



# BPD COMMUNITY

Volume 1, Issue 5

Oct 2015

The quarterly newsletter of  
BPD Community Victoria Ltd.



## STOP PRESS

You are invited to: "Reflections—Exploring our Identities" an Art Therapy and Creative Writing Carer Group Exhibition.

Noon—2pm, Wed 18 Nov

Rooftop Room Northcote Town Hall, 186 High St Northcote.

Canapes and nibbles

Contact :

[karin.king@mindaustralia.org.au](mailto:karin.king@mindaustralia.org.au)

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If you wish to join our email list, just drop us a line to:

[bpdcommunityvic@gmail.com](mailto:bpdcommunityvic@gmail.com)

## My how time flies...

When you're having fun, time passes quickly and our first year has been and gone.

Creating a sense of community is central to our work: clinicians, carers and consumers, we are united in our desire to replace stigma and discrimination with hope and optimism. It is in unity that we can achieve change, when we speak with one voice to challenge the misinformation that abounds. It is together, in compassion that we can support each other.

At our last Information Night, we were reminded of the isolation felt by our rural and regional people.

It is important to remember that those affected by BPD are a diverse lot. We become experts in our own experience and it helps to acknowledge that there are other experiences just as real and often very different. It is not just for ourselves that we are here, it is to reach out to others to welcome them to join us.

It is not just unity that gives us strength to stand up and speak out, it is diversity of experience that enriches our understanding, our community.

Our mission remains the same: to replace stigma and discrimination with hope and optimism.

To this end we not only try

to correct misinformation in the public media, we try to disseminate correct information and encourage helpful discussion on issues of interest in the world of BPD.

While we have achieved much this year past, there is a lot of work to be done. The stigma that affects us most is in the clinical field. This is based in pervasive misinformation or out of date beliefs.

To change this to a story of hope and optimism is a challenge and we are working on it.

To all who are with us on our journey, thanks for your support and encouragement over the year.

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## The Carer's Group

The new initiative at BPD Community is a Carer's Group.

Every third Tues of the month a Carer's Group will be meeting in South Melbourne. Anyone who is a family member or friend of someone with BPD is welcome to attend.

Just drop a line to:

[bpdcommunityvic@gmail.com](mailto:bpdcommunityvic@gmail.com)

and let us know who you are and the suburb you live in.



The group was started by those who were a part of the first Family Connections Program who found the support of that experience so important that they wanted to continue to meet. The format of the meeting begins with the sharing of stories followed by an aspect of 'psychoeducation'. The session finishes at 9pm.

### Next Carer's Group:

6.45pm Tuesday 17 November  
ischc South Melbourne

**Rsvp:** [bpdcommunityvic@gmail.com](mailto:bpdcommunityvic@gmail.com)

The first group met on 20 October to test out the proposed format and agreed that it worked and will continue to meet. We extend this invitation to all other carers to join us at 6.45pm on 17 November in the Tom Hills Room at ischc.341 Coventry St. South Melbourne (opposite the market, at the end of the street).



Your chair awaits you...

**“Now, however we do have the Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Management of BPD (2012) freely available.”**

## How far have we come?

If you go back 3,000 years, we find the first descriptions of BPD mentioned in the medical literature. So BPD has been around for a while.

It was in 1938 however that an American Psychoanalyst first described most of the symptoms and referred to the 'borderline group'. He described these patients as being on the border of neuroses and psychoses.

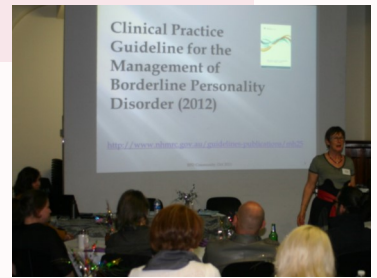
Soon the influence of Freud was felt in the work of the psychoanalyst Robert Knight. The work on 'ego' helped explain the mental functions that enable us to perceive events and integrate our thoughts and feelings.

In the 1960's the psychoanalyst Otto Kernberger proposed three categories of personality organisations: psychotic, neurotic and borderline. It was the same sort of ideas just dressed a little differently.

John Gunderson and Margaret Singer publish information on the borderline disorder and define its major characteristics in 1975. Then Gunderson published an instrument to accurately diagnose the disorder.

In 1980 the DSM-III first mentions BPD as a *bona fide* psychiatric diagnosis.

The myths surrounding BPD are profligate still today.



People affected by BPD can still be treated with disdain in the clinical world and contrary to evidence it is still claimed there is no cure.

Now, however we do have the Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Management of BPD (2012) freely available. All we need now is for the clinical world of BPD here in Victoria to read and accept the evidence of the research and implement the guidelines and for the government to make treatment and support accessible.

Not much to ask, is it?

## The Journey of Recovery

Hannah Dee, has a story to tell of the challenging path to recovery. The young mother of three boys, it was Hannah's love for her sons that provided the inspiration for her to keep on trying.

Recovery is possible, Hannah is living evidence of that. She works hard at spreading the story of her life with BPD to provide others with the hope

and optimism to keep on trying.

The author of two books, both collections of her writings on what it was like. Hannah's words are deeply touching and provide a profound insight into her experience.

Today Hannah contributes to the mental health debate through the various organisations she is involved with and

she visits schools to reach out to those who need to hear her message of hope.

Hannah has a blog on her website which you can visit at:

[www.authorhannahdee.com.au](http://www.authorhannahdee.com.au)

We are blessed to have Hannah with us in our BPD community.



Hannah Dee



## Courage personified

Public speaking is a challenge. When it is the first time you are addressing a group of strangers about yourself as a survivor of BPD, then it is an act of courage.

Sinead is a young woman who living miles from her childhood supports, faced her demons and began her journey of recovery.



Diagnosed at 30, Sinead's treatment was what would be termed 'good clinical practice' based on CBT and informed by other successful treatment theories.

Today Sinead works fulltime and enjoys her life

with her partner of 9 years who she acknowledges was a strength to her in the hard times.

The audience at our night of Celebration were deeply touched by Sinead's humble and gentle presentation. We felt proud on her behalf.

Sinead says: "The BPD diagnosis has allowed me to finally come into the light and stop living in dark :-)"

Courage does not always roar, sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying,  
"I will try again tomorrow."  
-Mary Anne Radmacher-

# So what have we done?



BPD Community began its life with the mission to replace stigma and discrimination with hope and optimism in Victoria. What does this mean in practical terms, you may ask.

Stigma is when a group of people are consciously marked as less deserving, less equal. It leads to prejudice, which leads to discrimination. It is caused by lack of knowledge or lack of understanding. Therefore eliminating stigma requires in part, making correct information available.

The unspoken objective of BPD Community is to create a sense of community amongst those affected by BPD which is a support to us as individuals. Also, it is

critical to bring about change, to give this community a voice.

With the concerns of stigma and creating community in mind, the BPD Community this last year has organised 4 Information Nights, issued 4 newsletters, established a Twitter and a Facebook account and begun developing a webpage. The focus is always on providing up to date, research based information.

We have taken up 6 cases of stigma and discrimination with Mental Health organisations and media. This is a challenging area to work in. People in the Mental health field are good people working to make a difference in our lives. That

misinformation abounds is one the one hand understandable but also frustrating. The Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Management of BPD (2012) provides all the basic information based on research, yet it seems no one uses it.

This year, after a period of consultation with carers on our email list, a position paper on what carers want called 'Carers Concerns' was adopted by the Board.

Writing the submission to the state government 10 Year Mental Health Plan was informed by this paper, we could speak with the authority of the voice of Victorian carers.

Finally, emanating from the first Family Connections program in Victoria, a Carers Group has been planned to commence this October. More information will be sent to the carers on our email list later on.

It has been a busy year and we believe we have achieved quite a lot. We would like to thank all of those who have made this possible.



## The people with us on our journey



*The people who have contributed towards our work have been numerous.*

*In October 2014, at the BPD Conference in Darebin, there was a core group of 12 enthusiastic people who wanted to make a difference here in Victoria. It is not easy however to make the commitment work and paid em-*

*ployment and family obligations always take priority. To those who have been and who currently are an active part of our organization, thank you.*

*We extend a thank you to all who have been with us through this year and who have in their own way made a positive difference to our community.*

*Our Info Nights attract between 25 to 35 people, the people who help organize these events, those who speak to us volunteering their time and expertise. On behalf of us all, thank you.*

*Then you dear reader, more than likely a member of our email list of over 200, your interest and feedback*

*gives us the energy to keep on going.*

*Thank you to those who have generously contributed pro bono legal support and IT support.*

*Finally, thank you to those who have contributed financially to help us pay the bills.*

*In unity we are strong!*

## Celebration!

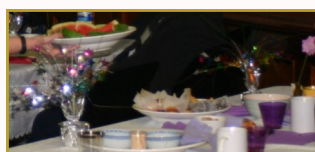


Oct 1 was the first day of BPD Awareness Week and we celebrated in style.

Our party of 25 sat at tables, nibbling and drinking the balmy evening away. We learnt a little about how far we had come in the world of BPD, we heard stories of recovery that were uplifting and inspiring, and we celebrated the achievements in our BPD Community in Victoria.

The room was abuzz with a positive energy we were

amongst people who understood, it was a welcoming environment and no-one felt alone.



The night was topped off with a performance by Zeke Ox—and what a performance that was! He lulled us with a moving rendition of 'I Heard It Through the

Grapevine'. Zeke masterfully emphasising the lyrics...'now you know just how I feel...' leaving his audience in no doubt about how he felt.

I never thought I would enjoy rap, but when I heard the freeform rap that summed up our night's discussion so adroitly delivered, I was persuaded.

Would you believe that at the end, everyone stood to sing 'We all live in a world of BPD' to the tune of Yellow Submarine! If there ever was a les-

son in not taking yourself too seriously, it was learnt with that song. We bubbled along doing our best reading the lyrics and following the melody and feeling rightly silly.



At the end, we didn't want to leave—it felt good to be part of our BPD Community a place where we belong.

# The February Information Night

## Professor Andrew Chanen

Professor Andrew Chanen is the Past President of the International Society for the Study of Personality Disorders. He is also Deputy Research Director at Orygen, the National Centre of Excellence in Youth, a Professorial Fellow at Centre for Youth Mental Health, The University of Melbourne, and Director of Clinical Services at Orygen Youth Health.

Phew, having said all that, Andrew Chanen is just a decent man and a great speaker who is up to date with the latest research. There are many more feathers to his cap also but it is his work and his insight that is inspiring. It is prevention and early intervention in BPD that drives Andrew. He established and directs the Helping Young People Early (HYPE) program, a clinical, research and training program investigating the understanding of and prevention and early intervention for severe personality disorders, particularly BPD, in young people.

The 14th International ISSPD Congress has just been held in Canada. Andrew was a keynote speaker there, his address to the Congress was "Why is Personality Disorder a Disorder of Young People and What Should We Do About It?"



Now, while many of us who know people over 18 with BPD find this a challenge: our own concerns with getting a diagnosis and access to treatment can be such a trial. However, wherever the access to diagnosis and treatment is improved for one sector of our community, it should have a positive effect on another sector. In particular, if the stigma, prejudice and discrimination that affects young people with the disorder can become a message of hope and optimism, then it will bring hope and optimism for all those affected by BPD.

We don't have to go to Canada to hear Professor Chanen speak, it is just a short trip to the Theatre at the Town Hall in South Melbourne. See you there!

**TITLE: "Early Diagnosis and Treatment"**

**PRESENTED BY**  
Dr Andrew Chanen

**TIME:**  
7pm

**DATE:**  
Tuesday, 16 February 2016

**PLACE:**  
The Theatre  
Town Hall  
Bank St  
South Melbourne

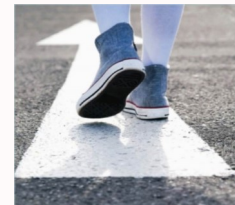
**RSVP: [bpdccommunityvic@gmail.com](mailto:bpdccommunityvic@gmail.com)**  
By: Mon 1 February 2015.

## "Early Diagnosis and Treatment"

It was in February 2015 that Professor Chanen was published in The Lancet, a prestigious medical journal. He and others wrote 3 articles on Personality Disorders, bringing us up to date with the latest research and findings.

It is with accurate and up to date information that we can defeat stigma and discrimination.

We know that about 10% of people with BPD suicide. But, did you know that suicide rates 14th on the list of causes of death in 2013 but 1st on the Years of Potential Life lost? We know it is bad, many of us live with the fear of suicide, we have first hand experience of what it means at a personal level. The Australian Bureau of Statistics report says:



*"A total of 85,032 years of potential life lost was due to this cause."*  
<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats>)

When we see figures like this we can appreciate Professor Chanen's passion for early to diagnosis and treatment BPD and other personality disorders.

On 16 February at 7pm in the South Melbourne Town Hall, we can hear what Professor Chanen says about early diagnosis and treatment. I recommend you book early.