“REACHING FOR THE STARS”

A SOCIAL WORK LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

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BACKGROUND

- How do we develop our leaders in health social work?
- Workforce perspective – identifying leadership capabilities in staff featured in workforce considerations and planning – need to put strategies in place
- HSWDG Working Group established in 2012 to examine possible opportunities for identifying talent and development opportunities
- St Vincent’s Social Work Leadership and Mentoring Program has been successfully operating since 2011
- The belief that “Stars are made – not born”
BACKGROUND

• Working Group comprised:
  
  • Tass Kostopoulos  Eastern Health
  • Bridget Wall    Alfred Health
  • Alison Hocking  Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre
  • Debra Leahy     Austin Health
  • Georgina Hannah Melbourne Health
  • Robyn Clark     Royal Children’s Hospital
  • Penelope Vye    Royal Women’s Hospital
  • Sonia Posenelli St Vincent's Hospital
Methodology

In April 2013, Survey Monkey sent via HSWDG to Grade 2 and Grade 3 hospital social workers to respond to a series of questions about leadership and opportunities.

All metropolitan and regional hospitals were invited to participate.

Survey sought to elicit qualitative input and views on:

- Any existing leadership programs within SW departments
- Self identified learning needs in transitioning from Grade 2 to 3
- Any in-house opportunities to prepare for career advancement
- Any barriers and enablers to leadership opportunities
- Interest in HSWDG leadership development opportunities
Survey Outcomes

• 41 Grade 2/3 social workers completed survey
• Thematic analysis was undertaken in order to group categories and re-organise data
• 87.8% of respondents stated that there was no current departmental leadership program in their workplace
• 68.3% were aware of the competency differences between Grade 2 and Grade 3 roles
• 55% were interested in making a transition from Grade 2 to Grade 3
Survey Outcomes

- Discussion of career goals and opportunities was predominantly via supervision and performance appraisal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing vehicles for discussion of career goals and opportunities</th>
<th>Occasions mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supervision</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance appraisal</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership program</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality activity/ research</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer supervision</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Survey Outcomes

• Self identified learning needs/opportunities:
  • Time and support to expand skill base
  • Mentoring
  • Leadership skills/development
  • Administrative duties and managerial responsibilities
  • Staff supervision experience
  • Project work opportunities
  • Professional development
  • Further study and higher degrees
  • Acting up duties
“Reaching for the Stars”
Aims of the RFTS Program

• The aim was to provide a dynamic leadership program which would offer staff important learning opportunities including the chance to practice key skills, observational and reflective experiences, and mentoring and coaching from senior social work staff in hospitals across Melbourne

• To provide the above in a supportive and safe learning environment

• To foster networking opportunities with peers
The Program

- 7 x 3 hour monthly workshops over the period of May – November each year
- Complete a quality project that is:
  - Aligned with individuals organisational strategic directions
  - Aligned with individuals core responsibilities and workload
  - Deliverable within current workload
  - To be designed, implemented and evaluated over the course of the program
- Final session (December) participates present their projects to the group, along with Managers from each health service
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Health Service / Lead and Venue</th>
<th>Date in 2015 Location Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Project development and management skills Ethics applications</td>
<td>Eastern Health</td>
<td>June 3rd 9:00 am – 12:00 pm Wantirna Health Lecture Theatre, 251 Mountain Hwy, Wantirna, EASTERN HEALTH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Lean Six Sigma and Redesigning Care</td>
<td>Melbourne Health</td>
<td>July 1st 9.00am – 12.00 midday NWMH Conference room, North West Mental Health administration, 1 North (1st Floor North). Royal Melbourne Hospital, City Campus, Grattan street, Parkville.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Leadership Styles and Situational Leadership</td>
<td>St. Vincent's</td>
<td>Aug 5th, 9.00 – 11.30 a.m. Ground Floor Mary Aikenhead Wing, Room 1 St Vincent’s Hospital Victoria Parade Fitzroy 3065</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Managing People / Teams</td>
<td>Monash Health</td>
<td>Sept 2nd 9.00am – 12.00 Monash Medical Centre 246 Clayton Road Clayton Seminar Room 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Small ‘l’ leadership, followership and networking</td>
<td>St. Vincent's</td>
<td>Oct 7th, 9.00 – 11.30 a.m. Ground Floor Mary Aikenhead Wing, Room 4 St Vincent’s Hospital Victoria Parade Fitzroy 3065</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Effective writing – proposals, reports &amp; submissions. Giving Effective Presentations</td>
<td>Austin Health</td>
<td>Nov 4th 9am – 11.30 am Austin Education Precinct Level 4 Austin Tower Rm. 4.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Presentation of projects by participants /Graduation</td>
<td>Women’s Hospital</td>
<td>Dec 9th 09:30 am – 1:30 pm Conference Room A, Royal Women’s Hospital</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Information Management</td>
<td>Own health service</td>
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Pilot Evaluation

1. Completion of an online survey sent out at the end of sessions 1-7
2. Telephone interview with each participation at the conclusion of the program
Pilot Evaluation

Themes all data collected identified the following key areas where the program had a positive impact on participants:

- Networking and Peer Interaction was highly valued.
- Project Management skills and knowledge were increased.
- Leadership styles and the use of your own style within a health context was a key learning from the course.
- Context was a key learning for participants – understanding where the social work ‘project’ is located within the social work and wider health contexts.
- Skill Development was articulated clearly by all participants in both behavioural and attitudinal changes.
- The evaluation has confirmed that the program provided a dynamic leadership program which offered participants important learning opportunities, including the chance to practice key skills, observational and reflective experiences, and mentoring and coaching from senior social work staff in hospitals. In addition to these original aims there was significant learning in project management.
- Participants opportunity to influence the learning of future participants through feedback
Rural opportunities

Workshop - How to make the Reaching for the Stars Program relevant to rural / remote settings?
- Small teams
- Solo workers
- How to engage specific practice areas - eg. child protection, Centrelink
- Allied Health – It need not be Social Work specific
Small Group Questions

• How could you make this work in your area?

• What support / resources will you need?

• Are there topics that you believe could be integrated from a rural perspective?
References

• Cowan, K (2010) “Experiences of Allied Health Senior Clinicians on the Challenges of their Transition from a Grade Two Role” Asia Pacific Journal of Health Management 5:2


• Health Workforce Australia. (January 2012). Leadership for the sustainability of the health system : part 2 – key informant interview report, Adelaide, Australia


Thank You