

Forum Flash – 29th August, 2008

News from Western Sydney Community Forum

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SPECIAL HACC EVENT

AN OPPORTUNITY NOT TO BE MISSED!

Supported by: CUMBERLAND / PROSPECT HACC, Auburn Council, and WSCF

Special Guest: Dr Michael Fine:

Associate Professor, Sociology, Macquarie University

Deputy Director, Centre for Research on Social Inclusion

Director of the Bachelor of Social Science, Macquarie University

Director, Postgraduate Program in Policy and Applied Social Research

Dr Fine's current research concerns the sociology of care. It addresses theories of care and international developments in care provision; the issue of migration, demography and care; links between formal and informal support; individualisation, social housing, isolation and social support; and on emergent patterns of service delivery, including issues of funding, planning and consumer engagement.

5th September, 2008, 2pm

The Exhibition Gallery, Auburn Council,

1 Susan Street, Auburn.

Afternoon Tea will be served.

CSGP REFORM IN LIMBO

The Community Services Grants Program Reform is in limbo as we wait for the Wood 'Inquiry into NSW Child Protection' to hand down recommendations at the end of September.

WSCF will be videoing an interview with Reynato Reodica from YAPA on Monday September 8th to discuss the possible scenarios from the Wood Inquiry / CSGP Reform process with a particular focus on the impact on youth services. We will have local youth worker, Eric Elefante from Granville Multicultural Community Services talking with us as well. We will be uploading it onto our website for you to view.

The Wood Inquiry will either recommend that more resources are directed towards the direct work of preventing child abuse and neglect or that more resources are directed towards building community capacity to support families under stress (or something in-between). It may recommend a split in DoCS into two distinct programs of Child Protection and Community Capacity Building. CSGP services, now defined as 'contracted child protected services' may be realigned to fit these recommendations. The CSGP Roundtable is trying to anticipate the Wood recommendations by building scenario responses to position ourselves well in advance of the re-invented Department of Community services.

Our continuing strategic response includes:

1. Communicating to both DoCS and the Minister that we are disappointed that the reform has been stalled – the fourth in 20 years.
2. Continuing to argue that in regard to DoCS core business, CSGP fits within prevention and early intervention rather than statutory child protection and that the review work that was done should not be set aside by the Inquiry.
3. Holding DoCS and Treasury to the commitments to community capacity building in DoCS Communiqué 6.
4. “No Funding, no Reform” – we are arguing strongly in the CSGP Roundtable that the NSW Government cannot expect the sector to proceed with “reforms” or “alignment” without the necessary funding increases.
5. We are commencing a more strategic long term campaign with state members of parliament.

Meanwhile the last CSGP Roundtable meeting was cancelled without explanation. Please contact Mary Waterford, Executive Officer at WSCF if you'd like more information on the CSGP reform eo@wscf.org.au

INTERAGENCIES and FORUMS

NEW SURVEY

Western Sydney Community Forum is undertaking a survey to gather some information on the functions of interagencies, networks and forums. We'd appreciate it if you could spare 5 minutes to answer the very short survey.

The survey is only relevant to community workers that attend interagencies, networks or forums. Please complete the survey by Friday the 19th of September.

Contact Semra Guler on 9687 6974 or send an e-mail to semrag@wscf.org.au if you'd like more information on the survey. [Click here to do the survey.](#)

[Click here: Western Sydney Interagencies List](#)

If you are aware of any interagency or forum that is running in Western Sydney and is not on our list please contact Semra Guler on the contacts above.

INTRODUCTION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

DON'T MISS THIS GREAT OPPORTUNITY!

Monday, September 15

9am – 3pm at WSCF

As you may remember, we announced that WSCF will be holding a Climate Change Program in conjunction with UWS. The Course is an introduction to Climate Change and is specifically designed for community organisations. We hear from every corner about Climate Change, but how much do we actually know about the likely effects on our organisations and clients? This is a great opportunity to hear from Professor Peter Phibbs about current and future policy responses to climate change and its likely impacts on NGOs and low income households.

[Click here to register](#)

Contact Semra Guler on 9687 6974 or send an e-mail to semrag@wscf.org.au for further information.

GETTING A TENANCY

TIPS FROM REAL ESTATES

In conjunction with the NSW Office of Fair Trading (OFT) we conducted a one-off project surveying local real estate agents and landlords about starting a tenancy. The survey was conducted at an information night held by the OFT at Lidcombe in May 2008.

The results have been compiled by WSCF and the information gathered will be useful to anyone running tenant information sessions or assisting people seeking rental housing. The opinions in the survey are those of the real estate agents and landlords surveyed and not Western Sydney Community Forum nor NSW Office of Fair Trading.

Real estate agents were asked:

- What information do you think tenants need to know?
- List the 3 top tips you'd give tenants when they start a tenancy. Anything else?
- List your 3 top tips to tenants to avoid problems during their tenancy. Anything else?
- List any emerging issues you see as possible problem areas for tenants in the future.

21 surveys were collected, 16 from real estate agents and 5 from landlords.

The survey results will be available on our website soon.

Enquiries: Cheryl Kelly. cherylk@wscf.org.au or 9687 6754

HACC AND DISABILITIES ISSUES

G'Day & Hello

Those of you involved in respite and disability service provision will be aware of and interested in DADHC's (proposed) new respite policy. I have been talking to a number of advocates who are very concerned and feel that it's punitive to families and carers who are under extreme stress. Briefly the draft policy talks about Supreme Court action, guardianship applications and DOC's notification of parental neglect. I would encourage all who are concerned to write to your local member and voice your concerns.

DADHC has a new accommodation policy for People with Disability. This new draft policy is recommending the continuation of 80 to 100 bed accommodation units (institutions). We need to debate this retrograde decision making policy.

Volunteers

I am interested in obtaining volunteer policies from services that use volunteers. I am particularly seeking some best practice policy about volunteer training (general), driver training and customer service. If your organisation has such a policy could you send me a copy? Email: noelh@wscf.org.au

Capacity monitoring and wait-list management

You would all be aware of the domestic support and personal care monitoring tool and protocol. I would like to explore the possibility of duplicating that system for non disability respite. If you provide respite and would like to be a part of a working party please give me a call. Phone: 9687 5263 Mob: 0411 644 600.

Regional Forum, October 1st 2008

Don't forget the next regional forum at Blacktown Council. If you have a burning desire for a particular guest speaker drop me a line and I will attempt to secure them for you.

Hope to see you all at the next regional and at your local community care forum.
Regards Noel Hiffernan

OPEN AUSTRALIA

KEEPING TRACK OF POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS

Do you want to know what your local or federal member is saying about your local issue? www.openaustralia.org is a marriage of the Hansard (a record of what is said in parliaments) with a website interface. You can get email updates when certain topics are discussed. Open Australia describes itself as:

“a non-partisan website run by a group of volunteers which aims to make it easy for people to keep tabs on their representatives in Parliament”.

The website is free and has an RSS reader. For more information on technology training and using RSS, you may like to contact Tri Community Exchange.

Why is it useful? It saves time, helps find out what members of parliament are saying on topics, and provides some insight into future policy directions. It can also be used to send feedback to politicians about their comments in parliament and what the community thinks about their position.

The beauty of the community sector, is that we know what is going on and it's important to feedback these real-life accounts from people who access services. At the moment Federal funding is topical so we must make sure that any funding has a Western Sydney component.

Call Paul Falzon on 9687 8937 or email paulf@wscf.org.au for more information.

[For a full WSCF staff list with contacts, click here.](#)

Western Sydney Community Forum

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