

Working Together for Mental Health – Cross Government and Cross Sector Approaches

7 August 2003

Mental Health and Families, Children and Youth

Services need to make partnership-building part of their core business.

Group Recommendations:

1. There is a need to address the issues of confidentiality and consent and how this is dealt with within services, in regards to parents and their children (and adolescents). Rights and respect must be taken into consideration.
2. There is a need to change the way that mental health services are marketed to the community, as quite often there is a large gap between the community's expectations and the service that is received.
3. Implementation of the child protection legislation needs to be multisectorial to work. Interagency guidelines are needed.
4. Rural and remote area issues need to be addressed specifically for that area. You cannot transfer metropolitan models into rural and remote areas and expect them to work in the same way. This is linked to limited services in these areas.
5. Opportunities need to be provided for different services to collaborate, build trust and have an ongoing partnership.
6. Services (Government and Non-Government) need to make partnership-building part of their core business.
7. GPs and Psychiatrists must be involved in training and partnership building.
8. Government Departments need to have mechanisms in place to ensure that policies and procedures filter down to practice (incl. Evaluation and review)
9. Non-Government Organisations that are already providing evidence based effective service delivery should be funded and resources appropriately rather than always funding 'new' projects.
10. Additional funding is needed for services to conduct workforce development and have appropriate staffing to address clients with complex needs.

Individual Recommendations:

1. Planned, coordinated involvement of schools.
2. That there is consideration and acceptance that we live in a multicultural society, hence any strategy should include cross-cultural sensitivity as an element and it should be included from a top-down approach. Government Departments need to service the 'whole community' and acknowledge individual and diverse needs.