A big welcome back to members and especially to new members of dArpa for 2004.

The New Year promises an array of interesting workshops and events to participate in. We urge members to contribute their feedback of events, book reviews and other relevant information to the paper editors.

Our newsletter belongs to its members and it is a way of communicating to all.

You are encouraged to personalise the Newsletter through your contributions.

Newsletter Editor, Julie Lamming
Newsletter Assistant, Colleen Agate
Profiles

I am a Client Services Officer for the Personal Support Program. I work for Career Systems Inc. as a PSP Officer for nearly 18 months, at Morphett Vale and Park Holme and we have just recently opened a new office at Woodville.

My background is in working with people who have disabilities (ABI) – my mother and my daughter were my first ‘clients’!!

When I completed my uni studies I worked for CSI as a self-employed contractor – and I seemed to be mainly working with people with an ABI (Acquired Brain Injury)

I then got a job with Career Systems Inc in their ABI Project as a Project Officer for 18 months but when that was established I moved over to PSP.

Muriel (aka Mueslie)
B.A. Psychology
Grad.Dip.Soc.Science (Counselling)
Cert. Women’s Studies
Cert. Auslan
Cert.IV Assessment and Workplace Training
Associate Member C.A.S.A.
Member dArpa.

Muriel Bic

I have worked at Julia Farr as a paramedical aide Since 1998, worked at Mount Gambier hospital as A physiotherapy assistant for a year in 1997.

Doing A disabilities degree currently
Hydrotherapy attended at flinders medical centre

Qualified masseuse and fitness leader for people with disabilities.

Fran Whitely
Developmental Educator... Disability Rehabilitation Professional...... Disability Manager...... Rehabilitation Professional...... Triple D..... Double D....... D & R..... what's in a name?

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find information from Brian Matthews about the welcome changes being planned for the Disability Studies degree. The increased professionalization of the course with plans for a shorter Diploma in Disability to bridge the gap between Certificate and Degree, will be long welcome for many who aspire to formalising their work and for employing organisations to structure their staff and client needs best.

Of concern to some will be the situation past graduates will be placed in, particularly in terms of competition for positions and for career structures and promotion. These are issues not unrecognised by the University and this professional association, and structures in relation to Graduate Certificates are being considered concurrently. Another issue that arises with the broadening of the course and the inclusion of the rehabilitation component, is the issue of professional title. Current students who graduate do not graduate with a clear title in mind, and as such have accompanying confusion of identity and career path.

The history of the title currently in use “Developmental Educator” is fairly recent, as recent as the first graduates that leapt out from the course in 1985 ready to revolutionise the area of disability, with devolution, deinstitutionalisation and inclusion principles firing up their cannons. The term developmental referred to the concept that people exist on a continuum of development, a recognition of equality without norms. And Educator? A term felt to be more respectful and less medical than “Therapist” as we tried to distance ourselves as much as possible from the “medical model”.

Developmental educators now work across many disciplines and amongst many multi-disciplinary teams. There remains a common goal – supporting the dignity, worth, growth, independence, occupation and prosperity of those with a disability and their families. Their titles within the organisations they work for are as varied as their roles: options coordination, case manager, recreation consultant, inclusion consultant, behaviour support worker, to name a few.

A professional title must be able to be meaningfully interpreted by others. It should reflect the discipline of training that it culminated in, and should additionally indicate what one is going to be doing in practice. The term ‘developmental educator’ may now be unrecognisable given the roles currently undertaken by graduates. Time for a change of name.

dArpa is very interested in this issue, and will be asking your opinion in the coming months, via newsletters, at workshops and through special interest groups.

Any thoughts or opinions can be emailed to Mandy Mabarrack at mabfam@senet.com.au.
Training Calendar 2004 - Venue for all training:

Workshops facilitated by John McKiernan Coordinator: Disability Worker Education,

Using SHine SA Resources in partnership with people with a disability – Course Code SHN 9040002
February 26th
9 am – 1 pm
Cost: Free

This workshop aims to inform participants of the range of resources and some strategies for their use for the delivery of Free human relationship and sexual health information/education.

Facilitators: Sharon Pawelski, John McKiernan

Being human, Relationships and Self – Esteem – Course Code: SHN 9040005
July 7
9 am – 5 pm
Cost $ 50.00 (incl GST)

In this workshop we will explore the qualities that make us human, we will explore how ‘disability’, can impact on a persons self-esteem and discuss some strategies for supporting a person to build relationships.

Facilitators: John McKiernan and Jane Flentje

Human Relationships and Self Esteem – a partnership approach to sexual health – Course Code: SHN 9040003
March 17, 18, 19  May 19, 20, 21
9 am – 5 pm
Cost: $350.00 (incl GST)

The course aims to improve the competence of workers to deliver appropriate support in the area of relationships and sexuality for people with a disability. Participants who successfully complete the assessment component of the Course will receive a Statement of Attainment. Following the completion of the six day course, those people who choose not to participate in the assessment component, will be given an attendance statement from SHine SA.

Facilitators: John McKiernan

Cross Cultural Issues for Migrant and Refugee people’s - Course Code: SHN 5010004
September 22, 23
9 am – 5 pm
Cost: $50.00 (incl GST)

The workshop aims to build the capacity of workers to provide services to Migrant and Refugee people in the area of Sexuality and Sexual Health. Not specific to disability.

Facilitators: Jacqueline Riviere and John McKiernan

Sexual Behaviours that Challenge –  Course Code: SHN 9040004
June 24
9 am – 5 pm
Cost: $50.00 (incl GST)

Based on the model developed by Vygotsky and Early Childhood Education L.E. Berk and A. Winsler Volume 7 NAETC, Research into practise and theory 1994), this workshop explores and expands an understanding of the model as well as providing participants an opportunity to develop specific strategies using the mode as a basis.

Facilitators: John McKiernan

Communicating/counselling about sexual health - Course Code: SHN 9040006
October 21, 22
9 am – 5 pm
Cost $100.00 (incl GST)

This workshop explores some models of communication/ counselling or education information gathering. We will explore these models and endeavour to develop a best practise models for delivering sexual health information.

Facilitators: John McKiernan,
Recent Changes and Coming Changes in the Degree for Disability Professionals at Flinders

There have been many changes at Flinders University in recent years. In mid 2001 the Department of Disability Studies was created in the School of Medicine, Faculty of Health Sciences (formerly, courses in disability were located in the School of Special Education and Disability Studies, Faculty of Education, Humanities, Law and Theology). In the latter half of 2002 a review of all courses offered by the Department of Disability Studies was undertaken and this included significant community consultation. The following information is taken from the Report of the Course Review Committee, chaired by Professor Kevin Forsyth. Changes have been made to tenses and other minor points to aid readability of the document. Recommendations that relate purely to internal University issues have not been included.

The Committee reviewing the course met over 2 days in October 2002, interviewing undergraduate students, postgraduate students, members of professional associations and organisations in which graduates are frequently employed, experts in the Disability field, departmental staff members and senior members of the management of Flinders University.

Students and employees spoke very highly of the course offerings provided by the department. There was overwhelming and unanimous support for a tertiary qualification in the field of disability and rehabilitation, and affirmation that the course as it stands provides a worthwhile contribution in training in the field of disability.

The most significant recommendations relate to the need for increased professionalism of this course. In particular it was recommended that the course be strengthened with a greater contribution of scientific rigour and an expanded 4 year course. It was suggested that such changes would lead to a more satisfying and professional career for graduates, that entry scores would thereby improve, and the course would be more aligned with other health professional qualifications. In order for this to be accomplished, and to improve the linkage of this course with other disciplines within the School of Medicine, it was proposed that some of the earlier course subjects be taught in cooperation with the Bachelor of Health Sciences course.

A greater focus on rehabilitation was also proposed, and that the name of the qualifications be changed to reflect these shifts in emphasis-- that the Bachelor’s degree is called a Bachelor of Disability and Rehabilitation Studies (BDR) and the Masters is called a Masters of Disability and Rehabilitation Studies (MDR).

The recommendations in the final report include:

- That Flinders University continues to provide courses in Disability Studies that are multi-disciplinary in nature, with a community focus;
- That the Bachelor’s degree is called a Bachelor of Disability and Rehabilitation Studies (BDR) and the Masters is called a Masters of Disability and Rehabilitation Studies (MDR);
- That within the earlier years of the Bachelor of Disability Studies and Rehabilitation course, some of the core topics are taught in conjunction with the Bachelor of Health Sciences;
- That the Bachelors course be re-structured such that there is a wide spread of core topics in earlier years of the course, but in later years of the course electives or similar specialised modules be provided;
- That the Bachelor’s Course is restructured to become a four-year course. The notion here would be that during the first two years there would be core subjects, many of them taught in association with the Bachelor of Health Sciences. In the latter two years of the course there would be increasing specialisation for students;
- That the Department of Disability Studies looks to increase the grounding in science that these students receive. It is acknowledged that they are taught a good values base, but there does need to be an increase in their exposure to science, research thinking, rigour and critical analysis of the literature.
- That some basic elements of statistics and evidence-based practice are added to the course, probably in earlier years.
- That within the course there is increasing emphasis on rehabilitation. It is suggested that the course is designed in such a way that significant aspects of rehabilitation are taught to students.
- That the staff in the Department of Disability Studies develop a teaching module on diversity, with consideration given to expanding this to be taught across much of the School of Medicine health streams.
That the Department continues to develop the graduate certificates and as they are able expand the offerings of these.

That a Graduate Certificate in Mental Health be developed by the department and made available. It may be that this course could be migrated down into the electives being offered in year four of the bachelor’s degree if there is sufficient demand.

That the Department develop a topic on early intervention, perhaps at the year four level or as a graduate certificate, and links this with the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health.

That the Department has discussions through the Educational IT Committee of the School of Medicine to see whether the Computer Assisted Learning Unit can assist in externalising some of the offerings by the department, in particular the Masters Course.

That students be provided with information on funding sources in the disability area, about grant writing and industrial issues. In addition, particularly if the course migrates to a four-year professional course, that there is a culture of enquiry and leadership developed amongst the students.

That the Heads of education/special education and the department of disability studies meet to clarify articulation of specialist topics, teaching and supervision responsibilities for specialist areas across awards and the two Faculties.

The Department of Disability Studies works to enhance the awareness and acceptance of DARPA as a professional association within the broad field of disability studies.

planned that this would be introduced in Semester 1 2005, however, with recent staff shortages at the University and the recruitment of three new staff in 2004 it was decided that the course would be offered in Semester 1 2006. Once a course framework has been developed and we have negotiated with the Australian Society of Rehabilitation Counsellors about necessary content and practicum placements, we plan to consult with dArpa and other interested groups and individuals.

The following is an excerpt from a recent report written by John Grantley from the Disability Studies Department on the revision of the undergraduate degree (again edited slightly.)

During 2003, the focus of staff of the Department of Disability Studies has been to develop a four-year model of the undergraduate disability studies degree to encompass the recommendations of the Review Report (October 2002), endorsed by the School of Medicine Board on 19 March 2003.

The draft of the four-year model of the degree includes the following intentions:

- To introduce the four year degree at the commencement of the academic year, 2005.
- The acceptance of a new title for the degree: "Bachelor of Disability & Rehabilitation Studies" to be registered in 2005. The topic codes in the current degree have been changed to reflect the recommendations of the review. The topic code has been changed from EDSP to DSRS in anticipation of the name change of the degree.
- The identification, inclusion and development of topics in the new four year degree:

- to allow graduates the opportunity to register as Rehabilitation Professionals, the following topics have been included in the degree draft:
  - Principles of Learning and Rehabilitation 1, 2 & 3
  - Vocational Placement & Follow-Up
  - Introductory Practicum
  - Advanced Practicum

- to offer students opportunities to study specialist areas in the final two years of the degree, e.g. autism spectrum disorder, rehabilitation, mental health

- to identify topics which may result in linkages and sharing of common topics across the faculty:
  - the specialisation topic Early Intervention to be discussed with the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health
  - the specialisation topic Perspectives on Ageing and Disability to be discussed with the Department of Rehabilitation and Aged Care
  - the specialisation topic Mental Health Issues and Dual Disability to be discussed with the School of Nursing and Midwifery
  - the Honours degree topic Research Methods to be discussed with staff of the Bachelor of Health Sciences

- The Flexible Delivery Mode of the new undergraduate degree has been discussed. Also several enquiries have been received … from the Director Community Services, Intellectual Disability Services Council and various disability service practitioners, requesting the course be available in Flexible Delivery. The discussions about Flexible Delivery were prompted by the closure, during 2003, of the Bachelor of Social Science (Habilitation), Charles Sturt University.
and the interest in the Disability Studies degree in Singapore by staff working in Disability Services. The potential student market could be extended locally, to students who currently work in Disability Services and are unable to attend internal lectures, to rural students statewide, as well as students Nationally and Internationally.

The Course Coordinator will attend a Seminar on Disability Advocacy Issues in Port Augusta, organised by Disability Action Inc on Wednesday 22 October 2003 with the intention of identifying the demand in this rural centre for the undergraduate degree and listen to the expressed needs of the potential students.

It is anticipated that a proposal will be presented to the School of Medicine Board to consider the development of the new four year degree in Flexible Delivery Mode.

♦ The professional association (Disability and Rehabilitation Professionals Association - DARPA) continues to be promoted and supported by the staff of the Department of Disability Studies. Undergraduate students are encouraged to join DARPA and currently hold positions on the Board of Management. The recent Annual General Meeting of DARPA successfully elected a new Board of Management and was addressed by the CEO of the Intellectual Disability Services Council (IDSC) and the CEO of the Disability Services Office (DSO).

♦ The Intellectual Disability Services Council (IDSC) have instigated discussion at an industrial level to gain professional recognition of Disability Studies graduates by the Public Service Association (PSA) to achieve industrial equity with other comparable professionals associated with providing disability services, e.g. speech pathologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists.

An important recent development is also worthy of mention. That is, the Department’s proposed 2 year Diploma in Disability that would articulate with the proposed 4 year degree. This would provide an extension of the training currently offered at TAFE level for people working in the field and/or would provide an early exit point for students who did not want to undertake degree-level study at the time. These proposals, of course, still need to be accepted by a number of University Committees.

dArpa is seen as an important group in the development of coming training at university level in the disability and rehabilitation fields. It is important because it is the only group representing professionals across a range of disciplines who are working in the disability field, and the University takes the contribution of professional groups very seriously. Members of dArpa have the opportunity to contribute to the planning process and the Committee will keep you posted about this.

If you have any questions or comments about the changes mentioned above, please feel free to contact me, preferably by email so that I have a hard copy of your comments. I can be contacted on 82013448 or brian.matthews@flinders.edu.au.