

Responding to mental health issues for international students

Dr Jim Elliott, Dr Sean Murray

9am - 2pm (4 hours)

Abstract

It is a practical skills workshop for staff in frontline roles as advisors, administrators, tutors and support staff who are exposed to students who are experiencing significant mental health issues, and may in fact be the first staff to encounter the student who is having difficulties in relation to the welfare and needs of international students. This is a **4 hour program**.

Participants will gain an understanding of mental health definitions and terminology. Learn the contextual issues which have the potential to magnify mental health problems for International students. Develop risk assessment strategies with a particular focus on ensuring high risk clients are referred to mental health professional staff. Develop an effective case management model appropriate to addressing the needs of students with on-going mental health issues. Address the needs of students who must be repatriated to their country of origin

The content will cover a brief overview of the Western mental health model. This will be followed by an overview of international students' expectation of mental health systems and the factors which exacerbate mental health issues for international students. It will address common unhelpful responses and develop principles for good practice including: early identification & intervention; appropriate psycho-education; case management approaches and crisis management. This workshop will be a mixture of psycho-educational, case study, along with small group and whole group interactive tasks.

Presenter:

Dr Sean Murray

Sean Murray is Head, Counselling and Disability Services at Curtin University. He has held this position for the past 6 years. Prior to working at Curtin he lectured in the Department of Psychiatry and Neuroscience, at UWA for 2 years. Before he migrated to Australia he held the position of Deputy Head of Department and co-coordinator of post-graduate courses in Psychology at the Medical University of Southern Africa; He was also a lecturer and Associate Director of the Centre for Psychology, at the University of Pretoria. As a psychologist he has worked for several Psychiatric Hospitals in government and military environments; student counselling services; substance abuse programs; and private practice. In 1988 he completed his MA and 1995 his PhD. He is the WA Convener for the Australian New Zealand Student Services Association and served on the executive of the Association for Counselling Psychologists for 4 years.