

INITIATING AND SUSTAINING MULTICULTURAL TRAINING

Mr SiewHo YEAK¹, Prof Alexander JOHN², Dr Navneet JOHRI¹, Prof Mohan ISAAC², Dr Elizabeth MOORE¹

¹ South Metropolitan Area Health Service, Mental Health, Perth, Australia,

² University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia.

Background: South Metropolitan Area Health Service (SMAHS), Mental Health is a publicly funded mental health service in Western Australia providing comprehensive care to a culturally diverse population in metropolitan and outer metropolitan Perth. SMAHS, Mental Health was the first Mental Health Service in Australia to mandate cultural competency training for all employees (+1200 FTE). Managing Cultural Diversity, Aboriginal Mental Health and advanced and specialised workshops have been evaluated positively by staff and external participants.

Objectives: Delegates will leave with a plan for implementing a sustainable multicultural training programme in their service.

Method: We suggest a preconference half day workshop would be the most appropriate delivery format. The presenters will detail the evolution of the process into an organisation wide service (which includes Aboriginal cultural awareness training), which has been embraced by staff and associated services, and continues to evolve to meet the changing needs of the population. Planning of course content, policy and cost recovery models will be considered. Enablers and obstacles will be explored and plans formulated by the participants in a group setting.

Conclusions: It is possible to implement a sustainable multicultural training programme within limited budget. Multicultural training enables staff to effectively manage people from diverse cultures with mental health issues, greater staff confidence and better patient outcomes.