

➤ Inside this Issue

The Results Are In!

Recent Projects

ShortCuts

Introducing... Laura Ribarow

In the Hot Seat.... Doug Faircloth

Literature Reviews - Why Bother?

Verso a Finalist at ACCV State Awards!

Environmental Update

www.verso.com.au

The Results Are In!

Aged Care Approvals Round (ACAR) 2008

As many of our readers may know, the results of ACAR 2008 were finally released in July after a 6 month wait! The results panned out to be most unusual, with changes to allocations surprising many people in the industry.

For example, Tony Gribble, Acting CEO of Aged & Community Care Victoria, commented on the reallocation of funding in Victoria, noting that whilst 148 less residential places were allocated, an additional 145 CACPs, EACH and EACHD places were made available. He observed that the Community Care sector “fared well” by this initiative.

Verso’s Managing Director, Mollie Sullivan, agreed. “At long last the community sector has been recognised. This is a great outcome for older people who wish to remain at home.”

Research Pays Off

Verso is proud to support committed Community Care providers who focus on meeting community needs and our ACAR team was delighted to share in their success. Two established providers of CACPs were assisted by Verso to receive funding for EACH for the first time. An established provider of CACPs and EACH was supported by Verso to achieve EACHD funding for the

first time. Proposals for these service developments were based on sound research (community consultations and targeted demographics) as well as strategies for enhanced organisational capacity through training and policy development.

Support for New Providers

Verso was particularly pleased to assist three service providers to enter the care package market for the first time. These providers were able to target particular community needs which have not been fully met in the past. Verso worked with these organisations over a period of time to prepare and support their applications. Mollie commented that, “it was a huge delight, but not a total surprise, to learn of their success.”

Record Funding Levels

The results maintained Verso’s strong record of success (see table below), with 75% of our clients across Australia successful and a record 100% of our Western Australian clients achieving success. Verso’s clients across Australia received close to \$15,635,000 in new annual recurrent funding. This is a record for the Verso team.

Preparations for the 2009 ACAR are well underway. We have already spoken to providers across NSW, SA, WA and Victoria about their plans for this year’s round. Call us now if you would like a Verso Community Needs Study conducted in your area. If you would like a tailored Demographic Snapshot to support your preparations, visit our website (www.verso.com.au) and click on Resources.

Comparitive Results Summary		
Verso ACAR Results	2007	2008
Successful clients	9	15
Overall success rate (%)	64%	75%
States & Territories covered	4	6
Regions covered	12	14
Capital grants funding	\$272,650	\$351,043
Number of new places	259	415

➤ Recent Projects

Therapeutic Residential Care Initiative

In July 2009, we were delighted to receive notification that our proposal to conduct a two year evaluation of Therapeutic Residential Care pilot programs had been accepted by the Victorian Department of Human Services. This evaluation project will be conducted in two parts, with the first being the evaluation of the Hurstbridge Farm Therapeutic Care Program and the second part being the evaluation of a number of similar pilots operating across Victoria.

Laura Ribarow, Senior Consultant with Verso, will be leading the evaluation with support from a number of expert associate consultants with experience in service evaluation and therapeutic care for young people.

Strategic Business Plan for Mental Health Service Completed

In early 2008, Verso prepared a successful application for a Mental Health NGO Capacity Development Grant on behalf of a service provider in Melbourne's West. During 2008-09, Verso and the organisation collaborated to deliver two 'Gateway' projects to provide a solid business planning base and enhanced client/carer outcomes.

Gateway One - Business Planning

This project focused on funding opportunities, finances and the future, with the key output being a Strategic Directions Business Plan. It provided a 'Gateway' to funding growth, strengthened financial viability, enhanced consumer outcomes and addressed unmet community needs.

Gateway Two - Clinical Governance

Designed to interface with Gateway One, this project concentrated on clients, carers and compliance.

The key output was a Service (Clinical) Governance Framework to strengthen legislative compliance and enhance quality outcomes.

Verso completed both 'Gateways' in early 2009. In May, Verso received a very positive feedback letter from the service provider's Board acknowledging the "great deal of time and work" that went into the project and thanking the Verso team for the "tremendous detail" in the Business Plan.

Consumer Survey Feedback

In April 2009, Verso was commissioned by a Victorian local government care provider to conduct Consumer Surveys across a range of program types (CACCP, EACH, Linkages and Interim Case Management). The aim of the project was to support the provider to achieve proactive and continuous service improvement, based on feedback from consumers.

The Verso team worked collaboratively with the provider to develop a survey process that would provide in-depth, qualitative feedback and offer achievable and practical suggestions for change. Over 50 consumers and carers were consulted, providing a diverse range of attitudes, experiences and ideas. The majority of surveys were conducted by phone and a small number of in-home interviews were completed to accommodate the special needs of some consumers.

The survey results have given the provider targeted recommendations encompassing areas such as approaches to the use of locum case management and ways to engage consumers in other community services and activities.

For further information, contact Jodie McNair on (03) 9489 3233 or email jodie@verso.com.au

➤ ShortCuts

Demographic Snapshot Series Arrives!

Verso's Demographic Snapshot Series has been launched online! We hope it will assist providers of community care, residential care, disability services, family and child services, retirement living and local councils by informing decisions about service development and funding growth.

For more information visit www.verso.com.au and click on Resources.

2009 ACSA National Conference

Verso will be resuming its role as Massage Sponsor of the ACSA National Conference in Perth in September. We hope our readers will stop by to relax, recharge and say hello.

Our Massage Sponsorship highlights Verso's commitment to taking the stress out of finding the right demographics and getting submissions in on time.

➤ Introducing...

Laura Ribarow

One of our newest additions to the Verso team is Laura Ribarow. As a Senior Consultant, Laura brings years of experience to the role. Her special fields of competence include health and community program evaluation, health service planning and policy review.

Before joining Verso in 2008, Laura worked for a major public provider of acute health services as Project Manager, Planning and Review.

During the past year Laura's project experiences at Verso have included successful FaHCSIA tenders for Personal Helpers and Mentors Program services in the Western Region of Melbourne and other successful mental health service grant applications.

She is currently engaged in a groundbreaking review project for BreastScreen Victoria.

To contact Laura about your planning and evaluation needs, phone her on (03) 9489 3233 or email laura@verso.com.au



IN THE HOT SEAT... DOUG FAIRCLOTH

Verso director and aspiring MasterChef Doug Faircloth gives us the inside scoop!

What do you do to relax?

Have dinner with friends and watch sport on television

I am passionate about...

Social justice and family

What are you reading?

The Castlemaine Murders by Kerry Greenwood, Boards That Make a Difference by John Carver and Leadbelly: The Inside Story of an Underworld War by John Silvester and Andrew Rule

Where is your favourite place to eat?

Al fresco in faraway places

What are you most proud of?

Two wonderful children and a marriage of 34 years, my participation in leadership development in the Czech Republic, Cuba and Vietnam and Verso's commitment and contribution to making a difference.

What are you listening to?

Jimi Hendrix and Kaiser Chiefs

Food for Thought Doug's Tequila Beef Chilli

Olive oil
 880g beef diced into 2cm chunks
 2 brown onions, finely chopped
 2-3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
 2 cans diced tomatoes
 Fresh jalapeno chilli
 1 1/2 tbsp lime juice
 1/2 cup tequila
 2tsp ground cumin seed
 2tsp whole cumin seed
 1 cup water
 Black pepper
 1 tsp smoked paprika
 2 cans kidney beans
 Bunch of coriander

Using a large, heavy-based pot, heat olive oil and brown beef. Once browned, remove beef and put aside. Add onions and garlic to the pot and brown. Turn stove heat to low and return beef to the pot along with diced tomatoes and chilli (to taste*).

In a bowl, mix lime juice, tequila, cumin, paprika, 1/4 cup water and a liberal grinding of black pepper. Add mixture to the pot.

Simmer for 3 to 4 hours, adding water as required.

Add kidney beans 1/2 an hour before serving.

Add chopped coriander 5 minutes before serving.

Garnish with remaining coriander and serve with crusty bread.

*Be careful not to put too much chilli in as you may overwhelm the aromatic flavours.

Research Updates Now Online

Jodie McNair regularly prepares research updates for the Verso team, pulling together information about emerging policy trends, industry news and recently released reports. The Verso team felt that our readers and clients may also benefit from these updates.

To download the latest research update, visit www.verso.com.au and click on Resources.

➤ Literature Reviews

Why Bother?

An interesting current project being undertaken by Verso's Mollie Sullivan and Alli Knight includes a review of Legislation and Publications relevant to abuse and neglect for a highly regarded Disability Support provider in New South Wales. The Literature Review will assist service managers determine future policy directions and guide decision making in day-to-day services.

Topics covered have included Disability Services Guidelines, Women's Services and Refuges, Child Protection, Training/Resource Information as well as Elder Abuse. A key finding of the Review was that although these topics seemed to be quite diverse, the themes and principles applicable to different service types and age groups are very similar.

Some of the main themes emerging from the Review:

- Different publications tended to define abuse/neglect and the types of abuse and neglect in differing ways. There seems to be no universal agreement on defining abuse and neglect
- Abuse and neglect can occur in a wide range of forms, and differing levels and types of responses are required. However, a strong focus on prevention, community education and empowerment is equally applicable for people of all genders and ages regardless of the type of abuse or neglect
- There is a high prevalence of abuse towards women and children with disability, though boys and men also experience abuse. Much of the literature focuses on women or children with disability and tends to 'bypass' issues relating to males or add relevant considerations as an afterthought

Mollie commented, "Literature Reviews are ideal as a first step when considering policy or practice changes."

For further information regarding a Verso Literature Review, contact Mollie Sullivan on (03) 9489 3233 or email mollie@verso.com.au



Did You Know?

Verso a Finalist at ACCV State Awards!

In May, the first annual Aged & Community Care Victoria (ACCV) State Awards night was held in Melbourne. With Verso qualifying as a finalist for the inaugural Industry Supporter award, a gaggle of the team's consultants were rounded up to attend the evening.

Representatives from all corners of the aged care industry came together to celebrate Victoria's best. Competition was strong, with Verso pipped at the post by Management Advantage.



The Verso team enjoys a night off! Left to right: Douglas Faircloth, Emma McCue, Jodie McNair, Mollie Sullivan, Brian Sullivan, Matthew Purtell

Environmental Update

Light Bulbs

During 2009, Verso replaced the one hundred and seven downlight bulbs in its offices with new energy efficient versions. These bulbs consume 30% less power than a standard bulb, have a 5000 hour life and yet still deliver the same light output as a standard downlight bulb. As a rough guide, this equates to a saving of approximately 1600 watts of power per hour if they were all on at once. Or, at today's prices, approximately \$600 a year.