

# WESTERN

## OUR NEW NORMAL



## The Shed Project. How I filled a leadership role left by a Professor – successfully bridging the gap between ‘us’ and ‘them’

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**Chair: Joshua Giblin**

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### Context: Why I decided to present today

- Acknowledge Professional staff worth
  - Can feel undervalued
  - Can be overlooked
  - Are frequently very qualified & highly skilled
  - Are skilled leaders
  - Understand the administration and mechanics of a business
  - Use a ‘common sense’ approach
- Challenge mindsets and re-ignite thinking about ‘hybrid’ roles – Why can’t professional staff fill certain roles that have previously been allocated to Academics?

## What is the Shed?

- Project aimed at suicide prevention
- Key client group: Indigenous males
- Location: Emerton (close to Mt Druitt, high Indigenous population)  
-not a WSU site
- Drop-in centre model – provision of support, referral and advocacy for clients (around 400 client contacts per month)
- Local agencies refer clients to the Shed for support (E.g. Community Corrections)
- Staffing profile: 1 x FTE at HEW 7 and 1 x FTE at HEW 5 level
- Some casual administration support
- Federally funded, administered by WentWest (PHN) - \$350k p.a
- 10 years led by a Professor

## The Dean makes his move.....(whilst I am on maternity leave)



- Professor retires
- Transitioned Shed staff to report to School Manager
- Upon my return:
  - Asks for an operational review
  - Acknowledges my background
  - Asked other Deans for support

## Operational review findings

- Lack of governance
- Lack of staff support & leadership
- Relatively unknown to the University – lack of collaboration
- Site and safety issues
- No mechanism to capture data
- No evaluation
- Inadequate staffing structure
- Reporting delays

= HUGE LOSS OF POTENTIAL



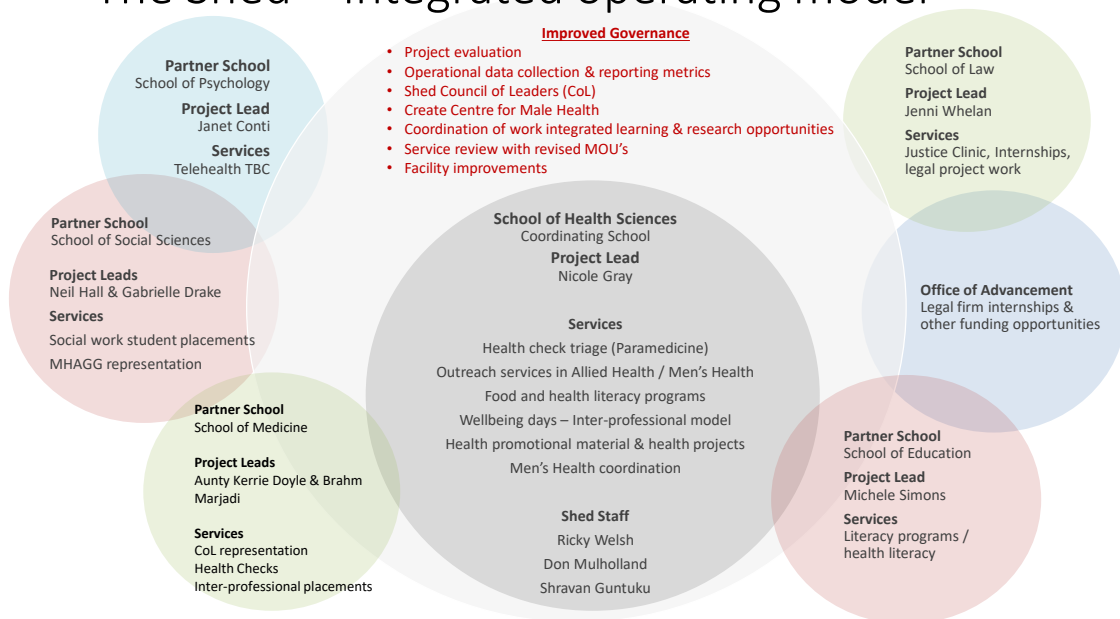
## What we have achieved in three months

- Held two collaborative workshops with partners & held many individual meetings with stakeholders – gained buy-in from a number of partners (SoE, SoL, SoM, SoSS, SoP)
- Created ToR for an oversight group (Council of Leaders)
- Ordered new computers and a printer (they were over six years old)
- Created a data collection solution and trained the staff in how to use it
- Created a PD for an Assistant Cultural Worker 0.6FTE (currently being evaluated)
- Reviewed the existing staff PD's to ensure they capture the work they do
- Organised a clinical debriefing session (& ongoing sessions) for the staff to ensure their ongoing wellbeing
- Organised training for the staff in "accidental counselling"
- Initiated a 'service review' to update MOU's

## What we have achieved in three months

- Oversight of site clean-up
- Applied for a community grant for \$7,000 to enable staff to re-commence cultural trips (awaiting outcome)
- Gained Executive approval for \$40,000 of minor and capital equipment to be invested into the Shed
- Analysed gaps in service delivery and found solutions to address these
- School of Law has commenced placing students through their Justice Clinic to assist the Shed two days per week
- Briefed Office of Advancement regarding opportunities for potential donors
- Commenced implementation of on-site procedures
- Generated enthusiasm for the new individual and inter-professional service delivery model – to roll out in 2021

## The Shed – Integrated operating model



## Reflecting.....

- Key University initiatives don't have to be led by Academics (even when they historically have been)
- Some projects are actually more suited to Professional staff
- Talk to your supervisor about opportunities to inject your skill set into the work place
- We are more than 'Admin'
- Our wide variety of professional backgrounds and experiences can provide Universities with new insights and expertise

## Questions??



Leadership is  
action,  
not position.

-McGannon

BECOME THE KIND OF LEADER THAT PEOPLE WOULD FOLLOW VOLUNTARILY, EVEN IF YOU HAD NO TITLE OR POSITION.

- Brian Tracy

Leadership is based on  
inspiration; not  
domination; on  
cooperation; not  
intimidation.

William Arthur Ward  
American Author  
1912 - 1984

“

Great leaders are almost always great simplifiers, who can cut through argument, debate, and doubt to offer a solution everybody can understand.

- GENERAL COLIN POWELL

“Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others.”

- Jack Welch

THE ESSENCE  
OF GREAT  
LEADERSHIP IS  
INFLUENCE,  
NOT  
AUTHORITY.

THE BEST LEADERS HAVE A HIGH CONSIDERATION FACTOR. THEY REALLY CARE ABOUT THEIR PEOPLE.

BRIAN TRACY

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