



Sydney Morning Herald, April 8-9 2006.



Madison Magazine, May 2006.

Awards finalist

ODYSSEY House has been named a finalist in Treatment in the prestigious National Drug and Alcohol Awards for its "brief" program. The successful Better Relationships In Every Family program is designed to improve the rehabilitation outcomes for clients while helping family members cope. Odyssey House chief executive, James Pitts said people who overcome drug or alcohol abuse need family support but the family was often overlooked in the rehabilitation process.

Macarthur Chronicle, 30 May 2006.

Diary Dates

For further information on any of these events, please contact marketing on (02) 9820 9999 or email marketing@odysseyhouse.com.au

- Milton Luger One Day Forum - June 20, 2006**
- McDonalds Helping Hands - June 14-24, 2006**
- Real Men Cook - August 28, 2006**
- Australian Fund Managers Awards - October 26, 2006**
- Odyssey House Open Day - October 29, 2006.**

Wish List

We require some new quilts, pillows and linen for our detoxification facility.

Odyssey Recognition

Support that Odyssey House has recently received from the following donors is greatly appreciated.

- Allco
- C Anderson
- G Andrews
- Assetinsure Holdings
- P Binsted
- K Burgess & A Waites
- D Cairns
- R Chadwich
- D Coe
- C Darvall
- A Davies
- P Gibson
- R Grant
- M Green
- S Grimshaw
- C & G Grubb
- I Hardy
- M Hawker
- P Hunt
- W Jephcott
- KPMG
- S Loane
- S Malcolm
- R Maple-Brown
- R Massy-Greene
- R Meagher
- M O'connor
- A Page
- M Renshaw
- A Rogers
- J Skippen
- G Smoker
- C Stilwell
- S Straney
- J Stuckey
- R Tate
- Trustee Company Of Aust Ltd
- D Veal
- W Wavish



ODYSSEY HOUSE



'A Calm in the Sea of Addiction'



Steve Hocking and Dr Glenda Hodge lead the successful BRIEF program at Odyssey House

Odyssey receives national recognition for family support group

Odyssey House has been named as one of the finalists in this year's National Drug and Alcohol Awards! The nomination was made for the program, "Better Relationships In Every Family" (B.R.I.E.F.). BRIEF is a psycho-educational program which is conducted over a 6 week period. Residents in treatment and their family and/or loved one participate in the group sessions in order to establish a platform from which the family is able to move forward. One of the crucial factors which leads to a successful rehabilitation episode is the involvement of the family of the person in treatment. Family members have a tremendous positive influence on the person who is undergoing treatment. The BRIEF program seeks to capitalise on the influence the family has on the individual, while at the same time providing a forum for the resident and family to investigate, identify and impact upon conflicts which have arisen as a result of the resident's alcohol and other drugs use.

The 6 sessions are:

1. Communication Skills.
2. Family Relationships, roles and responsibilities.
3. Self Esteem.
4. Managing Conflict.
5. Grief, loss and stress.
6. The family as a team - moving forward.

The six topics cover issues that commonly affect the quality of relationships within the family. A number of activities are used to allow participants to get to know themselves, their family members and other group members better. Family members are given the opportunity to discuss issues amongst themselves while the two staff facilitators spend some time with them.

The groups are facilitated by Dr Glenda Hodge, who was instrumental in the design of the groups. She is assisted by Steve Hocking. The funding for the implementation of the group was provided by the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation for a period of 2 years. The benefits of the groups are illustrated by the fact that all 16 of the graduates at last year's Open Day ceremony had participated in the B.R.I.E.F program.

We are grateful to receive the acknowledgement and recognition from the National Drug and Alcohol Awards selection committee for this most beneficial and innovative initiative!

YES! I would like to help Odyssey House assist residents to live a drug free life.

Please find enclosed my donation of: (please circle) \$50.00 \$100.00 \$500.00 or \$ _____

Enclosed is my cheque / money order made payable to the Odyssey House McGrath Foundation or charge my credit card.

Bankcard Visa Mastercard Amex Diners Club

Card number: _____ / _____ / _____ Expiry Date: _____

Name on card: _____ Title: (Dr/ Mr/ Mrs/ Ms/ Miss): _____

Signature: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Facsimile: _____

I would like to pledge \$ _____ per month to be deducted from my Credit Card until revoked in writing by me or Odyssey House.

DONATIONS OVER \$2.00 ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

For more information on Odyssey House, visit www.odysseyhouse.org.au

Telephone: (02) 9820 9999 Facsimile: (02) 9820 1796

Please return this coupon and your donation to:
Odyssey House McGrath Foundation, PO Box 459, Campbelltown, NSW, 2560.

PO Box 459
Campbelltown NSW 2560

Telephone: (02) 9820 9999
Facsimile: (02) 9820 1796

www.odysseyhouse.org.au

A message from the Chairman



Eric R. Dodd

The major role of the Board of Directors is to ensure the governance of Odyssey House programs is up to "best practice" standards, and to ensure resources needed to conduct the organisation's business are available.

We are pleased to be part of the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process Odyssey is involved in currently. This process is part of the accreditation requirements of New South Wales for Non Government Organisations who receive funding through its Centre for Drugs and Alcohol (CDA). The Board is committed to the CQI process through its sub-committees and looks forward to the scheduled review by Quality Management Services in late September or early October.

Our organisation has to raise over \$500,000 each year in order to maintain the delivery of quality services through its programs. The Board of Directors are responsible for the financial management of Odyssey House and its programs. We, as a Board, are committed to raising the funds necessary for Odyssey's ongoing service delivery through our fundraising efforts. We are confident this year, as in past years, we will be able to achieve our fundraising target by the end of the fiscal year. We welcome any donations which will assist in this endeavour.

Eric R. Dodd
Chairman

Odyssey participates in AERF workshop

Odyssey House recently participated in the Sydney workshop hosted by the Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation (AER) Foundation. Our After Care program plays a vital role in assisting people to maintain the gains made following rehabilitation for drug and alcohol addiction, particularly those with co-morbid substance abuse and mental health problems.

Since receiving initial funding from the AER Foundation in 2003 (generously continued into 2006), our structured After Care program has become an integral part of our service to clients, and also benefits clients from programs such as MERIT and Rendu Youth. We have had 222 people utilise the service to date.

With the main aim of preventing relapse by increasing social functioning, our After Care program incorporates:

- one-to-one counselling
- open sharing in groups
- recreational outings to encourage participation in healthy leisure time activities and development of social and support networks

• practical assistance in finding independent living supportive of recovery, employment, and/or education

The National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre conducted an Outcome Study during 2003/2004, with findings based on pre and post-test questionnaires of clients who had completed rehabilitation at Odyssey House. There were also several other diagnostic protocols used. In spite of some limitations due to insufficient data, the report confirms that: "Participants consolidated improvements in level of drug use, dependence, health, psychological and social functioning and criminal offending."

A key point to note is that clients participating in the study had high scores on the Brief Symptom Inventory at baseline, scoring more highly as a group, on average, than an outpatient psychiatric population, with which they would be most comparable. Despite having recently been involved in residential rehabilitation treatment, these clients are still not as stable as ideal and are obviously in need of ongoing support. As the report notes, "This indicates that there is a need for the type of

assistance being provided to them through the After Care program. Group education, group support, social interaction and one to one counselling are providing a number of different avenues for participants' mental health to be assessed and, where necessary, interventions and referrals to occur. The transition period between residential treatment and moving into the community can be a time of increased stress and anxiety for people in treatment."

Given the spotlight currently on the treatment of people with co-existing substance abuse and mental health problems, it is clear that structured aftercare can play a significant part in assisting this population of clients in maintaining the gains made in rehabilitation.

Our After Care program is vibrant and progressive, and we are hopeful of securing funding for the future to continue providing an essential service to people who have already put in the hard work to overcome drug and alcohol dependence. We are thankful for the AER Foundation for assisting us in the establishment of this very worthwhile program.

ODYSSEY EXPLORES mediation role

The Federal Government launched the Alternative Dispute Resolution Assistance Scheme (ADRAS) to help fund alternative dispute resolution at the workplace. It is an additional resolution initiative as the government had announced the establishment of Family Relations Centres. The Centres are to act as a source of support and assistance for families who are experiencing difficulties, including issues of separation and/or divorce.

The organisations to conduct these centres will be chosen in the near future. Odyssey House sees this as an ideal

opportunity to provide a service which is consistent with our program offerings of mediation and conflict resolution. These are major components of the intervention offered at our residential and community counselling programs.

Mediation addresses the conflicts between parties and is an informal process in which a neutral third party (mediator) assists the opposing parties to reach a voluntary, negotiated resolution to their differences.

The mediation process entails private pre mediation meetings with each party in

order to explain the process of mediation, to exchange information and assess the motivation of the relevant parties for reaching a settlement.

We are in the process of having two of our senior staff accredited through the Australian Commercial Disputes Centre (ACDC) located in Sydney. ACDC qualifications are recognised by the New South Wales government and other dispute resolution networks. We look forward to this exciting initiative.

A Road to RECOVERY

To demonstrate the real work of Odyssey House, this column features an Odyssey House resident's story.



The best is yet to come for Michelle!

Michelle, as is the case with so many of our residents, had a very chaotic and disjointed life. There was always a lot of conflict in her home due to arguments between her mother and father. There was a great deal of tension and uncertainty which resulted finally in her parent's separation when Michelle was 14. Life did not improve as her mother engaged in a series of relationships with men who were abusive and violent. Michelle was often used as the "buffer" by her mother to forestall the onset of the violent interactions with her partner of the moment.

Michelle fled from the ongoing violence by staying away from home as much as possible, meeting other young people who had similar backgrounds. She started to drink alcohol socially initially, but this behaviour escalated quickly. She eventually met the man who was to be the father of her three children when she was 16 years old. Michelle moved in with him and became pregnant with her first child at 18 years of age. Michelle's life mirrored that of her mother in her choice of partner. He was emotionally abusive towards Michelle as he put her down consistently saying she "was no good" and "couldn't do anything". Michelle coped with this latest onslaught on her self-esteem by increasing her drinking in order to avoid the hurtful things said about her. By this stage she had two other children to cope with as well.

Due to Michelle's total reliance upon alcohol to cope with her partner's dissatisfaction with her, he initiated mediation to gain custody of the children. Michelle was convinced by her partner she had no chance of maintaining custody of her 3 children, and she agreed to have her partner take custody of them. Michelle was lost without her children and her life, already out of control, careened from

crisis to crisis as alcohol became the most important relationship she now had. As a result she dropped out of TAFE where she was doing a course in hospitality, however she was able to maintain her job which was in a pub of all places!

Michelle drank before, during and after work. She lied to her children as to why she couldn't visit them saying she had to work. In reality Michelle was so ashamed of her physical appearance and her emotional state she couldn't bear to have her children see her. According to Michelle, "I couldn't feel anything emotionally. I passed out a lot and was miserable. I got to the stage I didn't want to live and decided to take a half box of sleeping pills. I woke up the next day feeling worse because I couldn't kill myself!"

After a succession of failed suicide attempts, hospitalisation, and stops at detox units, Michelle had lost everything. Her friends, family members, material possessions were all gone. Her physical health was in a parlous state as her blood pressure was through the roof and she suffered from anxiety so great it paralysed her. A drug and alcohol counsellor convinced her to seek help. Michelle entered Odyssey House in September, 2005.

Upon entering the program Michelle was overwhelmed, insecure and intimidated by the environment and the people in it. She was an observer for a number of weeks before she gained the courage to get involved. She still felt she didn't fit in, was always the last person to participate in groups, and was

a "people pleaser" generally. According to Michelle the turning point came when her group leader asked her why she went to such great lengths to be accepted as it was a subtle way of manipulating people? This put Michelle on the right path although as she states "It was only a small one!" In spite of its size it gave Michelle a road to become involved and she started to progress through the program rapidly. She functioned well but had a lot of work to do on her family issues which had such a bearing on her self esteem. Michelle started a "Domestic Violence" course which was held in Campbelltown to assist her.

She became the person in charge of the kitchen and relished the challenge not to become isolated in that compact environment. She learned to overcome her tendency to isolate by accepting who she is, which enabled other residents to accept her. As opposed to her earlier involvement in the program, Michelle views herself as being as important as anyone else.

Her dream for the future is to become a social worker. Michelle has developed confidence in her own abilities. As we say in Odyssey through the Rule of Three:

By first doing I proved it could be done;

The second doing followed with ease;

The third slipped by unnoticed, I had a habit of living!

Michelle has learned to dream and the rest will follow as a result.

A message from the Chief Executive Officer



James A. Pitts

This is the time of the year when we report on our programmatic and fiscal progress to a number of government and non government funding bodies. These processes allow us as an organisation to demonstrate our ability to be responsive and accountable to our stakeholders. We are engaged currently in a process to enhance our ability to provide service delivery of the highest quality. It's called accreditation and is a requirement which has to be met each 3 years as a condition of our funding agreement with New South Wales Health. The formal review of our service takes place in September, but we are wasting no time to ensure we have the best outcome.

In the meantime we continue to provide services and activities we feel are relevant to our residents and stakeholders. In recognition of our Founding Executive Director, Milton Luger, and as part of Drug Action Week 18th to 24th June, we are holding a One Day Forum at the main facility in Eagle Vale. The theme is focussed on people who seek treatment who have a drug problem and a mental illness. It is a population we are seeing with increasing frequency. We have a number of experts who will speak about this issue on the day. The public are invited and details can be obtained from Gavin Lo, Marketing Co-ordinator, by calling (02) 9820-9999.

This issue is but one of the challenges facing us as we come to the end of this fiscal year. Our After Care program, which has provided continuing care for a number of our graduates and others from community organisations faces a funding crisis. We have an increasing demand upon our programs to provide services without adequate resources. This is true especially in our Parents and Children's Program, After Care and services to residents who have alcohol, other drugs problems and a mental illness. We are hopeful funding agencies will recognise the value of our interventions and provide adequate financial support on that basis.

James A. Pitts
Chief Executive Officer