14 What is happening with field education?: Contemporary issues and challenges

Mark Cleaver – Manager of Field Education, University of Queensland

Dr Wendy Bowles – Professor, Charles Sturt University

Dr Helen Cleak – Senior Lecturer, School of Social Work and Social Policy, Faculty of Health Sciences, La Trobe University

In this interactive panel discussion the following key areas will be discussed:

- Implementing the new ASWEAS and Practice standards.

- The case for developing national standards in field education.

- The impact of the marketization of tertiary education and the influence of education becoming more consumer-driven.

- The need for field placements in social work training to be appropriate to a generic SW degree program in an employment context of increasing specialisation.

- The influx into social work education programs of a greater proportion of international students, and the challenge to all contributors to provide international students with relevant and high quality field education learning experiences in a constricted field education environment.

- Poverty and students undertaking placement, how to deal with issues of access to social work degrees.

- The growing complexity of students with mental health and disability issues while on placement, supporting students and field educators.

- The tensions of the complex tapestry of growing numbers of students, limited placement opportunities, and the need to place students with agencies with no appropriately qualified social work supervisor on site.

- The development of new and innovative placement units.

- Work based placements – how are they working?

Presentation of the new online Student supervision website – A significant move forward in field educator training.

There will be opportunity for the audience to contribute questions or observations to the panel discussion. The symposium will conclude with a panel discussant providing a summary of the learnings from the panel members and how this can inform field education strategies.