

Presentation Plan – Top End Mental Health Service (30 August 2017)

Working with Carers of People with Mental Illness

Introduction (5 min, 2:05 pm)

- What is today about
- What today is
- What today is not
- Who am I

Content (15 min, 2:20 pm)

- Sources
- Carer Recognition Acts (National & NT)
 - Obligations
- Intro Practical Guide for Working with Carers of People with a Mental Illness
 - Origin
 - Vision
 - Background – changing the paradigm
 - Why
 - Introducing the Partnership Standards
 - Bonus QA

Exercise 1 (8 min reading/discussion & 12 min feedback, 2:40 min)

- *Introduce each of the Partnership Standards to your Peers*
 - [Divide room into six groups]
 - Each of you will be given the background reading to the Partnership Standard your group is responsible for introducing
 - Also be given a format to introduce the Partnership Standard
 - Paraphrase the Standard
 - Why is this particular standard important
 - What are 3 bits of info you noted and want to share with the group about this standard
 - Have 8 min to read and discuss your groups Partnership Standard
 - Each group will have a couple of minutes to introduce the standard

Exercise 2 (8 min discussion & 12 min feedback, 3:00 pm)

- *Self-Assess your Work Place Policies and Procedures*
 - [Remain in your groups]
 - Each group will be given the Self-Assessment Tool (from the Practical Guide).
 - The Self-Assessment Tool describes various potential activities that align with your groups Partnership Standard.
 - You will be asked to rank your work place performance as

- **Red** – Significant under performance and need to develop a plan for improvement
- **Orange** – Indicates achievement some of the time but that improvement is required
- **Green** – Indicates positive achievement of the activity the majority of the time.
 - Great if you could discuss some potential actions.
 - Some groups are larger than others are - try to do at least four items.
 - My suggestion is to complete the field for your names in case your work place wants to include these findings in this information with their accreditation. Information will remain with TEMHS.
- Have 8 min to complete the exercise and a couple of minutes each to feedback to the rest of the group.

Where to from here? (10 min, 3:10 pm)

- Further reading – Information to Specific Settings including inpatient and outpatient facilities
- **Where to from here - what do you think?**
- Collection of notes – who should they be given too
- Who wants copies of the complete guide?
- Other feedback

Course feedback forms (5 min, 3:15 pm)

Me, my brother, our sisters and a stack of cousins. One of our large Christmas gatherings in the late 1980s.

In 2001, When I was 22 and my brother was 28 he had his first psychotic episode. The episodes and the involuntary hospitalizations came quickly and under traumatic circumstances.

There were many delusions featuring my parents. Aggression and violence were major issues. Often times this was because of naïve, but provocative behavior by certain family members.

Within 12 to 18 months our family was hovering on the edge of total disintegration. Not just the potential emancipation of my brother but disintegration of my parents marriage and my own depression and suicidality.

So what changed?

In the shopping mall, I stumbled across an information stand during Schizophrenia Awareness Week which was run by the Mental illness Fellowship of North Queensland. The support we received informed and empowered us. We turned things around and it literally changed everything.

Mum and I did a psycho education family program, we accessed individual support and we began to make changes including advocating for our place in my brother treatment. Life wasn't suddenly peachy, but I do not doubt that collectively we dodged a bullet. The family unit was maintained and after several more years my brother reached stability in his illness with the support of his family as a result of what happened.

I am not a MH Professional. I am actually an Mechanical Engineer. But for the last 18 months I have been working at Carers NT as a Peer Support Worker and the Coordinator of the MH Program. Prior to that for many years, I volunteered with the Mental Illness Fellowship of North Queensland as a peer educator providing support and information to other family members of people with Mental Illness. It was part of my own recovery from depression, anxiety and at times suicidal thoughts.

You guys are Mental Health Professionals. Some of you probably share my Carer experience. Some of you probably share my experience living with a Mental Illness. Some of you just care a whole lot and want to make a difference to the lives of others.

Whatever your background, I don't doubt that there are admirable and powerful reasons that you choose to work in the vocation that you do.