



# SUPPORTING FAMILIES in Mental Illness

---

## New Zealand

# March 2018

## Update from the President

By Dick Brown

At National Council's meeting on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> February the following goals were agreed for the next 12 months. The major goal is the outcome of the decision on the proposed reorganisation. However, the Council were concerned that life also goes on and opportunities other than the work involved with the reorganisation proposal do exist. Therefore 4 goals were set with the top priority being given to the reorganisation proposal and subsequent aftermath.

### **1. Complete the Reorganisation Proposal following the vote on the this at an SFNZ Special General Meeting (SGM) to be called for April.**

That is, following and as a consequence of decisions at the SGM,

specific objectives will be set to ensure that these decisions are successfully implemented.

### **2. To hold the SFNZ 40<sup>th</sup> Celebrations in conjunction with the SF Auckland Conference and SFNZ AGM.**

SF Auckland are proposing to organise a conference in October in Auckland, National Council have been giving consideration to a celebration of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of SF however, due to the workload involved for council members from the reorganisation proposal work, this project has had to be placed on hold, SFNZ has not have sufficient resources available to progress this matter. However, when SF Auckland began to discuss a possible conference it has been decided to hold this in combination with a celebration of 40 years since the formation of SF and to follow with the SFNZ Annual General Meeting (AGM).

### **3. To create opportunities to attract increased funding support for SFNZ.**

All organisation have a desire to increase funding and council is setting a base for taking actions to increase funding. Depending on the decision regarding the proposed reorganisation various options will be explored, if SF is reorganised on a national basis there will be better opportunity to take actions to increase funding.

### **4. To improve the SFNZ profile with Government and media.**

The SFNZ profile with Government has been satisfactory however efforts to maintain this with a new government will be made. Media is now a complex issue with social media playing a major role in our society. Options utilising social media will be explored and present relationships with media outlets further developed. The Mental Health review and the Narrative report provide good opportunities to promote the SFNZ profile.

## A study into the effectiveness of Family Connections Training.



Daniel Flynn and Mary Kells, with support from a team of researchers, and funding from the National Office for Suicide Prevention, Ireland released the results of their study in August 2017.

The primary aim of this study was to compare the effectiveness of Family Connections (FC), an effective programme to support, educate and teach skills to family members of individuals with Borderline Personality Disorder, with an optimised treatment-as-usual (OTAU) programme for family members of individuals with BPD.

A secondary aim was to introduce a long term follow-up to investigate if positive gains from the intervention would be maintained following programme completion and this was published in August 2017. Borderline personality disorder (BPD) is challenging for family members who are often required to fulfil multiple roles such as those of advocate, caregiver, coach and guardian. To date, two uncontrolled studies by the treatment developers suggest that Family Connections (FC) is an effective programme to support, educate and teach skills to family members of individuals with BPD. However, such studies have been limited by lack of comparison to other treatment approaches.

This study aimed to compare the effectiveness of FC with an optimised treatment-as-usual (OTAU) programme for family members of individuals with BPD. A secondary aim was to introduce a long term follow-up to investigate if positive gains from the intervention would be maintained following programme completion. The FC group showed changes indicating significant improvement with respect to all four outcome measures ( $p < 0.001$ ). The OTAU group showed changes in the same direction as the intervention group but none of the changes were statistically significant.

The intervention effect was statistically significant for total burden (including both subscales;  $p = .02$  for subjective burden and  $p = .048$  for objective burden) and grief ( $p = 0.013$ ). Improvements were maintained at follow-up for FC participants.

Conclusions: The findings of the current study indicate that FC results in statistically significant improvements on key measures while OTAU does not yield comparable changes. Lack of significant change on all measures for OTAU suggests that a three session psycho-education programme is of limited benefit. Further research is warranted on programme components and long-term supports for family members.

If you would like a copy of the full article, contact Fiona [sfnatcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:sfnatcouncil@gmail.com)

### updates: -

#### 1. Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addictions:

In preparation for the inquiry beginning the process of public consultation we

have set up a working party to draft a submission on behalf of SF.

The group consists of Diane Isaac (Clinical Team Leader Canterbury), Christine Zander-Campbell (Manager SF Manawatu), Emma Doré (Manager SF Auckland), Ruth Morgan (Family Member Auckland), Colin Smith (Family Member Taranaki), Bruce McGarvey (Chair SF Manawatu), Fiona Perry (National Coordinator), Debbie White (Waikato).

In addition, a group of family members in SF Nelson has undertaken to act as a sounding board and provide feedback. We will also seek input from a Māori perspective.

An initial meeting is being planned for mid-March, in Auckland. The working party will meet to establish the parameters of our submission, and begin the first draft.

A draft copy of the proposed submission will be circulated for additional comment, and feedback to the working party is welcome at all stages of the process.

If you would like to know more about how you can provide feedback or are interested in participating, please let Fiona know.

You can contact Fiona via email at [sfnatcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:sfnatcouncil@gmail.com) or by phone / txt on 021 744 106

#### 2. Reducing the administrative burden of grant funding and charities registration.

A summary of the feedback provided during regional workshops was published in December 2017.

Overall, the investment by charities in preparing applications and meeting the legal requirements for registered charities often results in a net decrease in funds for charities. In addition, failure to gain sufficient funding for projects

reduces the effectiveness of any funding received.

A number of themes emerged from the consultation, and these will be used as action points for change.

Themes:

- Change granting processes so that community groups apply once to multiple funders simultaneously
- Re-use information that has already been captured through other processes
- Improve the online request for funding process
- Improve and simplify information and advice to help applicants decide which fund is most appropriate for their needs and the requirements for that fund
- Increase the availability of multi-year funding where possible
- Enable personal contact and relationships with funders
- Make accountability for funding easier
- Reduce timeframes around decisions
- Increased Māori governance and representation in decision-making and access to funding
- Improve the range and nature of grants available.

The intention is to review the recommendations, and the work party will make recommendations for change.

If you would like a copy of the full report then please contact Fiona [sfnatcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:sfnatcouncil@gmail.com)

### 3. How important is a home?

A recent study published by SUPERU, is a government agency that focuses on what works to improve the lives of families, children and whānau, looks at the impact of residential movement, and transience on wellbeing, health and education.

This research looks at residential movements in New Zealand. Previous studies have linked frequent movement with poor outcomes for the affected individuals and their families, including poor education and health outcomes. Frequent residential moves, especially involuntary ones, can also worsen physical and mental wellbeing and future human capital.

This research found that 5.6% of New Zealanders moved three or more times during the three-year period studied. Over two-thirds of this group (4% of the population) were classified as being vulnerable transient, which is approximately 150,000 people. These people experienced at least three moves in three years, with a least one move towards or within our most deprived neighbourhoods.

Being female, Māori, associated with a social welfare benefit, experiencing social housing, facing court charges, having a Child Youth and Family (CYF)\* event, having a mental health event or visiting a hospital emergency department are all associated with a substantial increase in the chances of being in this group. The most important characteristic appears to be association with a social welfare benefit.

This report was commissioned at the request of the Minister of Finance as part of the [Ministerial Social Sector Research Fund](#), which is used to respond to research and evaluation questions from Ministers. The research was conducted by the New Zealand Work Research Institute at AUT University.

A copy of the full report is available from [http://www.superu.govt.nz/publication/residential-movement-within-new-zealand-quantifying-and-characterising-transient?utm\\_source=General+Subscription&utm\\_campaign=3e6168e84b-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2018\\_02\\_15&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_2bcd693428-3e6168e84b-237533337](http://www.superu.govt.nz/publication/residential-movement-within-new-zealand-quantifying-and-characterising-transient?utm_source=General+Subscription&utm_campaign=3e6168e84b-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_02_15&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_2bcd693428-3e6168e84b-237533337)

### 4. Refresh of 'Let's Get Real':

Te Pou o te Whakaaro, who are leading a refresh of 'Let's Get Real' on

behalf of the Ministry of Health, have completed a series of consultation meetings. The next step in the process is to incorporate the feedback. The final version will be provided to the Ministry of Health by April at the latest.

# Happy Easter

Lastly:

If you haven't already don't forget to go to our FACEBOOK page, for regular updates and other items of interest.

Find us on 

<https://www.facebook.com/SupportingFamiliesNZ/>

You can also find us on:  
Twitter @SFNewZealand



Pinterest

<https://nz.pinterest.com/sfnatcouncil/>



Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/sfnatcouncil/>



Instagram

