From all of us working on the Project Air Strategy, we would like to wish you all a relaxing and enjoyable break and happy and healthy New Year and look forward to working with you again in 2013.

6th Annual Conference on the Treatment of Personality Disorders a huge success

The 2012 annual personality disorders conference was held at the University of Wollongong on 9th and 10th of November on the theme “Guidelines-based practice” with close to 200 attendees, some from interstate and overseas. The conference was opened by Associate Professor Beth Kotze, Director of MH-Kids (NSW Health), and the keynote was presented by Professor Roger Mulder, on “Rethinking personality disorder diagnosis.” Professor Mulder is Head of Psychological Medicine at the University of Otago, New Zealand, and is currently Editor of Personality and Mental Health. He is also co-chair of the WHO Committee on Personality Disorders and a member of the ICD-11 Classification Committee for Personality Disorders. Professor Mulder provided insights into developments in both ICD-11 and DSM-5 and their implications for personality disorder diagnosis. Central to his discussion was the importance of severity and risk in considering the clinical implications of diagnosis. He then went on to discuss current debates in subtypes, including obsessive (anankastic), borderline (emotional), antisocial (antagonistic) and schizotypal (detached) and the different therapies suit each subtype. Dr Annemaree Bickerton - consultant psychiatrist in the family team introduced a model of working with families, carers and relatives of personality disorders called ‘staying connected.’ Jan Giffin - occupational and family therapist from Spectrum Personality Disorders service for Victoria presented a model of secondary consultation and teamwork around the Spectrum model. Associate Professor Andrew Chanen - Orygen Youth Health and University of Melbourne provided an overview of recent research, including debates in diagnosis. Professor Brin Grenyer - Illawarra Health and Medical Research Institute and University of Wollongong reviewed four different approaches to clinical guidelines for personality disorder, and introduced the NHMRC BPD guidelines project. Short research papers were given by Dr David Hawes and Dr Rebekah Helyer from the University of Sydney and Rachel Bailey from the University of Wollongong.

The presentations occurred on the 1st day of the conference, followed by a series of workshops on the second day presented by Professor Mulder (Otago), Professor Brin Grenyer (Wollongong) and Bernadette Jenner from the Spectrum Personality Disorders Service for Victoria.

http://twitter.com/Project_Air
http://www.facebook.com/pages/Project-Air-Strategy/207832305897441
New Fact Sheets

The project has now developed 13 Fact sheets for consumers and carers, and the popular Project Air Strategy care plan and carer plans are also now available for download. For further information on the Fact sheets please visit Project Air Strategy website at: http://ihmri.uow.edu.au/projectairstrategy/index.html

Fact sheets for people with personality disorders:
- What is a “personality disorder”?
- What treatment is available to me?
- Relationship difficulties, arguments & conflicts
- Self-harm: what is it?
- The importance of self-care
- Managing anger
- Managing distress
- Managing emotions

Fact sheets for families, partners & carers of people with personality disorders:
- What is a “personality disorder”?
- What treatment is available to me?
- For families, partners & carers: the basics
- For families, partners & carers: helpful tips for challenging relationships
- For families, partners & carers: managing anger
- For families, partners & carers: looking after yourself
- For Families, partners & carers: Strategies for effective communication & Healthy Relationships

Borderline Personality Disorder Awareness Day at St George Hospital

Project Air Strategy hosted a free sausage sizzle to raise awareness about Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) at St George Hospital. We asked the public and hospital staff to complete questionnaires regarding their knowledge of Borderline Personality disorder, including questions relating to diagnosis, prevalence rates and prognosis. Over 150 people participated in our survey and went into the draw to win iTunes vouchers. The 5th October is BPD Awareness day with a number of other events occurring across Australia.

First 12 month follow-up findings demonstrate the value of personality disorder – focused services

The Project Air Strategy invites clients with a personality disorder within the South Eastern and Illawarra-Shoalhaven area to consent to have their treatment included in an evaluation of the strategy. We are now beginning to obtain follow-up data from consented clients after 12 months. Clients are reporting very positive improvements in health, work capacity and mental health symptoms. Below is an example of data reporting changes in symptoms commonly associated with personality disorder reported after 12 months for the first 35 consented clients.

Most clients at intake had at least 7 symptoms of borderline personality disorder, which had dropped to 4 after 12 months, as measured by clinical interview based on DSM-IV criteria. These improvements reflect the outstanding clinical work being undertaken by mental health workers who are supporting the project air strategy through working in brief (gold card) and longer-term personality disorder treatment programs. Further followup results will be presented in further issues of Air Notes as more findings become available. Almost 1500 staff have now obtained training from the Project Air Strategy, including recent work with child and adolescent services across NSW.

![St George Hospital Personality Disorder Awareness Day](image)
**Mental Health Expo Day**

On Saturday the 6th of October, Project Air Strategy participated in a mental health expo that was held at Corrimal Regional Uniting Church. The expo aimed to educate the public about mental health services and included stalls from Headspace, ARAFMI, Housing, Catholic Care, Beyond Blue and a number of other support services. Presentations were also provided throughout the day, including a presentation by Rachel Bailey relating to personality disorders and Project Air Strategy.

**Benchmarking Forum**

Project Air Strategy presented at the Borderline Personality Disorder & Adult Acute In-patient Care Benchmarking Forum on 23rd October 2012 at the Australian Technology Park, Eveleigh. The forum was attended by clinical leaders across NSW. Benchmarking Forums include data from InforMH to provide clinical leaders with data about their services … to support service management, clinical improvement and planning … to understand any meaningful differences between services.

The forum included presentations by a consumer, carer and experts in the field, with a strong message about the need for mental health services to develop more proactive approaches to identification and treatment of this important group of mental health clients. The training and treatment guidelines provided by the Project Air Strategy generated a lot of interest with plans for further development in other health districts.

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**Carer, Family and Partner Workshops 2013**

This is an opportunity to invite carers, family members and partners of people with a personality disorder to attend a free educational workshop.

Project Air Strategy will collaborate again in 2013 with the Family & Carer Mental Health Program and the South Eastern Sydney and Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health Districts to run the ‘Staying Connected when Emotions Run High’ workshops. Once again we are fortunate to have Annemaree Bickerton and Toni Garrett as the workshop facilitators.

The workshops and follow up sessions were well received last year so the basic format has been retained for 2013. Workshops will be run in Wollongong, Nowra, Southern Sydney and the Eastern Suburbs. A parallel set of workshops, modified for clinicians, was run in 2012 and already there has been interest from the professional community to have these repeated in 2013. Over 40 carers have already expressed interest in the 2013 Staying Connected workshops although there are plenty of spaces.

Please spread the work to your clients and contacts to ensure we get good attendance at these events:

**WHAT**

“Staying Connected when Emotions Run High” – A workshop for families, partners and others who support someone with personality disorder or related conditions. Workshops run from 9:00 am – 3:30 pm, Lunch is provided.

**WHERE**

The same workshop is being offered in 4 locations: Thursday 31st January 2013 University of Wollongong Innovation Campus (Squires Way, North Wollongong) Tuesday 5th February 2013 The Archer Resort (Cnr Kalandar St & Princes Hwy, Nowra) Thursday 7th March 2013 Sutherland District Trade Union Club (57 Manchester Rd, Gymea) Thursday 21st March 2013 Eastern Leagues Club (93-97 Spring St, Bondi Junction)

**ENQUIRIES and REGISTRATION:**
Email: info-projectair@uow.edu.au, or call Michael (02) 4298 1237.

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**Conference for 2013 - Save the date! Fri 5 & Sat 6 July, 2013**

The 7th Annual Treatment of Personality Disorders Conference will have the focus on “Intervention Models for Personality Disorders”.

The keynote will be presented by Dr Shelley McMain, who is the Head of Personality Disorders Treatment, Research and Capacity Building, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) and Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry, University of Toronto, Canada. Dr McMain will also present a full day workshop on advanced skills in Dialectical Behaviour Therapy on Saturday.

www.projectairstrategy.org