



## VICTORIAN DOCTORS HEALTH PROGRAM

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### **Medical Director's Report AGM of the Victorian Doctors' Health Program 10<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

#### **Management and administrative:**

The staff at VDHP are to be thanked for their continuing hard work and dedication. Despite a shrinking budget and uncertainty regarding the future of VDHP, we have continued to provide as full a clinical workload as in previous years. We have also maintained our commitment to educational initiatives across the medical workforce.

The VDHP team has continued to meet weekly to discuss administrative issues. This is a valuable opportunity for any staff members to voice concerns they may have or to discuss issues that might affect the organisation.

The VDHP clinical team has met weekly to discuss, in a confidential setting, the optimal management and treatment plans of participants, particularly those on CAMP agreements. This meeting provides a forum in which all new participants are discussed, as are participants who may be of current concern.

The **Quality and Case Review** committee met on three occasions to review de-identified case summaries. This subcommittee advises VDHP clinical staff on assessment, support, referral and policy directions as needed.

The VDHP, along with Doctors Health Advisory Services from around Australia and New Zealand, is a member of the Australasian Doctors Health Network (ADHN). Dr Jenkins and Dr Pring have participated in regular ADHN teleconferences and face-to-face meetings.

#### **Clinical work:**

VDHP clinicians have continued to respond to clinical work demands in a timely and flexible fashion.

Figures showing the number of enquiries and face-to-face referrals in 2013/14 are found below:

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New enquiries	166
New face-to-face assessments	98
Follow up appointments	304
Participants on a case management agreement (as at 30 June)	46

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VDHP continues to update its panel of treating physicians who are known to have expertise in treating doctors and/or medical students. The arrangements and agreements developed with psychiatrists at The Melbourne Clinic and the Albert Road Clinic have continued to work well in facilitating timely reviews and ongoing treatment for doctors who need psychiatric services. We are increasingly working with psychiatrists at Victoria Clinic and Delmont Hospital.

**Caduceus**, our self-help group for doctors who have experienced, or are experiencing issues of substance misuse has continued to meet weekly at a suburban location. It is still facilitated by experienced psychologists and attendance averaged eight to ten participants per week. Current and past Caduceus participants contributed to a research project on the value of such a support group (see below).

VDHP still offers a **case management, aftercare and monitoring program (CAMP)** for doctors with substance use, mental health or physical health problems. VDHP case manages on average 45-50 doctors/students at a time. The CAMP program's Case Managers coordinate the team of treating clinicians for the individual doctor-patient and can work with relevant personnel at the doctor's workplace to facilitate a "return to work" program. The treating team usually consists of a combination of a GP, psychiatrist, addiction medicine specialist, psychologist or counsellor. There were 46 participants on CAMP agreements on 30/06/14.

**Education, presentations and publicity/promotion of awareness:**

VDHP continues to provide lectures, information sessions and workshops about doctors' health to groups of doctors and university students. The groups of doctors include College meetings, intern orientations, junior doctors' workshops etc. The work with university students at Melbourne, Monash, Deakin and Notre Dame (at Werribee Mercy Hospital) Universities this includes presentations to medical students in their 3<sup>rd</sup> year at Monash Central campus as they enter clinical training and presentations to 4<sup>th</sup> year Monash students as they begin their psychiatry rotations. Workshops are conducted with post-graduate students at the Gippsland Campus of Monash University in their first year.

VDHP produced one newsletter. Previously VDHP newsletters had been distributed with the assistance of the former MPBV, who used to include them with their newsletters; however, the VDHP newsletter is now distributed at various meetings, conferences and workshops throughout the year; is available on line and is made available to medical students via their university email address.

**Research:**

Our main research project was a study into the value of a support group for medical professionals with substance use disorders. Publications based on the research have appeared as a letter to the editor of the Medical Journal of Australia Vol 197 (5) 275-276 2012 and a paper in *Australasian Psychiatry* 2013 21(5) 481-485.

Dr Kym Jenkins



Medical Director  
VDHP