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SPREADING THE WORD

17-18 SEPTEMBER 2014
AUSTRALIAN IMPLEMENTATION
SCIENCE CONFERENCE, SYDNEY
ANGELA DEW & AKSHAY RAI

17-20 SEPTEMBER 2014
SARRAH CONFERENCE, KINGSCLIFF
KIM BULKELEY & JULIE CULLENWARD

28-29 OCTOBER 2014
ARTS ACTIVATED CONFERENCE,
CHATSWOOD; ANGELA DEW

12-13 NOVEMBER 2014
NHMRC SYMPOSIUM, RESEARCH
TRANSLATION, MELBOURNE
ANGELA DEW & KATHERINE BOYDELL



3D drawing by Dallas Winspear

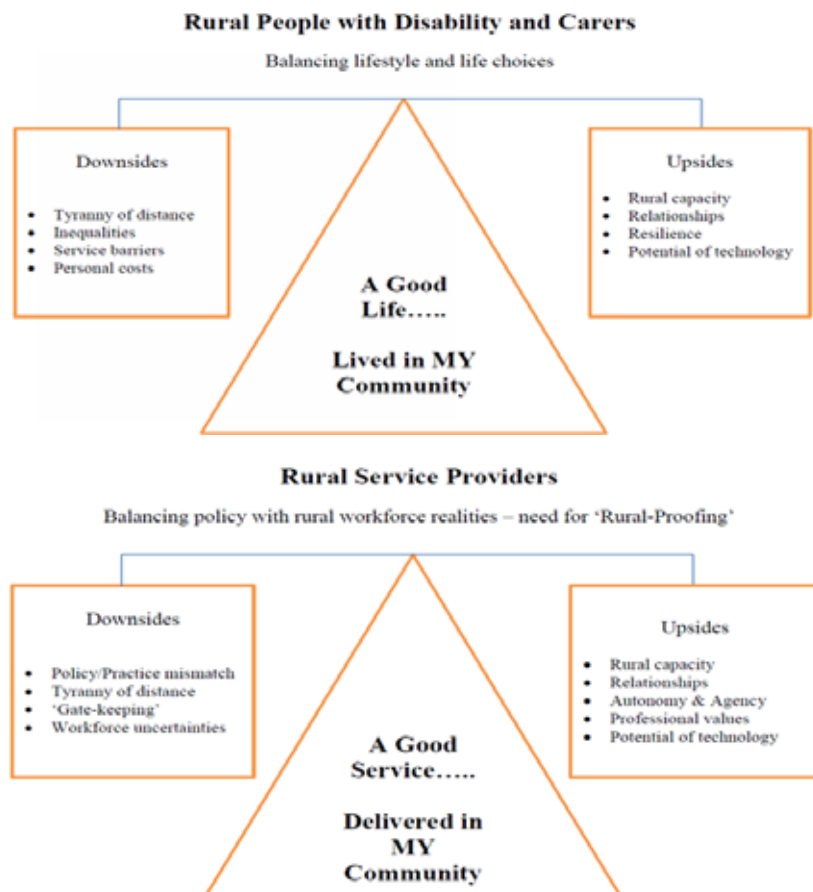
WOBBLY HUB ART PROJECT

The Wobbly Hub is a 3-D interactive artwork to share knowledge about the lives of rural people with disabilities, their carers and therapists. This unique object, created by visual artist Dr Ella Dreyfus, comprises a custom-built wobbly-shaped wheel with individual spokes reflecting themes of rural life. Embedded inside the wheel hub, an audio device plays sounds, prose and poetry from the research. The wheel will tour, creating opportunities to engage local western NSW communities. We need funding to build and tour the Wobbly Hub –please contact anita.bundy@sydney.edu.au

WOBBLY HUB PROJECT WRAP UP EVENTS

The four year Wobbly Hub and Double Spokes partnership project with NSW Family and Community Services, Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) is ending.

On 25th and 26th November the Wobbly Hub team made a final visit to Dubbo to provide feedback on the project to 12 ADHC senior staff members and to over 50 interested members of the community. The events were covered by the local media via radio and newspaper. For those unable to attend the community forum, a narrated Powerpoint is on our website: <http://sydney.edu.au/health-sciences/research/wobbly-hub> The research gave us valuable insights into the diversity of the rural context including the challenges in accessing therapy and a better understanding of the recruitment and retention issues affecting the rural therapy workforce. We heard that people with disability, their carers and the therapists who support them are all concerned with living “a good life” and delivering “a good service” in their local communities.



WOBBLY HUB PROJECT WRAP UP EVENTS CONT.

The two figures demonstrate the balancing act required of people to achieve “a good life”. People with disability and their carers balance their desire to live in their rural community with choices about access to services including therapy. Therapists must balance workplace policies that govern how and when services are provided with rural workforce realities such as staff shortages. For both groups there are upsides and downsides to be balanced.

The Wobbly Hub project has built a strong foundation addressing rural disability issues. The funded partnership has come to a close, however other streams of research will continue. Watch this space...

MOVING FORWARD: TELETHERAPY

Technology has the potential to improve allied health services for people living in rural and remote communities. We plan to build on our successful partnership with Royal Far West, who deliver Come N’ See, a speech pathology teletherapy program for children in rural and remote NSW. The program is feasible and highly acceptable to parents, speech pathologists, and school staff. However, we heard that there is still a need for greater collaboration between speech pathologists and teachers to help support children in the classroom. We are keen to develop and evaluate teletherapy service delivery models.

Craig Fairweather is currently completing an evaluation of the Royal Far West Come ‘N See program as part of his Masters research. His results have helped us to understand more about the practical considerations for delivery of school-based teletherapy programs in Australia.

Julia Martinovich is also conducting a Masters research project which

aims to identify the skills and knowledge required of allied health practitioners for delivery of telehealth services to children. Her research will have implications for workforce preparation, including the training needed to support speech pathologists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists to learn how to practice in telehealth.

Finally, Anneka Freckmann is a final year speech pathology Honours student investigating whether there is any difference in the rapport developed between speech pathologists and children during teletherapy sessions, compared to when sessions are delivered in person. Her research will provide new information about clinical interactions in telepractice that may help to address clinicians’ concerns.

Both Julia and Anneka aim to start recruiting to their studies early next year, so if you are interested in participating in this research, please keep an eye out for our future announcements.

The Wobbly Hub team includes a number of Honours and Masters students who are researching different aspects of teletherapy.

ACCESS TO EQUIPMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN RURAL NSW

EMMA COYNE IS A FINAL YEAR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY HONOURS STUDENT CONDUCTING A RESEARCH PROJECT WITH THE WOBBLY HUB TEAM WHICH WILL BE COMPLETED BY THE END OF 2015.

The Wobbly Hub and Double Spokes Project investigated the delivery of allied health services to people with disabilities in rural NSW and found that equipment emerged as an area of major concern. Access to equipment in a timely way is essential for people with a disability in rural areas. With the rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), a study exploring equipment provision will inform policy development about service delivery in rural areas.

This study will analyse the data collected in previous phases of the Wobbly Hub project with a specific focus on equipment access for carers and service providers. The study has the potential to give rural people with a disability a voice on issues that affect their ability to gain the equipment they require.



THERAPY PILOT PROJECT EVALUATIONS


Five early childhood services in rural and remote areas of western NSW received 12 months funding from ADHC to trial alternative models for delivering therapy.

In line with ADHC's Strengthening Support for Children and Families 0-8 Years Strategy, the projects were aimed at fostering inclusion in mainstream settings for children making the transition to preschool or school. The Wobbly Hub team evaluated the projects using formative evaluation principles providing feedback throughout the pilot phase.

The pilot projects were based in: North Western NSW: MacKillop Rural Community Services (see September 2014 issue of Wobbly Hub News); Mudgee: Ready, Set....Go! Private Therapists' Consortium; Broken Hill: Silverlea ECS and Novita Therapy Service; Deniliquin: Intereach ECS; and, Dubbo: Orana ECS Capacity Building Project. Each project and evaluation was locally tailored to the community in which it was set.

The evaluations showed that the Rural and Remote Family-Centred Approach is a viable model to provide more equitable access to therapy for children living in rural and remote communities. The pilot projects resulted in culturally relevant creative local solutions that built local capacity. Three of the pilots employed local people as therapy support workers or keyworkers and this alternative workforce model was useful in extending the reach and accessibility of outreach therapy services. Networking with outreach therapists, which was problematic in some towns, is necessary to support this model and technology can be better used to facilitate this. A 12 month pilot time frame is too short to assess longer term changes in outcomes and impact as systemic changes take time.

The table below shows the common issues found across the five pilot projects and identifies potential solutions.

 Common Challenges and Potential Solutions	
Common Challenges	Potential Solutions
Lack of knowledge on goal setting	Goal setting training – relevant, functional, achievable and measureable
Limited or poor use of outcomes measures	Outcomes measurement tailored and relevant to goals
Problems with using technology due to poor internet service	Alternative ways to use technology - enhance access for children in rural and remote areas
Difficulties accessing schools	Further development of relationships with school staff – value of ECI role 6-8yrs.
Limited evaluation capacity	Development of evaluation capacity within organisations - Evaluation Manual.



L to R: Tan Martin, Kylie Gwynne, Vanessa Lee, Kim Bulkeley, Michelle Lincoln, Christine Corby (OAM)

ALLIED HEALTH FOR ABORIGINAL CHILDREN IN REMOTE COMMUNITIES

“We know that conventional, urban models of care do not work for Aboriginal children and families in rural and remote areas. I am optimistic that this project will discover ways of providing allied health services which are culturally competent and deliver better outcomes for kids and their families.”

Kylie Gwynne, Director POCHE Centre for Indigenous Health.

The POCHE Centre for Indigenous Health has funded a research project investigating the delivery of allied health services to Aboriginal children and their families in four remote communities in North Western NSW.

The project, led by Chief Investigator Professor Michelle Lincoln will run over three years in partnership with community members and Aboriginal Controlled Community Health Organisations (ACCHOs) with approval from the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council (AH&MRC) ethics committee. Interviews have been conducted by Kim Bulkeley, POCHE Fellow and project manager and Tan Martin, POCHE scholar. Over 25 local service

providers interested in therapy for children and their families have participated in the first round of community consultations. Vanessa Lee, University of Sydney academic is also part of the team, bringing research and cultural expertise to the project.

Some members of the project team, (pictured above) met in Dubbo in November to collaboratively analyse interview transcripts. Christine Corby (OAM), CEO of Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service commented “This project involves Walgett, Brewarrina and Bourke ACCHO’s in all parts of the research process to understand local perspectives and develop local solutions. Children and families will get better access to therapy services and have their voices heard.”

For further information contact kim.bulkeley@sydney.edu.au

FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES



THE WOBBLY HUB AND DOUBLE SPOKES PROJECT

A partnership between the Faculty of Health Sciences and Ageing, Disability and Home Care, Department of Human Services NSW. Funded under the National Health and Medical Research Council’s Partnerships for Better Health scheme.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

T 02 9351 9034

E kim.bulkeley@sydney.edu.au

sydney.edu.au/health_sciences