

December 2015

Welcome

The summer edition of ReSpect is published at a time when Consumer Participation activities at ReGen have become an essential practice, benefitting organisational culture. Consumer Participation is driven by ReGen staff, some of which devise their own activities or advocate for the involvement of individuals who use their services in specific work groups or forums of various subject areas. Indeed, ReGen is a prime example of organisation practice of Consumer Participation, where interest in and support of people who use services contributing their expertise and opinion is top down and bottom up.

North and West Metro Client Satisfaction Survey

Geoff, Tory, Mark, Con, Key, Kristen and Colleen all did a tremendous job of helping the people who use ReGen services to complete the Client Satisfaction Survey for the North and West Metro Alcohol and other Drug Services over a two week period. Because of their involvement, a hundred surveys were completed, making this the first time that we are able to obtain such extensive feedback from people who use ReGen service outside of residential withdrawal services.

Our partners at Odyssey House Victoria have conducted the same surveys with people using their services. The results of the survey are currently being compiled. We look forward to telling you about them early next year.

Interestingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, the Consumer Consultants and the Consumers who administered the survey reported numerous conversations with people about their experience of using ReGen services, and helping out with other information requests from people in the waiting room. Once an individual knew that person administering the survey were also using or have used ReGen services, then they offered the time to complete the survey readily.

The Consumer Consultants and ReGen consumers communicated how much they enjoyed undertaking this role. This was also observed by staff at ReGen. It was a fantastic project that clearly all those involved enjoyed being a part of and will provide a model for similar initiatives in the future.

Harm Reduction Smoking Care Working Group

This project has proved to be an extensive undertaking with the involvement of Consumer

Consultants to be an essential aspect of changing culture and attitudes around tobacco use and facilitating changes in use for people who use our services, when this is desired. ReGen staff enjoyed the facilitation of a session by Richard (ReGen Consumer Consultant) who by all accounts was amusing and contributed an thoughtful perspective to the topic. Jo, the other ReGen Consumer Consultant involved in this project is a strong contributor to the working group, readily offering up her point without concern or self-consciousness.

Victorian Alcohol and Drug Agency Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Forum

There is no doubt that Con's presentation was a major hit at the VAADA forum. Con (ReGen Consumer Consultant) spoke about his experience as a child who immigrated from Northern Greece, how he took on the responsibility of translator as a young age and how he had his first drink of arak with his morning coffee at 16 as was the Greek practice. He then went on comparing aod service use between what he experienced 30 years ago to what he experienced now. He ended his presentation with a perspective regarding the acronym CALD and suggesting that this be replaced the word 'respect' as this is something that we all want no matter where we come from.

ReGen Peer Support Group

The ReGen [Peer Support Group](#) has finished for 2015, but will be recommencing in 2016 on Thursday January 14th. The Peer Leads, Con and Michelle are planning to make this a mainstay of ReGen Services. With a group of consistent attendees, welcoming and inclusive culture and flexible structure, it certainly seems that they will achieve this goal. If you require more information or wish to attend, please contact Regina on 9384 8894 or email her at rbrindle@regen.org.au.

ReGen Consumer Participation Training (November 11-12)

The 8 people who attended the [Consumer Participation Training](#) were fortunate to participate in an impromptu discussion with the 2 ReGen Directors about pathways for people completing the Catalyst programs. It certainly was a great demonstration of how ReGen executive management are serious about the opinions and ideas from people who use ReGen services. Other presenters from within ReGen was the Workforce Development and Diversion Programs Manager and a ReGen Consumer Consultant.

Presenters outside of ReGen include Brad Pearce (Program Manager from Victorian Alcohol and Drug Agency) presented on the newly reformed Victorian Alcohol and other Drug Sector, Edita

Kennedy (Project Worker at the Association of Participating Service Users based at SHARC) on Consumer Participation in the Victorian Alcohol and other Drug Sector and Nadia Gavin (from Harm Reduction Victoria) on harm reduction and health rights of people who use services.

Methamphetamine Family First Aid Group

Affected family members and people who use ReGen's services played a major role in the development of this free program. If you know someone who is affected by a loved one's methamphetamine use, the first program for 2016 will be on Jan 13. Call us for more information (1800 700 514).

Christmas/New Year Operating Hours

Just a reminder that, while ReGen's residential withdrawal services will operate throughout the festive season, our other services will be closed on the public holidays. Some of our staff will be on leave but we will be open on all other days, so give us a call (1800 700 514). Alternatively, Directline (1800 888 236) is always available if you need support during what can be a stressful time for many.

Consumer Participation End of Year BBQ

We ended a gigantic year of ReGen Consumer Participation activities with a bang, celebrating the work undertaken by those who use ReGen services with a delicious BBQ prepared by staff at ReGen. There has been tremendous achievement and consequently ReGen has widened its knowledge base to include that belonging to people who use our services. Thank you to the consumers involved. Your work has impacted ministers, Health Department representatives, the ReGen board, representatives from philanthropic trusts, but most of all, has provided leadership to those who are commencing alcohol and other drug service provision.

See you in 2016!

Consumer Participation is making great contributions at ReGen, but we're looking forward to even bigger and better things in the new year. If you would like to be involved, contact Regina on 9384 8894 or email her at rbrindle@regen.org.au