
Editorial

Mary Nash

After a long wait, it is good to be writing another editorial for the *Aotearoa New Zealand Social Work Review* issue. This time, I am reflecting on a selection of our reviewers' comments when introducing articles in the editorial. I think these comments show how our members share in the editorial work of the journal and provide a generous service to all members. In this issue we have also decided to publicly acknowledge and thank our reviewers from over the last three years by including a list of them. Should we have left anyone out, we hope they will let us know so we can acknowledge them in the next issue.

In this issue, the articles included reflect a variety of social work interests. It is with pleasure that we feature two articles on social work with older people, which will add to our understanding of social work practice in this area. This is an important field of practice which I believe gets too little coverage. There are more articles in the pipeline on this topic and I encourage more from our readers. The first article by Robyn Aldrich provides, in the reviewer's opinion,

...a valuable contribution toward the understanding of what might be experienced by social workers working with older people as world populations age in the next decades. This is an area of social work which has had minimal exposure and the value of social workers working with older persons from health, social and economic perspectives I believe has not yet been fairly estimated.

Against this background, which helps to contextualise this field of practice, Judy Wivell and Diane Mara have written up their research to provide what one reviewer called,

...a perceptive analysis of informal caregiving with older people. The insights provided in both the results and the implication sections are very relevant for social work practice. The strengths-based perspective from which the article has mainly been written encourages practitioners to think broadly about caregiving issues. A number of the points made also foster critical reflection of practice.

This reviewer went on to note the current shortage of New Zealand writing for social workers on caregiving by adult children, particularly writing that has a cross-cultural perspective. The second reviewer was impressed by the way this qualitative research,

...has respectfully reflected something about the experience of those who support and care for elder family members. In so doing, the social work community is informed about how practice and policy can be appropriately responsive to this group.

In support of practitioner research, there follows the contribution of members of the Growing Research in Practice (GRIP) team in Auckland: Liz Beddoe, Deborah Yates, Christa Fouché and Phil Harington. Their article: 'Practitioner Research Made Easier' is one that our reviewer felt many practitioners will be pleased to see given the earlier publicity given to the GRIP research initiative. It clearly makes a contribution to the field of practice-based research by

outlining an innovative New Zealand research study that offers a model of partnership between academic and practitioner social workers keen to do quality research.

Tony Stanley's article follows on and his reviewer found it 'thought provoking and reflective' not only for Child, Youth and Family social workers but also for a wider group of practitioners, given that risk applies to most areas of practice, including, for example, those who work with older people who wish to live in their own homes.

Finally, in this section of the journal, we include an article by Anita Gibbs who offers an important review of literature related to post-adoption support. One reviewer pointed out that very little seems to be written about this topic in New Zealand and she appreciated the approach to the topic taken by the author.

In Practice Notes I am delighted to include the article by Helen Simmons and Charmaine Wheeler: 'Serendipity – Surprises in critical reflection on supervision'. This is a thought-provoking, and entertaining account of fieldwork supervision at its best. In some ways, it echoes the theme of risk-taking in Stanley's article, but coming from a different angle altogether. It portrays with sensitivity the way two honest people managed to overcome obstacles and negotiate their way to a very fruitful learning experience in which the learning went two ways. Both student and supervisor learnt from each other, and learned far more than either had expected. We owe them our thanks for sharing what is usually such a private experience and opening it out into an opportunity for all our readers.

Finally, I am very conscious that our head office, in Christchurch, and the team of people there who help to keep our professional association visible, have had to cope with one of the biggest earthquakes that New Zealanders have experienced. I know it has not been easy for them. It reminds me that social workers have a role to play in such crisis situations. There are some excellent electronic resources available on the civil defence website: www.civildefence.govt.nz.

Look it up sometime, and be prepared.
