

# Onboard

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIAL WORKERS REGISTRATION BOARD

APRIL 2007

## SOCIAL WORK IN THE NGO SECTOR

The **NGO Social Work Study Awards** are providing an important means of support for enhancing the social work profession in the non-government sector.

Now into its second year of full operation the Awards are run by Family and Community Services (FACS, a service line of the Ministry of Social Development).

Derek Howell, Project Manager for the Awards says that they were now supporting more than 110 students towards completion of qualifications that will put them on the road to social worker registration.



Rachel Ward and Fuad Farah. An NGO Social Work Study Award supported Rachel to continue her work at the Wellington Somali Council (see story inside)

Since 2005 more than 300 applications have been received for these Awards, from practising social workers and their employers from the NGO sector. Each award helps to cover payment of fees as well as the costs for employers of supporting students, including the final placement - to a maximum over the duration of study of \$32,750.

"Even with this support we acknowledge that the challenge of taking on degree-level study is a big commitment for individuals to make. Many of our recipients are from smaller rural centres and their efforts to balance work and study in often difficult circumstances are outstanding," says Derek.

"The lengths they go to, along with their employers, is a demonstration of the value that is being placed on increasing

the level of professional knowledge these social workers will bring back to their communities and iwi".

In February FACS ran a series of regionally-based workshops for successful applicants and their NGO employers. Attendance was high, with most students and their employers attending.

The application process for 2008 is expected to start soon with pre-application workshops to be held from July around New Zealand.

"The number of workshops we hold reflects the wide geographical distribution of not-for-profit NGOs. It's an extremely important sector for 'grass roots' social work in New Zealand," says Derek.

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### SPECIAL UPDATE:

## Countdown to Annual Practising Certificates

Renewal of Annual Practising Certificates (APC) for 2007-2008 starts at the end of May when application notices will be posted to Registered Social Workers.

"It's a straightforward process, says SWRB Office Manager Suzanne Thurlow. "Before we can issue an APC we require a statement that reconfirms a person's employment and practice status as well as confirming their supervision arrangements".

"There is also a responsibility on registered social workers to advise the SWRB if we need to update our records in any way," says Suzanne.

"This is a routine exercise that is common to all registration bodies, and we do provide detailed guidance notes. We often hear from people who have successfully set up a dedicated filing system to keep track of their papers, as a place to keep duplicate copies and related information. We highly recommend this approach as it does make things easier over time".

The SWRB distributed a booklet in October 2006 that sets out APC criteria. Copies are available on request to the SWRB or can be downloaded from our website at [www.swrb.org.nz](http://www.swrb.org.nz) under Publications.

A special condition to hold an APC is that all registered social workers must keep a record of their continuing professional development (CPD). In any three year period the SWRB expects that registered social workers will participate in a minimum of 150 hours CPD and this is subject to random audit.



## Comprehensive Feedback Will Inform Future Directions

The SWRB is currently reviewing feedback on the operation of the Social Workers Registration Act 2003 and will be formulating a report for the Minister for Social Development and Employment about pathways for the future.

A public document will be tabled in Parliament after the review is completed. Details of the issues to be addressed will be made available to you in Onboard newsletters during the year and via our website at [www.swrb.org.nz](http://www.swrb.org.nz)

This review process, as described in our last newsletter, has been about taking stock of the operation of the Act to date, to identify areas that might need to be changed, clarified or reinforced.

The timing for this process is part of the Act itself, and, through submissions and meetings, the SWRB has been able to engage with key stakeholders in a meaningful exchange of constructive views about ways to maximise access to registration.

At all times the SWRB's operations have to be aligned to the purpose of the Act, set out in section 3, while also working to perform all of the Board's functions, set out in section 99. Where there is scope for improvement within those parameters, and within our self-funding regime, we will continue to complete projects such as streamlining application forms and increasing our knowledge base to enhance the profession.

Another priority for 2007 is to meet the SWRB function to promote the existence of procedures for making, considering and determining complaints for all registered social workers, and in cooperation with all organisations that employ social workers. Systems put in place for this are a key benefit of registration, to protect everyone concerned and to build and maintain confidence in the profession.

Regards  
  
 SEAN MCKINLEY  
 Chief Executive and Registrar  
 SWRB

## APPLYING EDUCATION TO NGO SOCIAL WORK

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Rachel Ward's Masters of Social Work (Applied) is being put to good use at the Wellington Somali Council.

"Getting to this point wouldn't have been possible without an NGO Social Work Study Award. As an extramural student (at Massey) balancing my study and my 'day job' was not easy and there was financial pressure as well. The Award took away that burden," says Rachel.

Rachel has worked at the Wellington Somali Council for more than 2 years, after originally graduating from Victoria University with a degree in politics and development studies.

"The MSW degree has given me extra confidence that I'm in the right line of work and has introduced me to other inspiring social workers."

"An attraction of working in the not-for-profit sector is the scope and flexibility of the type of work we are able to do"

Youth Worker, Fuad Farah adds, "We do the full A to Z of working with a community, to work with people in a real and meaningful way."

"The key is building relationships. Seeing young Somali women and men – like Fuad – take an interest in social work as a profession is a real bonus", says Rachel. "I also believe that the NGO Social Work Study Awards are an important way to value the role community social workers play, and a step towards better recognition for the profession as a whole".

The work of the Wellington Somali Council grew from an amalgamation of three tribal associations. As it has adapted and evolved its focus has broadened.

More information about the NGO Social Work Study Awards is available on the FACS website, [www.facs.govt.nz](http://www.facs.govt.nz)

### FROM THE BOARD:

#### WORKING WITHIN AN INCLUSIVE 'SECTOR'

ONE OF THE hidden strengths of social work is that it spans different sectors in New Zealand and plays a positive role at different levels for many whanau, communities, iwi and individuals. The range of social work can be daunting at times for the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB). It means that unlike some professions and registration bodies we need to engage with social workers and employers of social workers on a diverse multi-sector basis.

What makes the profession strong as a whole, of course, is that issues that confronting social workers are interconnected. The statutory community, iwi, health, alcohol & drug, mental health, schools and wider social service sector have a commonality in their offering social work services to clients but there are many differences and philosophies in the organisations that present those services. This interconnection was definitely in evidence at the inaugural Women and Children's Health Social Work Conference held in March. Events like this are a testament to social workers working together in an inclusive way (see back page story).

SINCE MY LAST column some changes to the membership of the Board have been confirmed by the Minister for Social Development and Employment, the Hon. David Benson-Pope. Existing members Sonya Hunt, Buster Curson, Jan Duke, Yvonne Crichton-Hill, Ian Calder and myself have agreed to serve extended terms and three new people will be joining the Board: Shona Kapea-Maslin, of Gore; Stuart Macdonald, of Wellington; and Paula Nes, of Auckland. John Dunlop and Paul Curry will be stepping down this year.

I look forward to introducing you to our new Board members in the next *Onboard*.

Heoi ano, kati ake te korero mo te kaupapa nei, ma te Atua koutou e manaaki, e tiaki ki tenei wa.

Regards,  
  
 ROBYN CORRIGAN  
 Chairperson, SWRB

## SUPERVISION A CENTRAL TENET OF BEST PRACTICE SOCIAL WORK

A new SWRB policy statement raises the point that the interests of the public are best served by the profession requiring all registered social workers to be in a formal supervision relationship.

"It isn't the Board's intention to define 'supervision' as it recognises the definitions that are used," says Professor Jan Duke, chair of the SWRB's Education and Practice Standards Committee.

"Our interest is in the area of setting clear expectations given that social workers need to supply us evidence of their supervision arrangements when they renew their Annual Practising Certificate, and also as part of the process of proving competency".

"In summary the expectation is that registered social workers will not practice without evidence that they access professional social work supervision consistent with their levels of skill and practice ability", says Jan.

Over time it is expected that people providing supervision will preferably be registered social workers.

Acting as a supervisor is particularly relevant for those senior or specialist practitioners who may not otherwise have a supervisory relationship.

It is expected that supervision be consistent with the Code of Conduct issued by the SWRB and also the generally accepted standards reflected in the profession's Code of Ethics.

The full policy statement on Supervision Expectations for Registered Social Workers is available on the SWRB website, [www.swrb.org.nz](http://www.swrb.org.nz) under Policy.



Bachelor of Applied Social Sciences (BASS) students at Wairiki Institute of Technology discuss the principles of supervision.

Pictured with BASS Programme leader, Toni Hocquard (right), are Lisa O'Connell, Michaela Hohepa and Wikitoria Hona.

TONI: "As a student I was introduced to the concept of supervision really early on in my training and 'absorbed' it. Supervision is therefore in my blood and I think the same can be said of social workers as a professional group".

"There is much more open-ness about practice standards now, regardless of which legislation your professional group happens to be operating under.

"My teaching approach is to integrate these topics. Supervision obviously has implications for us when students are on practicum placements and as a professional practice topic it fits very neatly with introducing students to registration and the Social Workers Registration Board.

"There really is an obligation to make students aware of the environment they are entering and the processes that are already in place, for their benefit and the benefit of the profession".

### DID YOU KNOW?

#### Social Work news and facts from Aotearoa and beyond!

Since 2006 Census data became available, Statistics New Zealand/Tatauranga Aotearoa, has been releasing a series of summary documents called QuickStats. The series so far includes snapshots of population and dwellings, population mobility and QuickStats about Māori. The website address for these is [www.stats.govt.nz/census/2006-census-data](http://www.stats.govt.nz/census/2006-census-data)

In March the National Association of Social Workers in the USA launched a new online search tool to provide a gateway to information about the profession. The tool is being promoted to the public, students, educators, journalists and policymakers. See [www.socialworkers.org/swportal](http://www.socialworkers.org/swportal)

England's General Social Care Council (GSCC) is currently leading a project to describe the roles and tasks of social work. A literature review has been published and the GSCC is consulting on a public paper until June. See [www.gsc.org.uk](http://www.gsc.org.uk)

A social worker elected to the US Congress in 2006 has been raising the profile of social work there. In a resolution to mark Global Social Work Day on 27 March, Carol Shea-Porter praised social workers for dedicating their lives to the service of others. Her press release stated there are more than 600,000 people in the USA with social work degrees. As a group, professional social workers are the largest providers of health care services in the US and provide more mental health services than psychologists, psychiatrists and psychiatric nurses combined.

Items relevant to this column are welcomed. Please send to [onboard@swrb.org.nz](mailto:onboard@swrb.org.nz)

## "SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE" AT SUCCESSFUL CONFERENCE

Providing a programme that had appeal to people "across the sector" was a key success factor for the inaugural Women and Children's Health Social Work Conference, hosted by the Auckland District Health Board (ADHB) in March.

"This was a fantastic opportunity to bring a cross-section of people together to pool a collection of experience and knowledge", says Sheryl Wilson, Team Leader of the ADHB Women and Children's Social Work Team. Members of the team had made a commitment to stage the event and worked on it for more than two years.

Topics covered were all focused on making a difference in highly demanding work – as varied as mental illness, family violence, bereavements, child protection, eating disorders, grief & loss, cancer and palliative care services. "Papers will be collected and published in a special



The theme for the conference was Challenges, Creativity and Change, illustrated by this image.

edition of the ANZASW Social Work Review," says Sheryl.

SWRB Chair Robyn Corrigan and Board colleague Yvonne

Crichton-Hill were both at the event as keynote speakers in their professional capacities outside of the Board. Other keynote speakers were Dr Cindy Kiro, Commissioner for Children, psychotherapist Liese Groot-Albert and paediatric psychiatrist Dr Louise Webster.

Robyn and Yvonne came away impressed by the expert focus given to a wide spectrum of practice-related topics, such

as informed consent and Māori and Samoan models of practice, as well as admiration for the lead role being taken by health social workers professionally.

"A notable aspect of the conference was that it highlighted how much expertise there is in the health sector. The dedication of those who work closely with issues that impact on women and children's health was evident throughout the conference," says Robyn.

Yvonne: "The conference objectives were to explore the emotional, spiritual, psychological, cultural and environmental issues which touch the lives of and impact the health of women and children, while also identifying current issues and future directions of women and children's health social work. All participants agreed that these objectives were achieved, and taking part in a panel discussion on future directions was a privilege".

SEPARATE TO THE conference the DHB Social Work Leaders Council held its annual meeting recently in Auckland and elected Marianne Pike, Taranaki DHB, as their new Chair. Marianne said the Council, which represents social work leaders from all 21 DHBs, was enthused by opportunities for social workers at DHBs to meet and exchange information.

"Events like the ADHB hosted conference really highlight the diversity of social work in the health sector within and beyond the hospital setting," says Marianne.

"This 'breadth' does mean we have to be mindful of ensuring that social workers aren't out on a limb. One of the benefits of registration is that it offers an added degree of commonality and unity for the profession within and across different sectors".

## INFORMATION NOTES

### 2007 EVENTS

4-7 JUNE, HAWAII, USA. "Indigenous Voices in Social Work". For details see [www.vrchawaii.org/IVSW/index.html](http://www.vrchawaii.org/IVSW/index.html)

27-29 AUGUST, MALAYSIA. 19th Asia-Pacific Social Work Conference. For details see [www.usm.my/apaswe](http://www.usm.my/apaswe)

11-13 SEPTEMBER, HAMILTON. "In Sync – A Collective Approach" conference. NZ Child & Adolescent Mental Health & Addiction Services. For more information contact Paula Armstrong, email [paula@sixhats.co.nz](mailto:paula@sixhats.co.nz)

13-14 SEPTEMBER, PALMERSTON NORTH. "Blown Away" Social Service Providers Aotearoa Conference. For information visit [www.theorganisation.org.nz](http://www.theorganisation.org.nz) or email [events.mssc@xtra.co.nz](mailto:events.mssc@xtra.co.nz)

17-18 OCTOBER, WANGANUI. "Collaboration for Success" conference. A key focus of the event is the process of developing models for collaborative practise amongst government and non-government organisations. For more information contact Trish Greer, email [trishg@ghw.co.nz](mailto:trishg@ghw.co.nz)

### COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT

The recognised providers of competency assessment are:

- ANZASW, PO Box 14230, Christchurch; Phone (03) 358 6920 or email [natoffice@anzasw.org.nz](mailto:natoffice@anzasw.org.nz)
- TE ARA AROMATAWAI, PO Box 2637, Wellington; Phone 0800 558 558 or email [louisee@tkaito.co.nz](mailto:louisee@tkaito.co.nz)

### BOARD DATES TO NOTE

The Board's next two meeting dates are Friday 4 May and Friday 29 June.

Please send feedback about this newsletter or ideas for future topics to [onboard@swrb.org.nz](mailto:onboard@swrb.org.nz)

