

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

SOCIAL WORKER AS A MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM MEMBER: EMBEDDING 3 C'S (COMPETENCE, CONFIDENCE AND COMPASSION) IN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION IN MENTAL HEALTH.

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Knowledge about mental health and the skills to work effectively with clients who have mental health problems are basic requirements to contemporary social work practice. It has been estimated that approximately 45 per cent of Australians will experience a mental illness at some point in their lives. Social workers have been very active in supporting people with mental health issues. However, it requires the involvement of 'whole-of-government' responses especially from public health, multidisciplinary mental health teams and from specialised fields of cognate practice. This presentation focuses on the role of the social worker as a multidisciplinary team member who plays an important part in the assessment, treatment and rehabilitation of clients within the context of their specific employment. Unfortunately, although social workers are key to the provision of a range of these services, their roles in this regard are often challenged, confronted and undermined in the workplace. The question therefor is how can these problems be addressed? How can social work education, for example, work to alleviate these difficulties? How can the profile of social workers be strengthened? These are some of the pertinent questions that the author will address in this presentation. The author will argue that by embedding the 3 C s in social work education, the profession will be able to strengthen the ways of engagement with the clients and families and also become an active and effective member of a multidisciplinary team.

STRENGTHENING SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION IN MENTAL HEALTH: CHANGE THROUGH INTER-PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION

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The impacts of mental health issues are widely documented in the literature, and Social Work as a profession is challenged to respond effectively to these issues. Strengthening social work education in mental health is accordingly gaining in importance so as to enable social work students to respond effectively to these challenges through appropriate knowledge, skills, and the ability to apply these in practice. This paper presents one approach towards strengthening social work education as utilised in the 'Social Worker as a Member of a Multidisciplinary Team'