

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Improving Mental Health Services

Ms Sharyn McGee from the School of Social Sciences is collaborating with Mr Charles Folami of Aftercare to evaluate a progressive adolescent mental health service. This research has been funded by Aftercare, a not-for-profit social enterprise that provides mental health care services in NSW.

'Young people with mental health disorders frequently encounter more than their fair share of problems, especially in maintaining family relationships, getting full-time work, and finding a stable place to live,' says Ms McGee. 'Aftercare's Kurinda Adolescent Services program seeks to address these problems by providing a supported accommodation service for young people who have mental disorders and who may have become isolated from their families or require support outside of the family home. The service also assists with family restoration, schooling and other skills training in addition to learning about how to live with the disabling effects of their disorder. Kurinda has been providing services to young people since 1990. With the ever-changing nature of government and non-government mental health services in NSW, Aftercare requested the review with the main purpose of collecting evidence-based research. This will allow them to continue to improve services to young people in residential programs and make decisions about which models of care bring the best outcomes for this particular group.'

The research team will conduct an extensive review of various mental health services in NSW and compare this to what the latest research literature suggests as best-practice. Interviews with Kurinda clients and focus groups with family members, support workers and NSW Health case managers will also be conducted to explore their experiences of mental health care services, focussing on what works and any perceived gaps in service.



This project will provide Aftercare with vital evidence-based suggestions for integrating the Kurinda service into Aftercare in the long-term and provide policy-makers with valuable information on best-practise mental health care service design and implementation. Ultimately, it will provide better mental health outcomes for at-risk young people and their families in NSW.

Project Title: Evaluation and review of Aftercare's Kurinda Adolescent Service

Funding has been set at: \$31,073

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http://www.uws.edu.au/social_sciences

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