

Positive improvements

The value of consumer and carer engagement at South Pacific Private

South Pacific Private's Consumer & Carer Advisory Committee (CACA) has been running for more than a decade and is typically comprised of 10 past client and carer representatives and two South Pacific Private staff members. The committee meets quarterly and suggestions for ongoing improvements are openly discussed and logged.

South Pacific Private believes the CACA committee is invaluable and prides itself on the impact it has on the integrity and improvements in the hospital and for the patients.

Claire Barber, South Pacific Private's general manager commented, "Effective partnerships, consumer experience and high quality healthcare are of the utmost importance to South Pacific Private and we feel privileged to work so closely with our consumers, carers and healthcare partners."

The hospital received full accreditation in the 2013 National Accreditation Survey and was singled out by the surveyors for its work with consumers. According to the surveyors, "There was very strong evidence throughout the service that a central tenet of the organisation is partnering with consumers."

The value of consumer engagement

The CACA committee has been an integral part of several key improvements throughout the hospital in recent years, including:

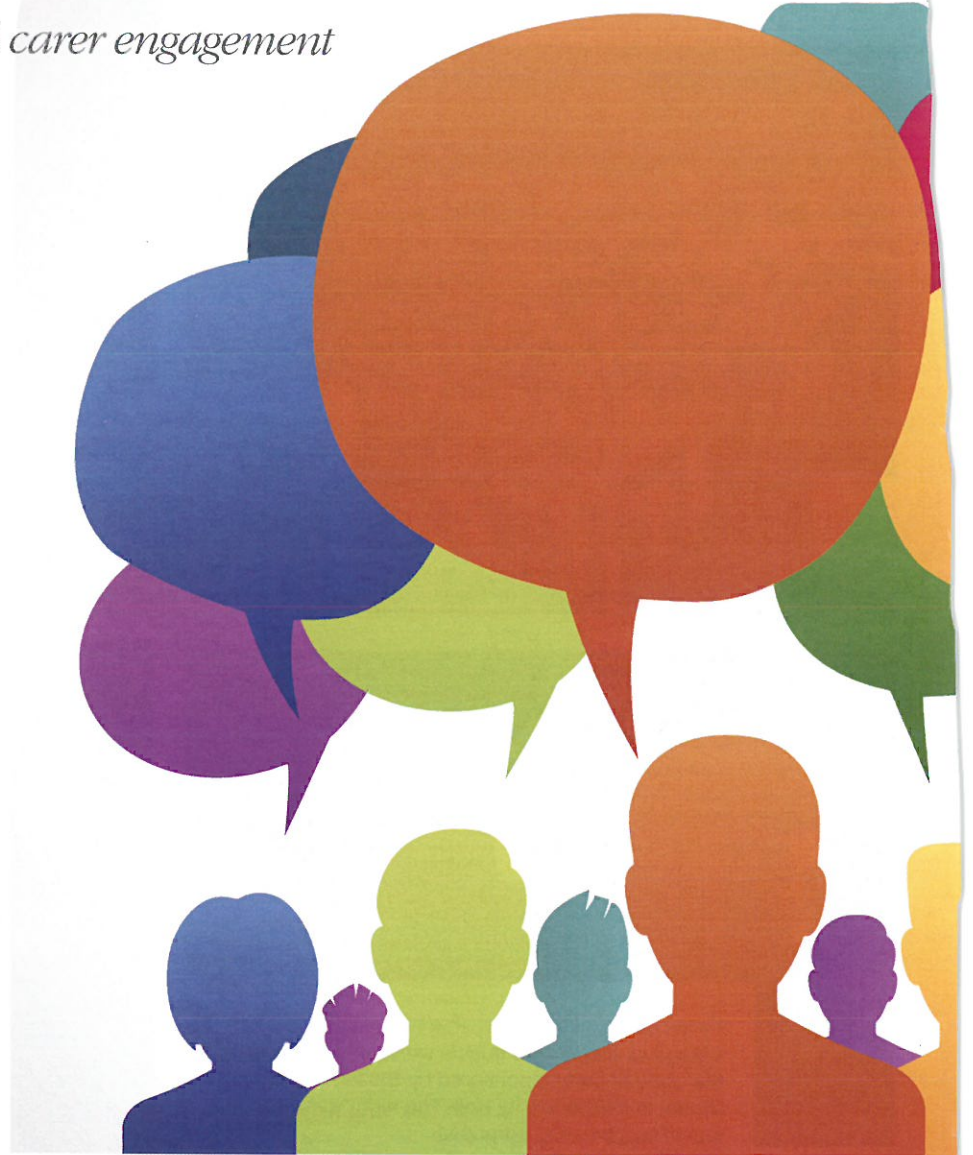
1. 24 hour alumni support line: This support line was implemented in May 2013 as a direct response from a CACA committee member suggestion. This means the hospital is now able to take enquiry calls 24/7. Prior to this change, after hours calls (from 5.30pm onwards) were channeled to the nurses' station and to after hours staff. However this was a strain on resources and challenging for the nursing department whose focus needed to be the inpatients' care and treatment. Implementing this support line has helped to ensure the

nurses are able to focus their care on the inpatients overnight, and that South Pacific Private is better able to track and respond to overnight enquiries.

2. Client rights and responsibilities: The CACA committee reviewed South Pacific Private's client rights and responsibilities. This resulted in improved communication throughout the hospital. Posters on rights and responsibilities are now clearly displayed for staff and clients.

3. Development of Changes 2 program resulting from phone survey: The CACA committee

members conduct an annual survey with South Pacific Private alumni. This survey consists of questions around program content, development, improvements, customer experience, aftercare and patient recovery. As a result of this annual survey, the hospital developed a Changes 2 program to meet specific needs outlined in the survey. Changes 2 is designed as a treatment booster program, providing an intensive therapeutic experience to support clients who may be struggling in their recovery journey, with further psycho-education, psychotherapy and life skill development while reinforcing the principles of recovery.



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4. **Pacific Connections:** On a quarterly basis, South Pacific Private designs and develops two newsletters, *Pacific Views* (for healthcare professionals) and *Pacific Connections* (for past clients and alumni). The CACA committee helped to generate the idea for the latter as a reflection of annual survey results and this newsletter has been shared with alumni since 2011. Each quarter the newsletters cover a variety of topics that are specific to supporting clients in their ongoing recovery journey.
5. **Complete revision of the Step Down program (became Transitions):** The Transitions program supports clients in their first few weeks after discharge as they transition back into their home and work environment.

This program is an important part of treatment as it allows clients to address issues as they arise and helps them to focus on reinforcing and extending the skills they learnt during their treatment. The CACA committee disseminated feedback from clients in the annual survey and used it to transform the program into what is now known as *Transitions*.

6. **Aftercare planning groups and lectures developed to improve client aftercare knowledge and engagement:** Another fundamental and valuable insight from the CACA committee was the inclusion of tailored lectures specific to aftercare and ongoing recovery. This was to ensure the hospital is educating and preparing clients in terms of how they would manage their own aftercare plans. It is critical to provide insights to clients in terms of their next steps post discharge and these lectures are now an integral part of the facility's psycho-educational lecture content.

The CACA committee provides ongoing support to the hospital. In addition to the quarterly meetings, South Pacific Private also engages with consumers and carers through a variety of channels, which include:

- Annual phone survey of past clients
- Suggestions box placed in the hospital
- Client feedback cards available throughout the hospital and at the reception area
- All compliments and complaints logged and addressed on a weekly basis
- Weekly staff (clinical and non-clinical) and community meeting which provides the opportunity for current clients to feedback directly to staff
- Alumni support email address. [EH](#)

From personal experience

John McMillan is a longstanding committee member and has been involved in many of the improvements and changes over the 20 years South Pacific Private (SPP) has been operating. He has also gone through recovery firsthand and brings his experience to the CACA committee in terms of perspective, insight and support.

SPP asked Mr McMillan about his experience with the committee over the years.

You've been involved with South Pacific Private as a client and as one of our consumer and carer committee members; what changes have you been privy to and do you think are significant? There have been a number of significant improvements over the years. The first I would cite would be the remodel and refurbishment of SSP. It impacted the 'flow' in a really positive way and I believe the service provided as a result is fantastic. As a result, there are more beds; and thus more on offer, which is

great as it supports each individual experiencing treatment at SPP (regardless of how far along a person is in their recovery journey). Some of the biggest changes I have been privy to is the addition of more after care programs and day programs, which is really important in terms of a person's recovery post discharge from SPP.

Finally, and most significantly, the program has stayed constant, effective and has great integrity.

You've been a key member of our CACA committee for some time now – what's the value in being involved in that committee from your standpoint? I am able to share with others, from an intimate point of view, what is on offer; from the perspective of what the hospital is offering now and what the future holds. The CACA committee offers the layer of support that allows the vision and strategy of the hospital to be fulfilled and SPP to continue to support clients.

By Steve Stokes