

Pressing Concerns in Rehabilitation

Welcome to this Issue of the Journal. The most immediately obvious change is a change to the cover of the Journal which I signalled in my last editorial. The cover design is intended to convey in symbolic form the plethora of activities and interactions that typify the process of rehabilitation and rehabilitation counselling in particular. As is usual with symbolic representations, they are only shadows of the realities and there remains sufficient scope for individuals to weave their own positive constructions for a personalised view of rehabilitation.

The six articles in this issue provide a wide view across pressing concerns in rehabilitation. In the lead article Anthony Hogan and his associates examine employment issues amongst deafened adults particularly those with cochlear implants. This article addresses an important and timely topic in the field of deafness. Cochlear implants have become so sophisticated that adult members of the deaf community, often united in their opposition to implants, are increasingly utilising cochlear implants to improve sound discrimination. This Journal anticipates and welcomes further discussion in this important area.

Lorimer Moseley addresses an ongoing topic of concern in rehabilitation and examines the prevention and management of disability due to chronic pain. His paper discusses the scientific rationale for the current approaches to pain management and reviews the available empirical evidence. His evaluation of the available evidence concludes that chronic pain is best managed within a biopsychosocial model and he suggests that chronic pain related disability should be recognised as a discrete clinical presentation. Sandra Bentley examines the overall impact of the 1993 reforms on the Californian workers compensation system and contrasts these outcomes with the legislative changes undertaken and proposed in the New South Wales compensation system. An examination of the published evidence was augmented by the Author's field trips and discussions in both constituencies, and the overall conclusion suggests there are several valuable lessons to be learnt and caution advised. Herbert Biggs provides an article on test instrument validation of the Rehabilitation Skills Inventory. The paper details the validation processes for the use of the originally USA normed Inventory in Australasian populations. The amended instrument is more parsimonious in both principal components and items than the original and is suggested as a useful tool in professional development environments for rehabilitation counsellors.

The final two articles are linked and are based in part on major presentations at the recent (November 1999) Biennial Conference of the New Zealand Rehabilitation Association. Steve La Grow and Graeme Craig provide a scholarly overview of the role of outcomes and goals in rehabilitation and the link to individualised solutions. The utility of the Goal Attainment Scale in assessing desired outcomes is examined in some depth and the article concludes that irrespective of the measure/s used, the acquisition of the set goal is the real measure of outcome and individualised solutions are always appropriate. Don McKenzie's paper is an eloquent and reasoned journey to the core of the profession of rehabilitation. He provides a global vision and a humanistic context that focuses firmly on the individual

consumer of rehabilitation services as the reason for the services' existence. It is a timely reminder to all rehabilitation professionals that consumer need IS the primacy of the process and services and professionals need to incorporate this first principle in every activity.

Since the last issue both the Australian Society of Rehabilitation Counsellor's 4th National Conference and the New Zealand Rehabilitation Association Biennial Conference have completed at Coffs Harbour and Auckland respectively. Both Conferences attracted large numbers of 200 delegates and the programs were highly regarded by participants. Delegates enjoyed many excellent presentations at both Conferences and an edited selection of these will be the feature of the next Issue of the Journal as a special edition.

Finally the Journal farewells Paul Leung as Associate Editor and welcomes Gregory Murphy into the role. Paul has returned to the United States and will remain with the Journal as a Consulting Editor. The Society has also undergone some administrative organisation with David Thomas in the role of Administration Manager for the Journal. Thanks to Tim Peddell for his work in this role to date.

Herbert C. Biggs PhD

Editor