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Participation and Partnership:
The development of a social work model of service delivery
for consumers and carers living with schizophrenia

Thesis submitted by
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in January, 2007

For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the School of Social Work and Community Welfare
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.....
Catherine Flanagan

.....
Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of various people. I would like to thank my supervisors Professor Rosamund Thorpe and Dr. Greta Galloway under whose supervision I chose this topic and began the thesis. I could not have imagined having better advisors and mentors for my PhD, and without their common-sense, knowledge, perceptiveness and endurance I would never have finished. Professor Thorpe offered me confidence in my ability to undertake a thesis with minimal direction. She endured many occasions when I suffered from an inability to write. During these times Professor Thorpe remained faithful to the belief that I would indeed complete this research. Dr. Greta Galloway, who taught me to write academically in an earlier thesis, was abundantly helpful during the difficult, early stages of the work and towards the end. She exhibited tireless commitment with editing and offering valuable, critical feedback.

I thank the Australian Federal Government for the Australian Postgraduate Award that sustained me through the earlier days of my research. I would also like to thank the Department of Social Work and Community Welfare at the James Cook University and Queensland Health for giving me work that kept my head above water.

I cannot end without thanking my family. In particular, my mother Mrs. Janet Flanagan for her constant encouragement and love through numerous setbacks. I am grateful also to the examples of my sisters Anne, Moira and Geraldine, and my brothers Liam, John, Stephen and Michael. In particular, I would like to thank my late father Mr. William Graham Flanagan. His unflinching courage in transporting his family to Australia and his enduring conviction in me will always inspire me, and I hope to continue, in my own small way, the noble mission to which he gave his life. That is, his belief in hard work, family and the conviction that higher education is the means to a more fulfilling life.

Finally, thank-you to all the people who agreed to be interviewed by me for this thesis. My admiration goes out to people who struggle with schizophrenia in a climate of prejudice and misunderstanding. I also remain in awe of the work undertaken by people who continue to care for people with schizophrenia. It is to them that I dedicate this work.

ABSTRACT

The primary intention of the research reported in this thesis was to develop a model of social work service delivery within one mental health service, Lantana Integrated Mental Health Service (LIMHS), that would prioritise the development of participation and partnerships in service delivery, planning and evaluation for consumers diagnosed with schizophrenia and their carers as stipulated under Standard 3 of the *National Standards for Mental Health Services (1996)*. In order to undertake this task, ethnographic case study research was employed which incorporated focus group discussions and individual semi-structured interviews. The intent was that any proposed model, arising from the research would be capable of operationalisation within the existing structure of LIMHS. Research participants consisted of three members of management, a community development worker, twelve social workers, fourteen consumers and fourteen carers either working or receiving services at LIMHS.

The findings of this study indicate that LIMHS experiences many constraints to implementing participation and partnership policy expectations. The primary themes which emerged from the consumers' and carers' discourses were about their powerlessness in relation to psychiatry and bureaucracy, and the importance of mental health professionals, including psychiatrists, to help them address their social, emotional and material needs rather than continue a strict focus on bio-medical issues and solutions. This research uncovered a more respectful stance towards social work as demonstrated by consumers and carers than the respect social workers afford themselves. Using structuration theory (Giddens, 1984) this study found that social workers position themselves precariously between an overt demonstration of collusion with psychiatry in the workplace and a more covert alliance with their own codes and methods of practice in the intimate shared space of consumer and carer engagement.

This study found many anomalies and tensions within a third way (Giddens, 1998) politics when applied to the field of mental health. The findings of this case study suggest that consumers and carers are exposed to legal, medical and social structures, and third way policies which fail them. These conclusions have implications for socially just social work practice. This thesis culminates in the presentation of a proposed model of social work practice at LIMHS.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Statement of Access	II
Statement of Sources	III
Acknowledgements	IV
Abstract	V
Table of contents	VI
List of figures	XII
Abbreviations	XIII
Key Concepts of the Study	1
CHAPTER ONE	4
Introduction	4
Research Aim and Questions	5
Myths, Stigma and the Media	6
The Abuse of Carers and Families	8
Suicide and Schizophrenia	10
Caring for People with Schizophrenia	13
Indigenous Ways of Caring	16
The Policy Setting	18
Policies of Inclusion	21
Concepts of Partnership and Participation	24
Implications for Social Work	26
Theoretical Framework	27
Structuration Theory	28
Structure	29
Rules	29
Rules and ontological security	30
Co-presence	30
Resources	31
Resources and the dialectic of control	31
Agent and agencies	31
Reflexive monitoring	32
Transformative capacity	33
The Third Way	33
Location of the Researcher	41
The Research Context	44
Research Setting LIMHS	47
Clinical Teams	47

Thesis Layout	49
Conclusion	49
CHAPTER TWO	50
Social Work in Mental Health Services	50
Case management and the Multidisciplinary Team	51
Continuous Improvement	56
Performative Mental Health Services	58
Working Together	59
From Expert to Facilitator	63
Recovery and Hope for a Future	65
Advocating for Active Involvement	67
Education, Training and Development	69
Conclusion	69
CHAPTER THREE	71
Living with Schizophrenia	71
Schizophrenia Defined	71
Incidence and Prevalence of Schizophrenia	73
Common Theoretical Explanations for the Causes of Schizophrenia	74
Consumer and Carer Participation	75
Consumer Advisory Groups	77
The Medical Model	82
Putting the Last First	84
Staff Recruitment	86
Consumer Day-centre Programmes	87
Knowledge and Training	89
Conclusion	90
CHAPTER FOUR	92
Research Design and Methodology	92
Research Paradigm	92
The Critical Research Paradigm	94
Participatory Research	95
Locating the Researcher	96
Ethical Considerations	96
Participants	99
Management	99
Community development worker	99
Social workers	99

Consumers and carers	99
Research Techniques	100
Educative sessions using vignettes	100
Semi-structured interviews	101
Focus group interviews	102
Interview Processes	103
Phase One: Semi-Structured Interviews	103
Social workers	103
Management	103
Community development worker	104
Phase Two: Educative Sessions	104
Consumers	104
Carers	106
Phase Three: In-Depth Focus Group Interviews	107
Consumers	107
Carers	108
Phase Four: In-Depth Individual Interviews	109
Consumers and carers	109
Limitations of the Research	110
Data Analysis and Presentation	111
Thematic analysis	111
Generalisability and transferability	112
Conclusion	113
CHAPTER FIVE	114
DATA SET 1: Managements' Responses	114
Background and Introduction to Management Participants	114
Participation	115
Social Work	119
Performance and Evaluation of Social Workers at LIMHS	121
Social Justice	122
Postgraduate Social Work Training	124
Conclusion	125
CHAPTER SIX	127
DATA SET 2: Community Development Workers' Responses	127
Participation	127
Social Work	129
Social Justice	130

Social Work Education	130
Conclusion	131
CHAPTER SEVEN	132
DATA SET 3: Social Workers' Responses	132
Participation	132
Roles which could be engaged by Consumers and Carers	139
Social Work	141
Social Workers at LIMHS	142
Social Work Evaluation	148
Professional Supervision	150
Social Justice	150
Postgraduate Social Work Education	153
Conclusion	154
CHAPTER EIGHT	156
DATA SET 4: Consumers' Views	156
Participation	156
Participatory Activities in which Consumers are Engaged	158
Ideas for Consumer Roles	160
LIMHS	161
Consumer Concerns about Participation	164
Social Work	164
Social Justice	166
Education for MHPs	173
Conclusion	174
CHAPTER NINE	175
Data Set 5: Carers' Views	175
Participation	175
Participatory Activities of Carers	178
Possible Carers' Roles	180
Social Work	182
Social Justice	184
Education fo MHPs	195
Conclusion	196
CHAPTER TEN	197
Data Analysis: All Voices at the Table	197
SECTION ONE	198
Discussion and Analysis: Participation and Partnership	201

SECTION TWO	224
Social Justice	233
Social Work Postgraduate Education	236
SECTION THREE	239
Conclusion	243
CHAPTER ELEVEN	244
A New Model of Social Work Service Delivery	244
Rationale for the Model	244
PART ONE: Case management, Partnerships and Research	247
Case management	249
Promotion, prevention and recovery focus	249
The use of the strengths perspective	250
Consumer and carer frameworks	251
Involuntary admission	253
Advocating for consumers and carers	253
The involvement of Indigenous mental health workers	253
Indigenous psycho-education	254
The involvement of general practitioners	254
A Recovery Plan	254
Holistic scope of the recovery plan	255
General practitioners	262
Planning for relapse	263
Key Formal Partnerships	263
Department of Child Safety	263
Drug and alcohol services	264
Queensland Police Department	264
General practitioners – shared care	264
Future Research Activity	265
Suicide and schizophrenia	265
Issues with children	266
Ageing with schizophrenia	266
Day-centre programme	266
Incidences of sexual abuse	267
PART TWO: A Model for Committee, Participation and Training	267
Consumer and Carer Consultative Committee	269
Staff selection panels	269
Policy, planning and service evaluation	270

Surveillance	270
Training for case managers	270
Involvement with psycho-education	271
The Practice wisdom required from Social Workers	271
Standards and competencies	272
Research and writing skills	272
Community development	272
Cross-cultural training	273
The Skills Consumers and Carers Require	273
Psychoeducation	274
Cross-cultural training	274
Group and communication skills	274
Queensland Mental Health Act 2000	275
Public speaking	275
Participation & partnerships	276
Processes of recovery	276
Professional Social Work Supervision	277
How is this model similar to other models and how is it different?	278
Why other Models have not been fully implemented	278
Present Climate and how the Model might work in this Climate	279
Recommendations arising from this study	279
Conclusion	281
REFERENCES	282
Appendix One: Standard 3 – Consumer and Carer Participation	318
Appendix Two: Consent Form – Management	319
Appendix Three: Consent Form – Community Development Worker	320
Appendix Four: Consent Form – Social Workers	321
Appendix Five: Consent Form – Consumers and Carers	322
Appendix Six: Letter of Introduction – Management	323
Appendix Seven: Letter of Introduction – Community Development Worker	324
Appendix Eight: Letter of Introduction – Social Workers	325
Appendix Nine: Letter of Introduction – Consumers and Carers	326
Appendix Ten: Interview Schedule – Management	327
Appendix Eleven: Interview Schedule – Community Development Worker	328
Appendix Twelve: Interview Schedule – Social Workers	329
Appendix Thirteen: Interview Schedule – Consumers	330
Appendix Fourteen: Interview Schedule – Carers	331

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1: Research Design	44
Table 2.1: Ladder of participation - consumers and carers	68
Table 10.1: Policy and participation data summary	200
Table 10.2: Data summary of social work	225
Figure 11.1: Case management, partnerships and research	248
Figure 11.2: Principles of a strengths perspective	251
Figure 11.3: Committees and training	268

ABBREVIATIONS

AASW	Australian Association of Social Workers
AHMAC	Australian Health Ministers Advisory Committee
AMHAC	Australian Mental Health Advisory Council
CAG	Consumer Advisory Group
GPs	General Practitioners
LCAG	Lantana Consumer Advisory Group
LIMHS	Lantana Integrated Mental Health Service
MHPs	Mental Health Professionals
MHS	Mental Health Service
NCAG	National Consumer Advisory Group
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
NSMHS	National Standards for Mental Health Services

KEY CONCEPTS OF THE STUDY

This section clarifies the overarching philosophical distinctions that underlie some commonly used terms of this study. Commonly used terms are often weighed with different meanings for different people. The interpretation of these concepts is a reflection of my experience and philosophical orientation. The definitions borrowed from other authors are identified and referenced accordingly.

Binary	a distinction that is black and white so that things are thought of as only one way or the other.
Biopower	has two poles or components. First is the pole of scientific categories of human beings (i.e., species, population, race, gender). This pole is tied to the practice of confession. The second pole is disciplinary power. (Danaher, Schirato & Webb, 2000).
Carer	any person who is involved with unpaid caring for a person diagnosed with schizophrenia.
Carer's framework	the way that a carer of a person with mental illness would like to be treated by mental health professionals.
Caring	any duty carried out by a carer which contributes to the overall well-being of a person diagnosed with schizophrenia.
Consumer	any male or female 18 years and over who has been diagnosed with schizophrenia and who does not manage their life without assistance from others. Throughout this research, people with schizophrenia have been referred to as consumers. The term consumer however, is now common to all stakeholders in mental health services, including consumers and carers.
Consumer's framework	the way that consumers would like to be treated by mental health professionals.
Disciplinary power	a form of surveillance that is internalised. With disciplinary power, each person disciplines him- or herself. The basic goal of disciplinary power is to produce a person who is docile (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p.13).
Disciplinary technologies	techniques for producing docile people who may be subjected, used, transformed and improved (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p.135).
Discursive formation	roles within a particular field that precede the people who now occupy the roles Foucault (1972).
Empowerment	a process through which people become more able to influence those people and organisations that affect their lives (Meagher, 1995, p. 20).
Governmentality	a centralisation and increase in government power. This power is not negative. In fact, it produces reality through 'rituals of truth' (Dean, 1999).

Mainstreaming	The management of people who are seriously mentally ill, under the same organisational arrangements as those applied to general health services (<i>Australian Health Ministers</i> , 1993).
Panopticon	a method of surveillance used in modern prisons. It involves the observation of those incarcerated at all times in order to coerce obedience to a dominant order (Bentham, 1995).
Partnership	is multiple people as groups or individuals associating in a common endeavour, moving forward together through the process of learning about each others skills, knowledge, strengths and abilities in mutual growth (Meagher, 1995, p. 20).
Role	the part played by persons attending to myriad duties required of them through formal or informal processes and/or structures of organisation.
The Medical Model	a general term describing the power of the medical profession in terms of its control over its own work, the work of other mental health workers, mental health resource allocation, mental health policy, and the ways that psychiatric hospitals and community mental health services operate. This term is commonly used instead of the more descriptive term, medical dominance (Germov, 2000).
Technologies of the self	specific practices by which people identify themselves within and through systems of power, and which often seem to be either 'natural' or imposed from above (Danaher, Shirato, Webb, 2000).
Tokenism	processes whereby a dominant group promotes a few members of an oppressed group to high positions and then uses them to claim there are no barriers preventing any member of that group reaching a position of power and status. The people promoted are 'tokens', and the process of their engagement is 'tokenism' (Bishop, 2002).
Transdiscursive	a paradigm reclaimed from the past and represented as new and progressive (Foucault (1977b).