddon Mallee region in the future.

**July 2004 – May 2005**

Activity	Provider	No of clients served	Cost to Mental Health Project	Estimated added value in \$ terms only
Dental Health Program	Sunbury Community Health Centre	10	Nil	\$12,000
Planned activity group (4 hours per week)	Cobaw Community Health Centre	8	\$1,100	\$3,000
Holidays	Mental Health Project	1	\$300	\$500
Weight training (1 hour per week)	YMCA	4	\$181.82	\$500
Gentle exercise (1 hour per week)	YMCA	4	\$254.54	\$1,000
Strength Training x 2 Sessions	YMCA	1	\$145.45	\$250
Recreational activities	Range of providers	4	Nil	\$6,000
Education Fees (Cooking lessons, Arts classes, Yoga)	Range of providers	11	\$57.20	\$2,000

**Achievements – Milestones**

**Kyneton Lodge and Karinya Lodge.**

There have been some positive changes over the last two years in these facilities as result of the Mental Health Project intervening.

Eight clients from Karinya Lodge and Kyneton Lodge were found to suit the Mental Health project profile and criteria.

The Mental health Project has involved The Cobaw Community Health Centre as one of the service providers. This service is to be highly commended for the enthusiasm with which they have taken up the task of including the residents from these two facilities into their programming.

Cobaw Community Health has contributed the use of a bus for transport and with the assistance of a small amount of brokerage dollars from the mental health project. Cobaw Community Health has employed a support worker, with Certificate III in Aged Care and Certificate and Certificate IV in Aged Care and certificate IV in Disability, to provide activities for eleven of the residents identified as being socially isolated with limited or in fact no opportunity to access their local community.

This program has been going for eighteen months, providing four hours of service for each Supported Residential Service once a fortnight. This program has proven to be very successful and the clients love it!

## **The S.R.S. Dental Health project for Karinya and Kyneton Lodge**

\$20,000 was allocated to Sunbury Community Health Centre through Dental Health Services Victoria.

Applications for this initiative were provided to the Mental health Project by the Department of Human Services but no one knew exactly who was supposed to provide the Dental Health service.

After contacting several dental clinics in the Sunbury area and having no response the Mental Health project worker chased down the service provider who was the Sunbury Community Health centre.

Sunbury Community Health Centre then requested that the project worker organize applications from the Supported Residential services. This was done.

In October 2004 the applications were distributed to both Karinya and Kyneton Lodge and the proprietor's were to fill them out and send them to Sunbury Community Health Centre in Sunbury.

This required a lot of follow up from the project worker to ensure that the applications were lodged with the Dental Service. Transport was also organised to ensure that clients kept their appointments.

There were four clients from Kyneton Lodge that needed dental work. Their treatment commenced in early March and is now completed. This regime also included a Dental Technician from Sunbury visiting the lodge and preparing new dentures for three of the residents.

Seven clients at Karinya Lodge required dental work. Six of these have commenced their round of appointments with the seventh commencing treatment within the next two weeks.

## **Lansell Lodge**

There are two clients from Lansell Lodge and two clients from Home bush that are involved in the Wednesday Activity Group, which is run, jointly by Golden City Support, Vahland House and L.M.H.S. The activities involved include bushwalking, fishing, cinema visits, and day trips to Echuca, Macedon, and Maryborough etc.

Brokerage dollars spent on behalf of residents at Lansell Lodge has allowed 3 clients to attend jewelry courses 1 client being enrolled in an art course, four clients attending cooking lessons and 3 clients' involvement in yoga. One client completed an art course this year.

## Home bush

There are seven residents who fit the service profile living in Home bush. Two of these have no program at all currently. Five clients are involved in a range of activities.

The owners usually take clients away on holidays to Queensland once a year where possible.

Mental Health Project brokerage dollars have mainly been spent on a few board games. And the Community Connections Program has funded the provision of incontinent pads for one resident.

## Princess Park

There are four residents at Princess Park that meet the criteria for the project.

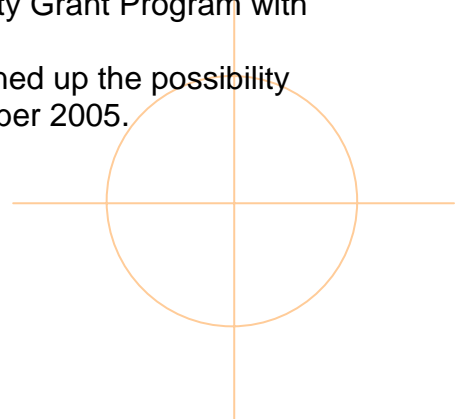
Mental Health Project brokerage dollars have been expended in the provision of a Y.M.C.A fitness Instructor to run a program for one hour every Monday in the facility. This program has proven to be extremely popular amongst the residents. This program keeps them physically active and assists in them building their strength and flexibility. In addition as a group activity it assists emotionally in terms of having fun and overcoming their social isolation.

Vision Australia holds activities for the residents, which enable them to go for drives and attend, organized luncheons.

## Group Activity Proposal

Last September with the support of Lansell Lodge and Home Bush Hall an application for a D.V.D. projector through the Community Grant Program with through the City of Great Bendigo was submitted.

Al though this application was unsuccessful. It has opened up the possibility for reapplying for something else next round in September 2005.



## Case Studies

### Case Study Number One

“Mary went to visit her brother for a couple of days in Tasmania. The Mental Health project funded her airfares. She had a volunteer travel companion, Harriet who is normally her Support Worker from Cobaw Community Health.

Mary claimed that she had a fantastic time and that Virgin Airlines really took good care of her. She is planning to go back to Tasmania in the near future.

This time she says that she will only need to be dropped off and picked up at the airport terminal. Her brother promised to pick her up and drop her off at the Hobart airport terminal.

Mary does not get involved with many activities and prefers to keep away from most people; she enjoys a visit from me occasionally. Sometimes she will talk for an hour and other times she just prefers a short visit.”

### Case Study Number Two

“Another client from Karinya keeps pretty much to herself, but she sometimes participates in the activities with Melanie from Cobaw. I have visited her a few times and she feels much more comfortable talking about herself and her family than when I first met her.

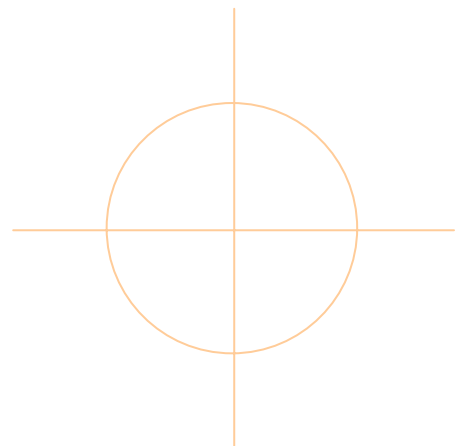
Working with Cobaw has been very beneficial and they are now looking at getting a couple of clients at Karinya case managed either through one with the Community Care Options or through Psych services.”



### Case Study Number Three

“Prior to Talbot Lodge closing, personnel from the Mental Health Project and the Community Connections program - LMHS organised a ‘Christmas in July’ party for residents. The objective was to provide residents with an activity conducted in their ‘own home’. This was in order to open them up to the possibility of participating in activities that were previously unavailable to them.

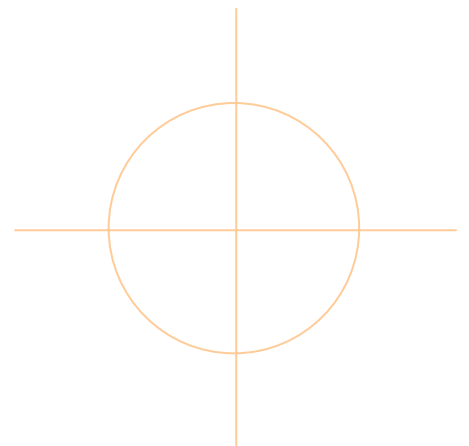
The residents had lunch at the local hotel before they all returned to Talbot Lodge where they were given presents from Santa. A local band provided the entertainment. Both residents and staff members evaluated this activity as being very positive and it was obvious that the morale of the residents was raised. Additionally, this event encouraged positive participation and interaction between the residents, staff members, and management of the facility. Resident’s presents consisted of personal care products that assisted in promoting hygiene and self care.”



**Consultation, visiting and networking.**

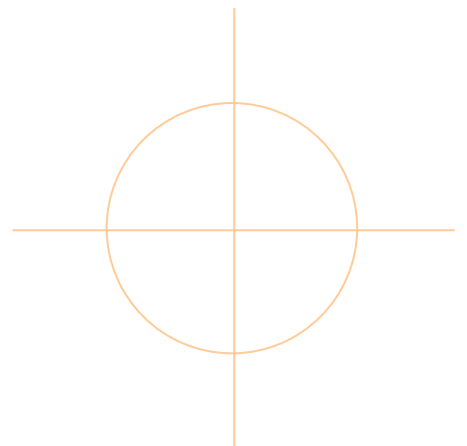
The Mental health Project has proven to be adept at facilitating the building of relationships and connections between providers, proprietors, residents and a range of other services to the benefit of the residents within the service scope.

This has resulted in an accrued benefit for the clients in improving their quality of life and having specific identified needs being met.



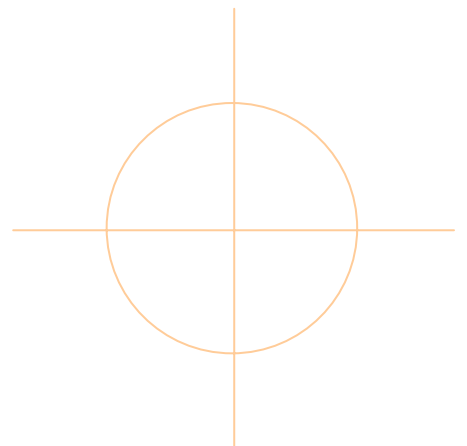
## Recommendations.

- To allocate ongoing brokerage dollars for the Cowbaw recreation Program with Karinya lodge
- To allocate ongoing brokerage dollars for the Y.M.CA exercise programs
- To allocate brokerage dollars to provide holidays for residents who are unable to visit their relatives due to lack of finances
- To ensure that Independent Program Plans are kept up to date to give residents freedom of choices and serve as tool to achieve goals
- To Network residents into educational, recreational and Medical needs
- Conduct Review of Business Plan for 2005-2006



## Future Directions

- To work in partnership in a collaborative manner with the Community Connections Program and the Housing Support for the Aged Program
- To facilitate access for residents with less complex needs into the community
- To scope and identify needs of residents and provide access to services for residents being accommodated in the new Gisborne Support Accommodation when the facility is operating
- To consult with Florence Davison from Mildura and incorporate new initiatives as appropriate
- To link residents from Karinya Lodge and kyneton lodge into the programs being run at the Macedon Ranges Neighbourhood & Learning Centres



**Appendices**

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