
Editorial

Mary Nash

The theme for this editorial explores the value of a written record or narrative for practitioners. It came to me when listening to the news of the signing by the Crown of the Deed of Settlement for all outstanding historical Treaty of Waitangi claims with Ngati Rarua in Blenheim on April 13th 2013. One of the kuia was explaining how crucial for the success of the claim were the contemporary written records made by a member of her iwi. As an editor of a journal, I often wonder how to encourage social workers to write a reflective account of something that they are witnessing, maybe the effects of a social policy being implemented, or the work of a determined community development group, or even something more personal with social significance.

This year, the editors of *Social Work Review* have arranged for a special guest edition of the journal, on social work in the quake zone. This will provide accounts by practitioners who have worked through the days, weeks and months following the two big earthquakes, using their professional ingenuity and personal courage to facilitate the return to something like normality. Later in the year, we are editing an issue looking back at the first 10 years of the Social Work Registration Act 2003 by people closely involved in leading out social work registration. Once again, valuable historical material will become available for future social workers.

This issue covers a selection of articles, four of which are based on research and three on practice. Michael Dale has written about social work at Whakatipuria Teen Parent Unit and provides a useful evaluation of the programme, concluding with suggestions for strengthening the social work models of practice being used. Pam Smith's article is a timely reminder of the place of rural social work in our communities and the cultural issues involved in this field of practice. Research into a more clinical area of practice is provided by Joanna Appleby and Deb Phillips, who write about enhancing engagement in child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). They look at ways of overcoming the environmental, cultural and psychological barriers encountered by young people referred to CAMHS. The fourth research article, by Teresia Kanyi, challenges us to reflect on the lack of outcome research on New Zealand care and protection Family Group Conferences. Given the emphasis on the duty of professionals to use evidence-based practice models, this article signals the pressing need for more New Zealand research and publications in this field. Compared with other countries using the family group conference model, we are lagging far behind. We need to consider why this is so, and develop ways of carrying out ethically approved research which can be published.

In the practice section, we have three articles. Stefanie Döbl and Amy Ross have documented the journey taken by a social worker and a community social worker in different but interconnected organisations, towards the implementation of collaborative way of working. Their innovative and award-winning approach provides an accessible model for others to draw upon. With their permission, I include the author's explanation to the editors for writing their article in the manner they chose. They 'are trying to generate a discussion,

one which appeals to a wide audience, particularly of practitioners and is not academic in nature.' Hence the tone of the work deliberately follows the guidelines of Margaret McKenzie's article to be 'readable, current, practice focused, not purely academic, and reader friendly'.¹ We think they have succeeded in doing this.

Likewise, Trish McBride and Jane Fuller offer a historical account of the work of Through-Blue, which is the name of a support group for women affected by depression. This has been sensitively written and all those people and organisations referred to in the article have been proud to be named. This inspiring account represents the generosity of two authors, prepared to take the time to share with fellow practitioners the achievements of the people they work with as well as the success of their programme. Finally, Peter Robb, at the invitation of his competency assessment panel, has sent us an edited version of his own competency assessment portfolio. These portfolios are both personal and private, and often include innovative examples of practice. We are grateful to Peter for his readiness to share.

Writing for publication is recognised as an ethical outcome for research. Writing about one's professional practice is always worthwhile and readers appreciate the information and encouragement it provides. We remind you that next year, 2014, is the 50th anniversary for the Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers and we look forward to publishing great material in the journal to celebrate this anniversary.

¹ McKenzie, M. (2008). You should write that up: Getting practitioners started on writing for publication. *Social Work Review*, XX(2), 89.