

# EDITORIAL

## Celebrating 25 Years

Since the Journal's last issue, the 4th National Conference of the Australian Society of Rehabilitation Counsellors has been organised and will take place at the Novotel Opal Cove Resort, at Coffs Harbour, New South Wales, Australia over June 24 and 25 1999. This Conference is an important event for ASORC members, celebrating as it does 25 years of the Society on Australia.

In some respects however, the key to the development of rehabilitation counselling in Australia occurred a further quarter of a century prior when the Commonwealth Government accepted the recommendations of the Coombs Report (1947) to provide both rehabilitation treatment and training services within the same organisation. The establishment of these centres which provided a full range of rehabilitation treatment and training services persisted in one form or another until the 1980's when the commonwealth moved toward a community based model of service.

It seems clear from the evidence assembled (e.g. Tipping, 1992), that the progenitor of the contemporary Rehabilitation Counsellor in Australia was a category of professional called an "Education and Training Officer" who concerned themselves with vocational counselling and the supervision of a range of training courses. And although the original staff in these positions were trained teachers seconded from State Education Departments, this selection criteria did not persist and it was not until the mid 1970s that the profession of rehabilitation counselling commenced a substantive set of statements on the skills and competencies required for the profession. Twenty-five years on from the initial College based education course on rehabilitation counselling, the profession has continually redefined itself to meet contemporary challenges as they arise and is able to do so with an extensive network of University based training, professional accreditation processes, and the continuing development of an expanding professional society. Rehabilitation counselling in the new millennium will continue to meet the individual needs of persons with disabilities as its core responsibility, but is likely to use its unique set of professional competencies to explore additional areas of service as widely divergent as, for example, personal coaching and restorative justice. Emerging community needs will test the mettle of the rehabilitation counselling profession and enable vigorous debate on its future direction. Such debate can only be healthy and should be eagerly anticipated.

This issue provides three articles from the winners of the Student Manuscript competition and two articles from general review. In the first category, Anna Rybak discusses an alternative approach to vocational assessment for individual with schizophrenia, which posits a five-stage model, or some potential benefit to rehabilitation counsellors. Corey Moore examines a very interesting proposition that, with evidence in the Unites States suggesting that the Rehabilitation Act (1973) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) are not effectively addressing the right of individual with disability, there is potential for a minority group argument to be more effective. Ross Colquhoun examines the Work Repertory Grid which arises from George Kelly and his colleagues work on personal construct theory. He

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canvasses the potential of the Grid's use in the early prediction of burnout in stressful working environments.

In the second category, Sandra Bentley examines the transition of this county's oldest education programs in rehabilitation counselling from current traditional distance education delivery to an online multimedia instructional medium and explores pedagogical issues and future evaluations. Nicholas Buys and Elizabeth Kendall have examined the important topic of institutional level stressors as a factor in individual burnout within insurance-based rehabilitation. Their conclusions are an important contribution to the debate on inherent contradictions within insurance-based rehabilitation decision making.

Finally, readers of the Journal will be aware that the production of issues has not proceeded as well as might be expected. The delay has been at Editorial level and is one for which I apologise. The management plan to enable the Journal to realign its issues in the appropriate calendar year, will see Volume 4 Issue 2, and Volume 5 Issues 1 and 2, published in 1999. By the commencement of 2000 it is expected that the Journal will issue twice a year as normal.

Herbert C Biggs Ph.D

*Editor*