

New research Centre to target improved mental health in Australia

3 August 2012

The University of Queensland has been awarded a \$2.44 million Centre of Research Excellence to research the design of a better mental health system for Australia.

The Centre is among 17 National Health and Medical Research Council Centres of Research Excellence announced yesterday by the Health Minister, Tanya Plibersek in Brisbane.

UQ Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor Alan Lawson congratulated research team members, led by Professor Harvey Whiteford, Kratzmann Professor of Psychiatry and Population Health in UQ's School of Population Health.

" We thank the Federal Government for developing and supporting this scheme that enables teams of researchers to pursue collaborative research and develop capacity in clinical, health services and population health research," Professor Lawson said.

" In this case, the funding will enable the best experts across three States to collaborate on research that will produce gains in service planning and policy making in the mental health system."

The Centre will examine the burden caused by mental disorders and how best to reduce this using the full range of prevention and treatment interventions delivered across Australian service settings.

The work will be carried out across five of the best research centres in Australia with expertise in clinical medicine, epidemiology, service planning and implementation science.

Professor Whiteford said the CRE would develop a mental health service system for Australia that would reduce deaths and disability caused by mental disorders in the most cost effective way.

" We have an outstanding team who will use the best science to demonstrate how to organise mental health services for Australia and the best ways to translate the optimal service model into practice through influencing government policy," Professor Whiteford said.

The Centre has three research streams.

The first stream will describe the burden of mental and drug use disorders and develop priorities for cost-effective mental health interventions and the service platforms to deliver these interventions.

The second stream will undertake mental health system planning to reorganise the current Australian mental health service system into a new model in which the service platforms can maximise the delivery of evidence-based interventions.

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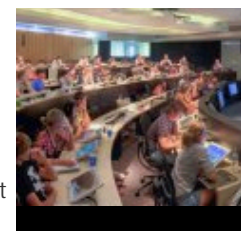
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The third stream will translate evidence-based planning into policy, demonstrating the policy settings needed to make the model service system a reality.

Research team members are: Professor Harvey Whiteford (UQ); Professor Louisa Degenhardt (UNSW); Professor Jane Pirkis (University of Melbourne); Professor Theo Vos (UQ); Professor Kathy Eagar (University of Wollongong); Ms Cathrine Mihalopoulos (Deakin University); Professor Gavin Andrews (UNSW); Professor Brian Head (UQ); Professor Jane Gunn (University of Melbourne); and Professor Wayne Hall (UQ).

The University thanks the Kratzmann family, and in particular Mr Wayne Kratzmann and Toowong Private Hospital, who have endowed Professor Whiteford's Chair since 2000.

Media: Jan King 0413 601 248

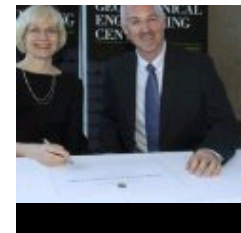
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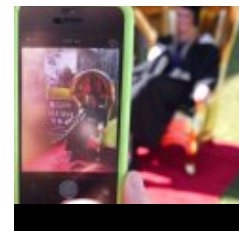
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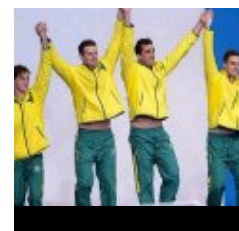


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