



**Australian BPD
Foundation Limited**

*Support Promote Advocate
for Borderline Personality Disorder*



Annual Report

2014 - 2015



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for Borderline Personality Disorder*

VISION

The **vision** of the foundation is to encourage a positive culture around BPD and the ready availability and accessibility of appropriate services for people with BPD and those that care for them.

MISSION

The **mission** of the foundation is to promote a positive culture to support the recovery journey of people with BPD and their families/carers. The Foundation also supports clinicians, health care personnel and researches working in this field and acknowledges everyone who works towards a better recognition of BPD.

AIMS

The Foundation **aims** to support and promote services which

- provide high quality accessible, timely, responsive and appropriate services, treatment and care for people with BPD and their families/carers.
- provide high quality and accessible education and support for families/carers of people with BPD
- provide high quality appropriate education for clinicians and frontline workers providing treatment and care for people with BPD and their carers /families.
- promote a positive culture for those with BPD and to advocate for accessible and appropriate services provided by highly skilled professionals offering choice within an environment of hope and optimism
- improve the well-being of people with BPD and their families/carers and clinicians and others in the community who assist them.
- provide high quality scientific research about all aspects of BPD



Report from the President: Julienne McDonald

2015 has been an eventful year with so much change happening in the mental health sector that our hard working, small group of volunteers are having to pedal hard to keep up! It is a daunting task at times but it is the distress and pain encountered by people with BPD and their families whilst they struggle to access appropriate treatment that keeps us determined to change the negative culture and discrimination that shrouds this illness.

On 1st October, 2014 Senators Penny Wright (Australian Greens) and Jan McLucas (ALP) co-sponsored a motion to the Senate of the Australian Parliament, declaring the first week of October of each year as BPD Awareness Week.

The Foundation, together with our Patron Janne McMahon and supporters Dr Martha Kent from South Australia and Professor Andrew Chanen from the HYPE Program (Helping Young People Early) at Orygen in Victoria, were instrumental in getting support for this initiative.

We wish to acknowledge that Senators Wright and McLucas are the first politicians in Australia to assist in a practical sense in recognising Borderline Personality Disorder. This is a first for any parliament in Australia where a disease or illness has been acknowledged in such a manner.

The 4th National BPD conference held in October 2014 was a resounding success. It was attended by nearly 500 people. Professor Andrew Chanen spoke of equity and action for those experiencing BPD, Dr Sathya Rao described the range of effective psychological treatments for BPD emphasizing there is no excuse for clinicians to refuse treatment to people experiencing BPD. Fred Ford gave an extremely moving portrayal of his 18 year journey as a partner of someone with BPD. A moving presentation by Catherine Bennett of her survival from BPD made a very powerful impact on everyone present.

The day was a day filled with hope and optimism and a great example of consumers, carers and clinicians being on the one page and pulling together for a more enlightened and humane response to this debilitating mental illness. We are now looking to what promises to be an exciting 5th National BPD conference to be held in Adelaide on 2nd October 2015.

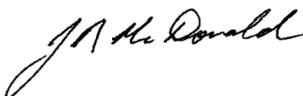
The Victorian Branch of the Foundation was launched by a group of enthusiastic volunteers following on from the Melbourne national conference. The Foundation and the Victorian branch have collaborated to provide an evening with Lynne Coulson-Barr, the first Victorian

Mental Health Complaints Commissioner. Lynne provided a progress report of the work of the Commission in its first year and was concerned to hear of the difficulties being experienced by people with BPD and their families. Currently it has not been possible to track complaints by diagnosis but this will be possible in the future. One of the major causes of complaint over the past year has been access to and choice of service. This comes as no surprise to anyone associated with BPD.

Another collaboration underway at present is the development of "A Guide to Accessing Services for BPD in Victoria". We are delighted that Ms Leanne Beagley, Director, Mental Health will launch this much needed guide at our AGM on the 8th October 2015. A big thank you to Board members Dr Sathya Rao, Katerina Volny and Rita Brown who prepared the content of the guide. Thanks also to Spectrum staff, especially Peter Fairbanks, who collaborated on the development for the guide. Finally a big vote of thanks to the Chair of the Victorian branch of the BPD Foundation, Anne Finch, for patiently gathering all the material and putting it into a format suitable for printing.

We were very disappointed that our application to the federal Department of Social Services for funding was not successful. This leaves us reliant on our small group of volunteers, membership fees and a small amount of profit from the national conferences. If anyone has any ideas that could assist with our financial sustainability we would love to hear from you. Also we are very keen to grow our band of volunteers!

On a more positive note we are pleased to be developing relationships in South Australia, Western Australia, New South Wales and Queensland. We hope to be able to formalize the development of branches in all states as a strategy to carry the culture change needed and promote the development of appropriate services throughout Australia.



Julien McDonald September 2015



Report from the Secretary: Katerina Volny

2015 has been a year of progress for the foundation that has wet our appetite for more to come in the future. The secretary's role has been transitioned to myself from Estelle Malseed with much appreciated support to take on this new role from Estelle and the board. This

follows my attendance as a new member to the board this year at a valuable training event, the Board Builder conference run by the Institute of Community Directors.

We have coordinated the development of a new logo with the expertise of Lauren Ormsby from Little Green Apple <http://www.littlegreenapple.net.au/> . Lauren worked with the board to develop a logo that reflected our foundation's identity. The circular element in the logo communicates the idea of community and support linking the experience of illness with the help that a person and their network needs.

Rita Brown has worked to maintain an active presence on facebook promoting events / services / articles of interest to people with BPD achieving nearly 500 likes. She has also coordinated the development of a new website that will be ready to launch soon. This important communication with members and the broader community is an important and time intensive role.

The annual program of national conferences around Australia continues to be a regular feature of board meetings, meeting the challenge of remotely supporting local networks in other states to develop and create a high quality BPD conference, this year in Adelaide, with strong interest from other states in the coming years.

Our work on meeting the governance needs of our foundation continues. We acknowledge with gratitude the probono legal advice given to us by DLA Piper which has been a valuable and essential support for our organisation.

We have worked hard over the last couple of months to develop a 'How to' guide for consumers and carers to access services for BPD in the state of Victoria. This guide will be launched by Leanne Beagley, Director Mental Health at our AGM on 8th October.

We have recognised the challenges of meeting our goals in the future. We strive to gain greater awareness and membership in the community, support new members to contribute to the running of the foundation, fundraising to resource the board's work, and the development of networks and branches in each state.



Katerina Volny September 2015



Report from the 4th Annual National BPD Conference

held in Melbourne on 2nd October 2014

The conference was designed to instil a realistic sense of hope and optimism that recovery from BPD is possible. The theme for the day was **"BPD.....What Works!"**

Whilst there were no promises made that recovery would be easy the focus was that BPD is a treatable mental illness and that recovery can be a reality for many. No one form of treatment suits everybody so if one form is unsuitable then persevere and seek out alternatives.

Flexibility had to be the order of the day with a small group of volunteers juggling other employment and trying to steer a calm course through the very complex world of mental illness and maintain an open dialogue between those with lived experience of BPD, their carers and the many differing professionals providing services and support.

450 people were booked but well over this number in fact turned up on the day. In line with our policy of inclusiveness no one was turned back. Auntie Joy performed a very appropriate smoking welcome to country ceremony and addressed us with warmth and wisdom. Approximately 25% of attendees were people with lived experience 25% were families or other carers and the remaining 50% were Mental Health Workers or clinicians.

Evaluation from participant feedback indicated the most overwhelmingly successful keynote speakers and workshops were given by people prepared and able to tell their story of lived experience from either the perspective of a person with lived experience or of being a support person/carer. A standing ovation was given to one such presentation of a life lived with trauma and the rewards of survival. A workshop later in the day with a panel discussion by people with lived experience discussing "What has worked for me" and answering questions about their own varying experiences was also particularly popular. The workshop explaining DBT was also very well received.

To be prepared to come before an audience of this size and diversity and talk about very private experiences takes enormous courage. Thank you from all who had the rich experience of hearing your story.

The workload for the team of organisers was enormous. It was also very emotionally demanding trying to juggle the changing availability of speakers, topics and resources. Congratulations and thanks to all.

The Conference was considered an overwhelming success as rated by 90% of attendees. I am still receiving good reports a year later. It suggested in creating a sense of optimism, that stigma has not necessarily been removed but it is worth advocating for change. Many people

with lived experience commented that they felt renewed hope for a better future and a renewed determination to work towards recovery. Many carers felt they received a much greater understanding of the difficulties and challenges that the person they support experiences.



Estelle Malseed September 2015

Report on the 2015 Conference to be held in Adelaide

Janne McMahon and her conference subcommittee are busy planning the 5th National Annual Conference to be held in at Flinders University in Adelaide on the 2nd October 2015. In line with attendance other years it is anticipated the venue will be filled to capacity.

The title of the conference is **"New Directions – New Opportunities"**

An excellent line-up of world class speakers will deliver thought provoking and informative presentations.

- Prof Andrew Chanen '*New Directions in Borderline Personality Disorder*'
- Catherine Bennett, '*Recovery: A lived experience*' Consumer perspective, Victoria.
- Karen Bailey, '*I'm with you on this*' Carer perspective, South Australia
- Prof Brin Grenyer '*The Project Air Strategy for Personality Disorders approach*'

A number of concurrent workshops will be held in the afternoon.

In addition two additional workshops are planned to coincide with the conference – one for GP's where a consumer will give a presentation about "Borderline Personality Disorder and her recovery" and the second for CAMHS, Youth and Adult mental health professionals and researchers presented by Professor Andrew Chanen. His presentation will describe the clinical, research and training program at Hype (Orygen Youth Health), focussing on the understanding of and prevention and early intervention for severe personality disorder, particularly borderline personality disorder in youth.



Rita Brown (Conference Sub Committee)

September 2015