



Anne Deveson Research Centre

A SANE Australia initiative

Hocking Fellowship Report 2019- 2020

Summary of findings

Hocking fellow: Ms Alison Salisbury



About the Hocking Fellowship

The Hocking Fellowship is a grant of up to AU\$20,000 to allow Australians to run a research project. Ms Alison Salisbury was a 2019-2020 Hocking Fellow.

Projects aim to advance public understanding of complex mental health issues, contribute to stigma reduction, or explore innovative approaches to understand the needs and experiences of people affected by complex mental health issues, or improve their wellbeing.

Background and Aims

The aim of this project was to allow unpaid primary carers of people with complex mental health issues to express their lived experiences on factors that contribute to carer stress, fatigue and burnout, when caring for those with complex mental health issues.

It also aimed to consider how these factors might be mitigated to enable carers to be better supported to continue their role.

Method

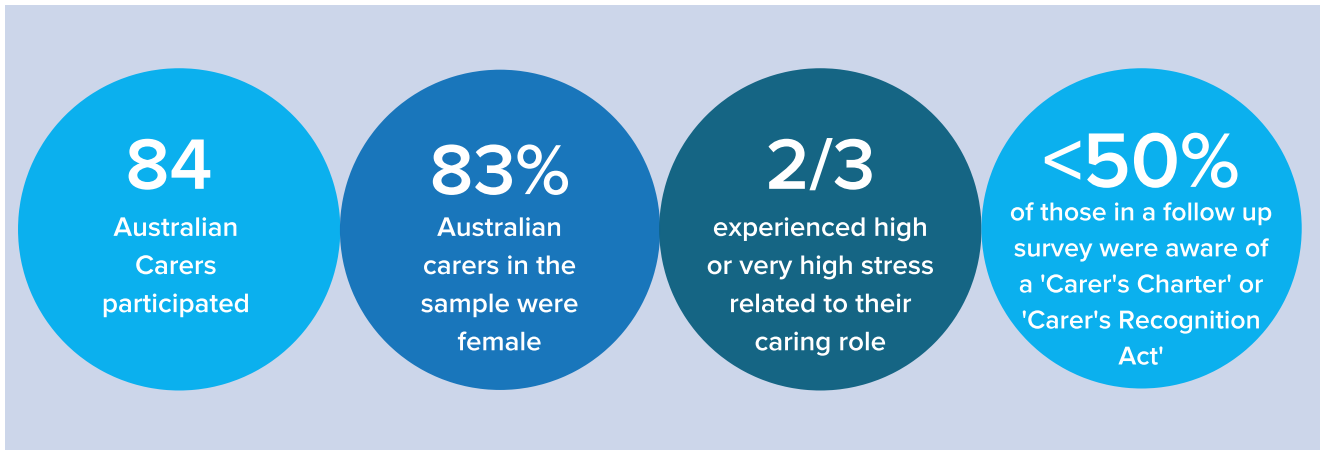
This project involved an online survey of carers who provide support for people living with mental health issues.

Questions included:

- Types of support provided, and degree of support
- Types of support carers access for themselves
- Challenges of being a carer

This project also involved a review and summary of Best Practice Models for supporting carer involvement in treatment.

Project Findings



Participants reported that caring impacted their:

- *Emotional wellbeing*
- *Ability to socialise*
- *Physical wellbeing*
- *Financial situation*
- *Ability to work*

“ Being a carer and dealing with services can be difficult, especially mental health services for some reason. We are trying to do our best...
Australian carer **”**

Best Practice Models

This project summarised two Best Practice Models for involving carers including:

Trieste

Trieste is an Italian model of care. Trieste has made community-based mental health care the centre of their model of care for several decades. This model has been directly linked to affordable housing, rehabilitation, social inclusion and employment opportunities for those affected by mental health issues.

The five cornerstones of this approach are :

1. Individualised care plans
2. Ensuring responsibility of all providers in all phases of treatment
3. Working on the community environment
4. Supporting individual strengths
5. Fostering service accountability.

Triangle of Care

The 'UK Triangle of Care Guide' was launched in 2010. It is a working collaboration, or 'therapeutic alliance' between the service user, professional and carer that promotes safety, supports recovery and sustains well-being.

The six standards in this approach are:

1. Carers have an essential role and are identified as soon as possible
2. Staff are trained in carer engagement
3. Policy and practice protocols around confidentiality are in place
4. Carer leads or champions are in place
5. A 'carer introduction' is available to orient carers to the service and staff
6. A range of carer support services are available.

Mind Australia have developed a Practical Guide based on these standards.

Recommendations from this project

Increase access to self-advocacy training, and education

Increase carers' awareness of the Carers Recognition Act

Increase implementation of the six standards

Increase carers' access to peer support

Ensure carers have a personal support plan, including access to respite

Increase carers' awareness of Advanced Statements

Improve access to financial compensation for unpaid care



Until the voices of unpaid mental health carers are treated with the respect and recognition they deserve, the voices of those with mental ill-health will remain disenfranchised.

The 'Triangle of Care' supports best practice standards and optimal outcomes for all.

Ms Alison Salisbury



More information

For more information about the Hocking Fellowship, please contact info@sane.org