

TARA H MOROSS

MENTAL HEALTH DAY 2016

Ronelle Price-Hughes

The annual Tara Mental Health Day was held on the 21st of October 2016 and attended by mental health practitioners from different disciplines and organisations within Gauteng. Sr Delray Jones and her committee worked very hard to ensure that the event was again one of the highlights of the Tara calendar.

As in previous years the theme was aligned with the World Mental Health Day theme for 2016. This year's theme 'Dignity in Mental Health: Psychological and Mental Health First Aid for All' was again inspiring and thought provoking.

According to Professor Gabriel Ivbijaro, President of the WFMH (World Federation for Mental Health) and Chair of The World Dignity Project, "getting the right help in crisis remains an area that provides challenges for people with mental ill health and their families". The aim of the WFMH is that every member of the general public should be a first aider and reach out to people in mental health crisis so that they feel less vulnerable, less fearful and more accepted by society. They want to address the stigma associated with mental ill-health so that dignity is promoted and respected. Furthermore, their aim is to empower people to take action to promote mental health and spread understanding of the equal importance of mental and physical health and their integration in care and treatment.

During registration the attendees could enjoy homemade rusks, specially prepared by the Tara Occupational Therapy team, with their tea or coffee. Each attendee also received a 'First Aid' bag to get them through the morning, which included bottled water sponsored by Lundbeck.

Tara CEO, Dr Florence Otieno, opened the event with an inspirational welcoming note and Sr Lorraine Kekana as a very dignified master of ceremonies ensured that the programme ran smoothly.

The first speaker was Dr Yvette Nel from Tara Hospital and she gave a brief history of dignity in mental health and an introduction to the concept of mental health first aid. This really gave an excellent



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foundation for the speakers who followed to build on as the audience had a much clearer understanding of the theme and the role of mental health practitioners in promoting dignity and improving outcomes for mental health care users.

IT IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE CLEAR THAT AS MENTAL HEALTH CARE PRACTITIONERS WE NEED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE BEFORE CONCEPTION, DURING PREGNANCY AND SOON AFTER DELIVERY. THE FOLLOWING SPEAKERS HIGHLIGHTED THIS POINT AND HOPEFULLY INSPIRED OTHERS TO GET INVOLVED.

Dr D du Plessis, a well-respected midwife and owner of Babywise (specializing in antenatal care) explored Maternal Perinatal Mental Health in a very engaging way. Following which, Safiya Bobat, an educational psychologist gave an introduction to the Ububele Home Visiting Project, a community-based, preventative mental health intervention. Khosi Sithole, a Home Visitor then gave a thoughtful case presentation which brought the work alive. Ububele is based in Kew and focuses its expertise and programmes on improving the emotional development of children under the age of 7 years. Most of the programmes are located in Alexandra.

The attendees were able to reflect on the first talks over a scrumptious tea sponsored by Janssen and Abbot Nutrition.



THIS YEAR'S THEME 'DIGNITY IN MENTAL HEALTH: PSYCHOLOGICAL & MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID FOR ALL'



Adrie Vermeulen

After tea, Adrie Vermeulen looked at First Aid for families living with Addiction. Adrie Vermeulen is a social worker with vast experience in the substance abuse field. She was a director at SANCA Phoenix House for over 21 years and is currently involved as a consultant for SANCA National. Adrie highlighted the importance of early intervention and the links between substance abuse and mental health well being.

Thereafter, Luke Lamprecht, the director of Fight with Insight and a longstanding advocate for child protection looked at Psychological First Aid (PFA) Basic Action Principles and assumptions as well as the requirements of a caring community. He ended by looking at the work done by the Children's Memorial Institute as a mental health continuum of care and the application of PFA.

The morning ended with a delicious lunch sponsored by Adcock and prepared by Market Caterers. This was hopefully an opportunity for the attendees to get to know each other better and strengthen working relationships in a relaxed atmosphere. An event like this would not have been possible without the sponsorship of Janssen, Abbott Nutrition, Lundbeck, Adcock Ingram, the Saxon Hotel, PPS, Old Mutual and Fresenius Kabi.



Dr Yvette Nel



Tara Ceo, Dr Florence Otieno giving welcome note with Master of Ceremonies, Sr Lorraine Kekana listening attentively.



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