



## Email Update ....

October 2009

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### Elder Abuse prevented

Wesley Community Action Newtown staff recently played a key role in the apprehension (and subsequent prosecution) of a (non Wesley) Caregiver who had stolen \$33,000 from an elderly patient.

In sentencing the Caregiver, Judge Tuohy noted she had committed a serious breach of trust, *"you were employed to look after him, not thief from him."*

Former Wesley Newtown Team Leader, Tom White who assisted in bringing this matter to the attention of the Police noted, *"unfortunately this is not an isolated case. In our work assisting the elderly to retain a quality of life while living in their own home we find such things happening on average a couple of times a year and we have no hesitation in reporting it to the Police"*

Another case of financial abuse of an elderly person has been reported recently by Wesley staff, and is currently being investigated.

### Wesleyhaven Honoured.

Wesleyhaven has been honoured as winner of the **Telecom Community Connections Award** and also joint winner of the **INsite Overall Excellence in Aged Care Award** announced by Health Care Providers NZ at its September 2009 conference.

The 'Overall Excellence' award means that Wesleyhaven has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to achieving excellence in aged care, and the Telecom Community Connections Award recognises exceptional effort in catering for residents needs and preferences by creating an environment which promotes inclusion and choice for older New Zealanders. This also includes the creation of a feeling of community within a facility, or the outreach of a facility to the surrounding community, to connect residents with their families and friends.

Congratulations to the team at Wesleyhaven!

## *Fear Overcome – Health regained*

A 74 yr old client who had a major infection in both of his legs which he had attempted to self cure over several years rather than seek medical care, because of his overwhelming fear of doctors and hospitals.

His infection grew so bad that he was in constant pain. His legs were so swollen and infected he could only wear shorts and could not walk without the aid of sticks or crutches.

As a result of odour problems associated with his infections he was banned from many public spaces including public transport.

Health providers had tried to intervene in the past and had failed.

A Wesley Social Worker used a Strength Based process to allow the client to view his problems from another perspective which gave the client an appreciation of just how much his poor health was affecting his quality of life and as a result the client agreed to try and overcome his fears and seek medical help.

The Wesley Team supported the client during the lengthy hospital admission process, and he spent almost a month in hospital getting his infections under control. Indeed, he became so comfortable being in hospital that he wanted to stay longer. Staff recently purchased him his first pair of long trousers (in over 3 years) to celebrate his return to good health.

## *Life changing care*

Peter (not his real name) had spent the last 20 years living in a WCC flat that was extremely cluttered, and rather depressing. Access was not good. When Wesley first encountered Peter he was quite depressed, 'closed down,' reclusive and some would say 'suicidal'. He had stopped cleaning himself, was not eating properly and living a very marginal existence.

In a team approach involving both Wesley and the Wellington City Council's Tenancy Support Officer, a review of his accommodation was carried out. Eventually, a new flat was found, and his old flat was scheduled for major redecoration/alterations.

When introduced to his new accommodation, Peter was in tears and overcome with emotion (as was one of the Wellington City Council's Team.) Since he shifted into the new accommodation, Peter has been transformed. He now takes great pride in his new 'home', and has much more 'self belief' than he did before. As Wesley Community Worker Peggy Sironen observed, "he is now like a different person, he looks better, he is taking a pride in himself and he is initiating social contact with his new neighbours."

## *Strength Based approach works wonders*

An interesting example of the benefits of Wesley's Strength Based practice was highlighted recently in the case of a young 12 yr old foster care client who had been removed from his mother. At that stage he was considered 'out of control', and he had missed school for over 7 months and was out every night.

A placement was found for him in Wesley's 1-2-1 Foster Care programme where his Social Worker using Wesley's Strength Based framework, noted the young person's interest in Rugby and enrolled him in the local rugby club. In his first game he won 'player of the day' and in observing the game his Wesley Social Worker noted he had "real talent."

In the following weeks his rugby skills became more apparent to others, and he was selected for the Club's Under 13 Representative Team as well as being made Captain of the School team. By the end of the season he had also been selected to represent the Region in his age group.

At school he is regarded as of above average intelligence in his Year 8 class, but was still struggling to catch up on missed lessons. Again, his strengths were utilised to assist his motivation and development and once a week he was asked to coach young people from Year 7 in preparation for the Year 8 rugby team.

The changes and the improved self belief in this young person have been particularly noticeable and in a fitting tribute to these improvements, Wesley's role in his life will reduce next year as he transitions back to his home where he is already enrolled in the local secondary school.

## *Symposium Success*

Wesley Community Action's two day symposium featuring Dr Barry Duncan has been rated as a great success by the majority of people attending.

The Symposium which was held at the Trust Bank Stadium, Wellington on 14 and 15 September introduced participants to the **CDOI (Client Directed, Outcome Informed) evaluation processes** that enhance and quantify progress for our clients based on Strength Based principles.

Wesley Community Action is committed to introducing CDOD into appropriate facets of our work as a valuable tool to both empower the client, and to provide valuable feedback to the Wesley Team.

Over 90 participants from throughout the North Island attended the symposium representing organisations which included; Barnado's, Child Youth & Family, Ministry of Social Development, Families Commission, Youth Horizons Trust, Presbyterian Support, REAP, Wellstop, and a variety of Community Health organisations.

Whilst in New Zealand, Dr Duncan also conducted training for The Methodist Mission in Otago and Presbyterian Support (Christchurch) and Relationship Services.

## *WATCH SCUBA diving course makes for changes.*

Over August and September 2009 Rob Sarich and Wayne England (WATCH Link Workers – working with young offenders that have drug and alcohol issues) ran their first scuba diving course in association with New Zealand Sea Adventures, Plimmerton. Five young men currently working with WATCH took up the opportunity to work together to learn a new skill and experience a whole new underwater world that most of us never see.

The course was run over four days. The first two days involved getting to grips with the theory as well as four confined water dives in the pool. But before putting a toe in the water, the taura (students/clients) needed to clearly understand each piece of scuba equipment and how to assemble and operate it. In scuba diving everyone is partnered up (the buddy system) to double check equipment is ok and to look after each other when in the water.

In each of the confined water dives there were a raft of skills that each participant had to complete before moving onto the next stage – including snorkel and regulator exchange, removing and replacing all scuba equipment (on the surface and under the water), cramp removal, buoyancy adjustment under the water, tired diver tow, navigation and more. Once in the sea the taura had to complete all the skills again, and lastly, swim 100 metres out to the dive spot and back with only snorkel gear, before passing the course requirements.

The course was instructed by Andrew Lett and overseen by New Zealand Sea Adventures Director Tony Howell. Both Andrew and Tony attended our graduation ceremony at Tapu Te Ranga Marae in Island Bay. The graduation ceremony was a wonderful experience for all concerned. It not only recognised the achievement of each taura, but emphasised the tikanga behind our endeavours and provided a context of community spirit, working together and just enjoying each others company in a respectful way.

A handwritten signature in black ink on a white background. The signature consists of three characters: a stylized 'D', a 'g', and a 'k'. The 'D' is formed by a single stroke that loops back to the top. The 'g' is a simple, rounded shape. The 'k' is formed by a vertical stroke that curves to the right at the top and then back down to the left.

David Hanna