Social Work in Paediatric Health: Current Practice Approaches at The Royal Children’s Hospital
Tuesday, 1ST December 2015.
Program

9.00 – 9.05  Acknowledgement to Country

9.05 – 9.15  Welcome and introduction

9.15 – 10.45  Presentation 1: Building Resilience - Working with families who have a child with a chronic illness.

Presentation 2: Social Work practice with vulnerable and at risk children in a paediatric hospital

10.45 – 11.00  Morning tea

11.00 – 12.30  Presentation 3: Acute psychosocial care of families following trauma

Presentation 4: Social Work care of children & families at the time of child death

12.30 – 12.45  Slater and Gordon service presentation

12.45 - 1.30  Lunch generously provided by Slater and Gordon

1.30 – 2.15  Presentation 5: Providing culturally sensitive and responsive service to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients of The Royal Children’s Hospital and their families

2.15 – 2.30  Afternoon tea

2.30 – 4.00  Facilitated discussion forums – parallel sessions for each presentation topic

4.10 – 4.30  Closing comments & evaluation

To register for this event, please click here
Building Resilience - Working with families who have a child with a chronic illness.

Presentation (AM)

Chronic health issues are both common and complex in the paediatric setting. Every day, children are diagnosed with a range of conditions affecting their daily life, current functioning and future care needs. Chronic health issues present a significant challenge for parents, particularly those already experiencing stress or disadvantage. Social workers are well placed to assess family coping, increase collaboration in treatment plans and to assist the family with coping strategies to develop resilience. This presentation will outline how these principles are enacted in social work clinical interventions which assist children and families to address the challenges involved in living with a chronic illness. Social work theory and skills ensure that the child’s developmental age and stage are at the centre of these interventions. At The Royal Children’s Hospital, medical, nursing and allied health teams work together to ensure that families are informed about and supported with their child’s condition and associated needs.

This presentation will also explore the impact on the child, their family, and the professionals involved in a child’s care.

Discussion forum (PM)

The associated discussion forum will explore case examples of children with a variety of chronic health issues, across the developmental stages.

Facilitators: Senior Social Workers Kelly O’Mara and Angela Richards

Social Work practice with vulnerable and at risk children in a paediatric hospital

Presentation (AM)

Working in a paediatric hospital setting, Social Workers see many vulnerable children at risk of or subject to child maltreatment. This presentation will outline the Social Work assessment and response to vulnerable children and their families within the hospital setting, and the social work role with the wider service system which exists to promote
these children's safety. Whilst all types of child maltreatment will be discussed, the presentation will pay particular attention to the complexity of recognising and responding to neglect and medical neglect.

Discussion forum (PM)

The associated discussion forum will explore examples of vulnerable children within a hospital or health setting, and seek input from participants around their practice experiences, concerns and dilemmas.

Facilitators: Senior Social Workers Dr Ronda Johns and Nicola Watt

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Acute Psychosocial Care of Families following trauma

Presentation (AM)

As a tertiary paediatric hospital, The Royal Children’s Hospital, Melbourne (RCH) provides specialist trauma services to children aged 0-16 years across Victoria, southern New South Wales, Tasmania and eastern South Australia. Children are dependent and do not exist in isolation, and children look to their parents for support and cues to manage their own reactive emotions. For parents, traumatic injury challenges the view of self as a protective and capable parent, and many parents require support while they grapple with often very confronting and difficult emotional processes in addition to pre morbid psychosocial considerations.

The RCH Social Work Department offers a psychosocial response to children and families in the immediate aftermath of a trauma situation, as well as ongoing support through hospital admission. This service is premised on the understanding that social work intervention provided at a time of crisis can help maintain the psychosocial wellbeing of families and assist them to adjust with resilience to these traumatic events in the longer term. This presentation will describe key features of trauma informed social work interventions at RCH.
Discussion forum (PM)

The associated forum will use case examples to illustrate the acute care model used by the RCH Social Work Department and provide space for discussion regarding the ongoing patient journey, community linkages and long term recovery.

Facilitators: Senior Social Workers Alys Manguy, Anna Lucia and Connie Montagner

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Being Present, Bearing Witness & Fostering Connection;
Social Work Care of Children & Families at the time of Child Death

Presentation (AM)

In a large paediatric hospital and primary paediatric trauma centre, one of the most difficult realities is that not all children survive. This presentation will describe how Social Workers at RCH provide end of life and immediate bereavement care of families at the time of the death of a child. The presentation will describe the variety of theoretical frameworks and skills utilised in this emotionally demanding but potentially rewarding work. It will describe the knowledge base informing acute bereavement care, and the principles which guide social workers in responding to the particular needs and wishes of each bereaved family.

Discussion forum (PM)

The associated discussion forum will explore via case material how social workers can provide crucial listening and active witnessing in the immediate aftermath of child death, intervening on multiple levels, being responsive to family cues and navigating the various systems involved. Presenters will invite discussion around practice dilemmas, consider how social work knowledge is enacted in such a high intensity context, and explore options for self-care for social workers involved in this field of practice.

Facilitators: Senior Social Workers Helen Stewart, Jennifer Burn, Cecilia Schreuder, Robyn Clark.
Title: Providing culturally sensitive and responsive service to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients of The Royal Children’s Hospital and their families

Presentation (PM)

The Wadja Aboriginal Family Place model has been specifically designed to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal children by providing a culturally sensitive and responsive service to Aboriginal patients of The Royal Children’s Hospital and their families. The model acknowledges the effect of past governmental policies which generate discomfort and anxiety for families as they navigate the hospital system, and includes a team of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff who play a significant role in actively identifying and addressing cultural and social factors that impact on the health outcomes and wellbeing of families. It also includes a dedicated space for families to have a yarn and break from the clinical environment where staff can reach out to families in a supportive and non-threatening way, and the Wadja Health Clinic which is a weekly general medical outpatient clinic for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients presenting with complex cultural, social and medical needs.

Discussion forums (PM)

Wadja Aboriginal Case Managers and Nurse Coordinator will contribute an Indigenous perspective to each of the afternoon discussion forums outlined above.

Facilitator: Wadja Team Leader Selena White