

The Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council is the peak Victorian body for consumers. To mark the 20th anniversary of the beginnings of the consumer workforce, VMIAC sponsored an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of consumers and consumer workers. The CORE Study team would like to acknowledge the winners of the inaugural VMIAC consumer awards in October:

Human Rights Award

Liz Carr and Merinda Epstein

Diversity Award

Evan Bichara

Consumer Workers of the year

Krystyn Smale (Clinical Sector)

Rick Corney (Community Sector)

Consumer Advisory group

Cohealth

Life Time Achievement Award

Cath Roper

Tandem held their inaugural Awards for Exceptional Service to Families and Carers in Mental Health in October. These awards went to persons and services who have significantly improved the experience of families and carers of people in the mental health system in Victoria. The CORE Study team would like to acknowledge the winners of the Tandem awards:

Awards for services:

North West Area Mental Health Service (Clinical Service)

MIND Australia Carer Helpline (Community Sector)

Individual awards:

Cate Bourke, Eastern Health

Jan McIntire, CATT Team Alfred Psychiatry, and

Frances Sanders, General Manager of Business Development, NDIS at MIND Australia

Chair's award

Chris Wynn from Thomas Lloyd Guitars, Monsalvat

Lifetime achievement award

Kali Paxinos, Carer and Advocate

THE CORE STUDY COMMUNITY REPORT

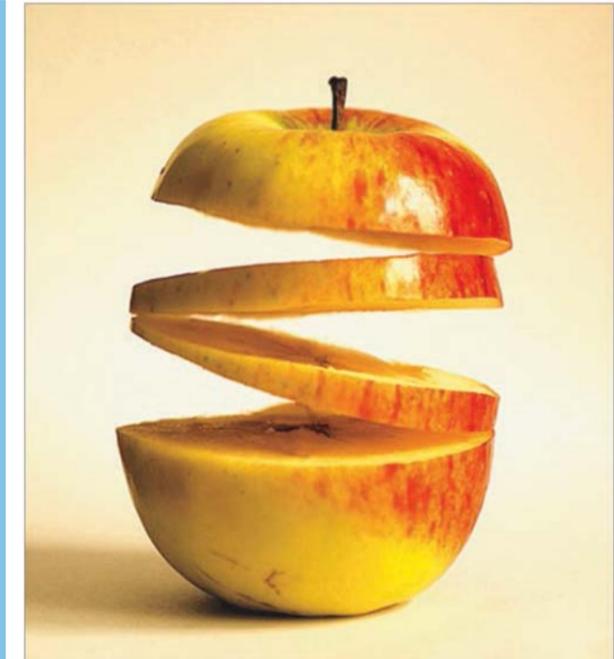
Report 3 | December 2016

Welcome to the third community report for the CORE study. This report is provided to Executive Officers and Board Members of partnered and other associated organisations participating in the CORE study.

In this report we provide the project aims and outline the key events and activities completed for 2016. The main study findings will become available in late 2017.

Since 2014, CORE has been collecting consumer and carers' personal stories and service experiences—we use this information to help understand recovery and work together to shape services with the voices of consumers and carers at the heart. Thank you for your ongoing participation and support.

Dr Victoria Palmer, CORE Principal Investigator



HOW THE CORE STUDY WILL CONTRIBUTE TO KEY POLICY DEVELOPMENTS IN VICTORIA

2016 marked the beginning of the Victorian government's work on its ten year mental health plan. At the centre of the plan is a focus on coproduced services.

The expert taskforce is currently exploring what coproduction means for mental health and other services. With your help, The CORE Study has gathered four years of evidence in coproduction/ co-design which can inform:

- the development of the planned implementation framework for coproduction in Victoria;
- the development of appropriate mechanisms, training and resources to embed coproduction in service planning, design and delivery.

This evidence can also inform the reforms called for in the National Review of Mental Health Programmes and Services. Primary Health Networks (PHNs) are currently looking at co-designing stepped care models for mental health to be delivered in primary care.



THE CORE STUDY—RESEARCH TEAM MEMBERS



Dr Victoria Palmer
(Principal Investigator)



Ms Kali Godbee
(Study Coordinator)



Ms Roxanne Kritharidis
(Intervention Coordinator)



Mr Wayne Weavell
(Investigator and Facilitator)



Dr Rosemary Callander
(Investigator and Facilitator)



Ms Jacqui Cameron
(Research Fellow)



Prof Jane Gunn
(Investigator)



Dr John Furler
(Investigator)



Dr Lauralie Richard
(Co-researcher)



Dr Donella Piper
(Investigator)



Prof Rick Iedema
(Investigator)



A/Prof David Pierce
(Investigator)



Prof Helen Herrman
(Investigator)



Dr Patty Chondros
(Biostatistician)



Ms Konstancja Densley
(Data Manager)



The CORE Study is a collaboration between Mental Health Community Support Services, The University of Melbourne, VMIAC and Tandem. The CORE Study is funded by the Victorian State Government Mental Illness Research Fund, 2013-2017.

For further information, please contact:
The CORE Study Team

1800 721 513
gp-core@unimelb.edu.au
blogs.unimelb.edu.au/core/
<http://go.unimelb.edu.au/r4ka>

Department of General Practice
Melbourne Medical School
The University of Melbourne
200 Berkeley Street, Carlton 3010

WHO WAS INVOLVED IN THE CORE STUDY IN 2016?



- At the mid-way study point we had **272 consumers** and **59 carers** enrolled in The CORE Study.
- Since 2015, **137 mental health community support services staff** have completed an online survey about their views on recovery and recovery-oriented services.
- 2 out of 3 consumers in the CORE Study were over the age of 45.
- 65% of consumers in the CORE Study were female. 77% of carers were female and 69% of staff who completed the online survey were female.
- 83% of the study participants were born in Australia.
- 7 in 10 consumers reported having been admitted to hospital at some point to get help for their mental health.
- 21% of the consumers reported that they were currently working. For carers the rate of employment was 36%.
- 77% of consumers reported having a physical health condition when we talked with them at baseline in 2015.



The CORE Study is building an evidence base about consumer and carer involvement in service re-design. Since 2015 nine community mental health teams have been taking part in a service improvement project based on an adapted version of Mental Health Experience Based Co-design (MH ECO). MH ECO was developed by our partners VMIAC and Tandem. Through a structured process, consumers and carers share what's working well in services and what could be improved with trained researchers over the telephone. This information is used to identify the positive and negative touch points in services, that is, the good things and the not so good things. The touch points are used within a facilitated process where consumers, carers and staff work together over a series of meetings to co-design improvements.

**Since the service improvement projects commenced,
153 consumers and 30 carers have taken part in telephone interviews.**

CARER NEEDS

Globally, there has been a shift in mental health policy to have consumer and carers directly involved in service planning, system re-design and evaluation. Despite the incredibly important role that carers play, it is difficult to get their voices heard. Of the 272 people enrolled in the CORE study mid-way, half reported that they have a carer and half of this group said that they live with their carer. Most carers in the CORE study were described as a family member (predominantly parents) (62%) followed by partners (20%).

"I would like to see some improvement in accommodation available for people."

The Australian Government's Carer Gateway lists the many and varied caring activities from attending appointments, facilitating access to support groups and professional services, listening to the person they care for, hearing their thoughts and sharing in their feelings, encouraging social interactions, increasing care when its needed and taking a step back as people become more independent.

"Knowing that there was just someone there that I could ring, I suppose, and just chat to."

Over the past three years, the CORE study team has talked with carers of people who receive mental health community support services and carers of people not in receipt of mental health community support services.

"I think the integration of services would be good for dual diagnosis. If you could go to one place where there were people that were involved with mental health and alcohol and other drugs (AOD) and both worked together with each other closely and coordinated treatment and counselling and just made it normal and not have AOD as a separate - a separate, you know, hoop - a separate jump - a separate batch of hoops to jump through. But if it was just normal to look at both together."

In 2017 there will be a focus on releasing more findings from our research with carers to identify their support needs and their views on ideal care. The CORE study will continue to work with its partner organisation Tandem to share this information and to inform Carers Victoria in the planned development of a Carers Statement in 2017.

"I think transparency is important and open communication. Carers need to be heard and valued more."

"As a carer my main needs are for information...the other thing I need from professionals is how the person I care for is going in the group...how are they interacting"