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1-1-2013

### Facilitating better health care for mental health consumers: complexities of establishing a partnership program

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#### Recommended Citation

Patterson, Christopher; Gagan, Alex; Watson, Sarah; and Douglas, Angela, "Facilitating better health care for mental health consumers: complexities of establishing a partnership program" (2013). *Faculty of Science, Medicine and Health - Papers: part A*. 1386.  
<https://ro.uow.edu.au/smhpapers/1386>

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## Facilitating better health care for mental health consumers: complexities of establishing a partnership program

### Abstract

Abstract of paper that presented at the Australian College of Mental Health Nursing 39th International Mental Health Nursing Conference, 22-24 October, 2013, Perth, Australia.

### Keywords

partnership, consumers, mental, care, health, better, facilitating, establishing, program, complexities

### Disciplines

Medicine and Health Sciences | Social and Behavioral Sciences

### Publication Details

Patterson, C., Gagan, A., Watson, S. & Douglas, A. (2013). Facilitating better health care for mental health consumers: complexities of establishing a partnership program. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, 22 (Suppl. 1), 27-27.

## **Facilitating better health care for mental health consumers through engagement: Complexities of establishing a partnership program**

**Christopher Patterson, Alex Gagan, Sarah Watson & Angela Douglas**

There is a growing body of evidence demonstrating the significant relationship between mental health and physical health outcomes<sup>1-3</sup>. Addressing the physical health needs of mental health consumers requires skilled, innovative and knowledgeable practitioners; the reduced fragmentation of services; and, collaboration between health care providers<sup>4-5</sup>.

This presentation will offer insights gained as a result of the development, implementation and evaluation of the 'ACTive' program - a healthy lifestyle program to improve the physical health of consumers in a mental health rehabilitation unit. It will demonstrate the elements that layer on top of 'having a good idea', in order to move towards having a tangible and successful outcome.

One of the greatest identified influences to the continued success and sustainability of the 'ACTive' program was the perceived logistical challenges, and not the potential benefits to consumers. This finding alone highlights the significance of research that seeks to identify perceived challenges and successes of establishing and sustaining such a program.

This presentation will explore the complex methods, strategies and learning experiences in building a sustainable program, and reflect on the invaluable learning curve faced in drawing together university and public health institutions to align patient care, health policy, clinical education and relevant and achievable research outcomes at the level of a small, grassroots project. The expectations, experiences and reflections of the clinicians, educators and students involved in the pilot program will be explored.

1 Lambert, T., Velakouli, D. & Pantelis, C. 2003, 'Medical comorbidity in schizophrenia', *The Medical Journal of Australia*, vol. 178, pp. 67-70

2 Lambert, T.J.R. & Newcomer, J.W. 2009, 'Are the cardiometabolic complications of schizophrenia still neglected? Barriers to care', *The Medical Journal of Australia*, vol. 190, pp. 39-42

3 Department of Health & Ageing 2011, *People Living with Psychotic Illness 2010*, Commonwealth of Australia, Online ISBN: 978-1-74241-614-4

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5 Chadwick, A., Street, C., McAndrew, S. & Deacon, M 2012, 'Minding our own bodies: Reviewing the literature regarding the perceptions of service users diagnosed with serious mental illness on barriers in accessing physical health care', *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, vol. 21, pp. 211-219