

Pharmacotherapy Training Contract Awarded to Southcity Clinic and JUCET

In 2004, Southcity Clinic, together with the Joint Universities Centre for Education and Training in General Practice (JUCET), was awarded the Department of Human Services contract to train Victorian GPs as methadone and buprenorphine prescribers. This is proving to be an exciting opportunity for collaboration with the departments of general practice at The University of Melbourne and Monash University. We have been contracted to deliver six training programs across the state and provide a range of mentoring and support options for new prescribers.



Workshop facilitators, I-r back: Benny Monheit, Leigh Munro, Nico Clark, Danusia Pietrzak, Paul Grinzi, David Ross, Dahni Houseman (project officer), Careen Jansen, Matthew Frei, front: Malcolm McRae, Martyn Lloyd-Jones, Chris Longman, Charles Cyngler

Two successful training days have already been conducted, one here at the Clinic and one at The University of Melbourne. The first training day was facilitated by Drs David Ross and Malcolm McRae and the second by Drs Paul Grinzi and Mark Davies. Plans are well underway for our first rural training day to be held in Gippsland in February. A number of the successful graduates already have a small number of methadone or buprenorphine patients and others will start prescribing shortly. Participants have been encouraged to take up the option of a mentoring session where they sit in with one of the GP trainers/mentors involved in the program. Several

participants have already taken advantage of this and feedback indicates that they then feel much more confident to take on their own patients.

We also have plans to conduct two forums for prescribers and community pharmacists involved in the pharmacotherapy program. All too rarely do pharmacists and GPs have the opportunity to get together to discuss the better management of their opiate dependent patients and other issues of mutual interest and concern. We see these forums as not only disseminating new and timely information, but also enhancing communication between GPs and pharmacists.

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Editor—Dahni Houseman

DTP—Michelle Evans

Welcome

New Clinician Brings Broad Experience to Clinic

Southcity Clinic is pleased to welcome Alesh Cech who has joined us as our new clinician. Alesh comes with qualifications in Gestalt Psychotherapy and an honours degree in health science. He is also a doctor of traditional Chinese medicine.



Alesh has a broad experience in alcohol and drug treatment services at the Windana Society. Most recently Alesh spent two years as senior clinician at the Specialist Pharmacotherapy Service with the Drug and Alcohol Service based at the Western General hospital—the equivalent service in the western region to our Clinic's service in the Southern Region.

The clinic has been fortunate to gain a clinician with Alesh's background and expertise and who, as with his colleagues at the Clinic, has a particular interest in working with complex patients.

Jan Brooks

Next time you call the Clinic you may hear a new voice on the phone. We are very pleased to welcome Jan Brooks as our new part-time receptionist/administration assistant. Jan comes to us with extensive experience working in a range of areas including local government, community health centres, aged care, and employment services.



She started with us in early October 2004 and has already settled in well to the team. We look forward to her ongoing contribution to the Clinic.

The Clinic

The Clinic is a service of Southcity GP Services. It's mission is to:

To provide optimum treatment in the Southern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne for substance dependent people with difficult and complex needs.

To provide effective training, consultancy and support services for health practitioners involved in providing treatment for substance dependent patients.

Southcity GP Services

Chair:	Jill Grogan	9903 1177
Chief Executive Officer:	Lyndon Crick	9276 3256

Southcity Clinic

Director:	Benny Monheit
Medical Practitioner:	Danusia Pietrzak
Service Development Manager:	Lurline Waters
Senior Clinician and Social Worker:	Wendy Mence
Clinician	Alesh Cech
Clinical Assistant	Evelyn Donnelly
Education Officer:	Dahni Houseman
Reception/Administration:	Vi Martin Jan Brookes

Newsletter

Published quarterly by Southcity GP Services (ABN 80 062 573 488), The Alfred, Commercial Road, Prahran, 3181.

Contributions to the newsletter are welcome. Send contributions to dhouseman@southcityclinic.com.au or fax to 9525 7369. Southcity reserves the right to accept, edit or reject material submitted for publication.

For information regarding advertising space and costs call Michael Simone on 9276 3256.

The publication of articles, notices and advertisements in this newsletter does not imply the endorsement of Southcity.

Web Site

www.southcityclinic.com.au

Call the Clinic on: 9525 7399

Fax us on: 9525 7369

New Clinical Assistant

Due to an ever growing number of clients being referred to Southcity Clinic a decision was made to create the new position of Clinical Assistant. This new position involves responsibility for the provision of assessment, care plans, treatment and outreach services to meet the needs of patients.

It is in this capacity that we would like to welcome Evelyn O'Donnell to the clinic.

Evelyn comes to us with a background in nursing having worked across a range of public health fields.

Evelyn started with us in early November, working Monday and Tuesday afternoons, and has settled into the team well.



Website Updated!

Visit us at

www.southcityclinic.com.au

Southcity Clinic's website has details of the programs we offer as well as useful clinical information—have a look today...

Oughts, Wants and Choices: Ethics in Drug and Alcohol Practice

Dr Alan Gijbers joined us again last November for the second of three sessions on ethics in drug and alcohol practice.

Dr Gijbers sees three issues to be addressed on this topic. They are choices and consequences, control and freedom, and bad choices and their consequences. The issue of choices and consequences was explored in 2003, and bad choices and their consequences will be explored at a SPIN session in the second half of this year.

For now we turn to issue three, control and freedom. Dr Gijbers has put together a list of questions for all of us to ask of ourselves about our practise and the decision we make. Importantly these are questions about our attitudes, behaviours and understandings and not those of our clients.

The questions are as follows:

- What behavioural limits are there on our clients?
- How do we encourage behaviour within these limits and how do we discourage/disallow unacceptable behaviour?
- What are the limits to the unconditional positive regard we

give to our clients? Where does this place judgmentalism?

- What do we do about the power differential between the client and ourselves?
- There are some D&A therapists who can only be described as 'control freaks'. Do you recognise that in some of your colleagues? (Quietly, in yourself?)
- What is the social context of the client therapist encounter? What impact does that have on the ethical expectations of the therapist and the client?
- How to we move from external to internal control of addictive behaviour?

If we are able to keep the answers to some or all of these questions in backs of our minds whilst we are working with our clients, then hopefully we will have a greater awareness of why they engage in some of the behaviours they do and how we, as their clinicians, impact on that behaviour.

Put These Dates in Your Diary Now!

SPIN aims to provide ongoing education, information and support to primary health care practitioners engaged in the management of people experiencing problems with substance use.

Topics confirmed so far for 2005 are:

Tues 1 February

Substance Related Brain Injury

Mandy Philactides—South East Alcohol & Drug Services

Tues 1 March

TBA

Tues 5 April

Hepatitis C in Substance Using Populations

Dr Nick Crofts—Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre.

Tues 3 May

Escape or Lifestyle? Drug Use, Homophobia and Sexual Diversity in Young People

Dr Lynne Hillier—Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University

Tues 7 June

Pregnancy and Buprenorphine

Dr Ian McCahon—Obstetrician & Head of Unit, RWH
Jenny Robinson—Midwife & Clinical Nurse Consultant, RWH

Journal Club

Every third Thursday of every second month, SPIN holds a journal club and case discussion forum, the dates for the 2005 sessions are:

Thursday 17 March

Thursday 19 May

Thursday 21 July

Thursday 15 September

Thursday 17 November

Journal abstracts and case discussions mailed out two weeks prior to meeting date.

To register for any session, call Dahni Houseman at the Clinic on 9525 7399 or by e-mail to dhouseman@southcityclinic.com.au.

What The Legal People Make Us Say

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News From the Frontline—Then and Now

What follows is a brief outline of one person's experience in treatment with Southcity Clinic. This has been written with the person's permission. It is an indication of what is possible when the collaborative effort of clinicians and patient achieves significant change in small steps, sometimes forwards, sometimes backwards, over a period of time.

	Then	Now
Age	22	27
Substance Use	Heroin, Cannabis, Alcohol Benzodiazepines, Amphetamines	None
Medication	Olanzapine, Efexor, Largactyl, Valium, Methadone, Ventolin	Efexor, Buprenorphine, Ventolin
Accommodation	Psychiatric Units, Homeless Special Accommodation	1 bedroom unit
Mood	Major Depression Chronic Suicidality Severe Dissociation Anxiety	Stable on meds No Rare Moderate
Behaviour	Multiple self-harm, (ODs, burning, cutting) Frequent verbal & physical conflict with others Shoplifting	None None None
Self-esteem	Extremely low	Steadily improving
Family Support	Non-existent	Weekly visits, financial and other help
Financial	Debts Mismanagement	No debts Manages with small amounts of help from family
Nutrition	Poor	Regular and nutritious meals
Physical health	Poor & no regular care or follow-up	Regular and effective treatment by trusted GP
Self Protection	Vulnerable to exploitation by others	Boundaries becoming stronger
Interests	No regular activities	Art, writing, science
Friends	Isolated and lonely	Developing firm relationships
Pets	None	Much-loved cat
Possessions	Clothes	Clothes, furniture, TV, DVD, computer
Training/work	None	Centrelink Community Support program Thinking about TAFE course Babysitting for friend

'When you're in amongst all of this, living the life, you don't realise what you have actually done. It wasn't until I was shown this list of everything that happened over the past few years that I realised how far I had come. I was totally shocked and really proud at the same time. It is such a positive experience.'