



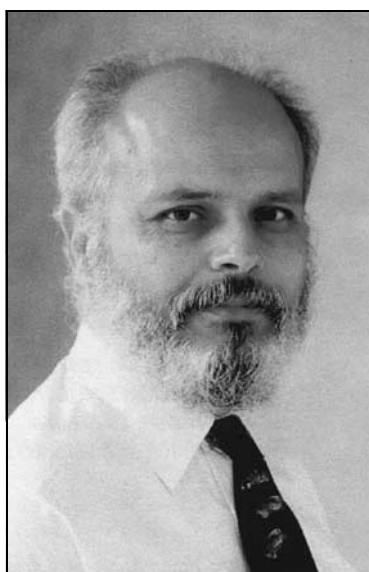
obituary

Niazi Ayoub Kraya

Formerly Director, Forensic Psychiatry, Waikato District Health Board, Hamilton, New Zealand

Dr Niazi Kraya was born in Cairo on 17 October 1946 and died suddenly on 12 May 2005. He completed his medical training at Cairo University where he obtained his MB ChB in 1970. He later trained in psychiatry at Oxford University and affiliated hospitals in the UK. He obtained the DPM in 1975 and MRCPsych in 1978. He held consultant posts in Liverpool, Lincolnshire and Saudi Arabia before going to New Zealand in 1989. Subsequently he became a Fellow of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Physicians.

He worked initially as a Consultant Psychiatrist and Deputy Director of the Tokanui Psychiatric Hospital, which served the middle of the North Island of New Zealand. Shortly thereafter, he was appointed to the position of Director of Forensic Psychiatric Services for the Area Health Board, which covered in-patient and community services for the whole of the middle of North Island. Following the



retirement of the Tokanui Psychiatric Hospital Director he also took over that position. He was heavily involved in all stages of the planning of the new 30-bed in-patient secure facility in the Henry Bennett Centre. This involved expansion and organisation of a comprehensive community service and a service to the

local prisons. From 1995 he worked in Perth, Australia for about 2 years as a consultant psychiatrist at Graylands Hospital. While there he became a member of the Mental Health Review Board of Western Australia. In 1997 he returned to New Zealand to resume as Director of the Forensic Service and to commission the opening of the new forensic in-patient unit. From 2000 he worked in the United Arab Emirates for about 3 years as Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at the United Arab Emirates University before returning to Waikato as Director of Adult Mental Health and, subsequently, of Forensic Services until his untimely death.

Dr Kraya was warm, generous and humble with a keen sense of humour and a delightful personality. His tolerance and ability to work with even the most recalcitrant (staff) endeared him to all. He was devoted to his profession in clinical, educational and research matters and will be remembered for his role in the establishment of the regional forensic service in the Waikato area, for his natural empathy, and for his generosity with his time for whoever needed it.

Selim El-Badri and Graham Mellsop

reading about

Reading about self-help for carers: books, leaflets and websites

Although there is a lot of information available about specific mental health problems, which may be as useful to carers as to service users, information that focuses on carers themselves is fairly sparse. Much is directed towards those who support someone with a long-term condition, for example, parents of disabled children or those caring for an elderly frail person. There appears to be remarkably little information specifically for carers of adults of working age with mental health problems. However, some of the fundamental issues faced by carers are probably common across conditions. These include how to cope with the carer–cared for relationship, how to deal with the turbulent emotions that can be aroused, how to respond to difficult behaviour and situations, how to navigate through the maze of services and how to

break through the isolation that comes with being in a caregiving role.

Books and booklets

Books are perhaps the least accessible and flexible source of self-help material for carers. Bookshops and libraries do not generally stock a large selection. My trip to a major branch of a well-known bookseller in Birmingham revealed just two relevant texts. A search of stock available through Amazon (<http://www.amazon.co.uk>) brought up more titles, including 22 focused on caring for someone with dementia, 12 on general issues of caregiving, 6 on caring for a child with disability and just two on supporting someone with mental illness. The books include personal accounts, practical manuals and guides on emotional survival. However, one drawback is that the market is dominated by American authors whose cultural and service context may not transfer readily to other countries. One example which illustrates the American expression of ideas is a book

synopsis which invites the reader 'to take a first step in healing from Alzheimer's ripple effect by beginning to journal about the experience' (Amazon, 2004).

Standing out among those in the general category is a book by Hugh Marriot (2003) with the provocative title *The Selfish Pig's Guide to Caring*. The author, who is a carer himself, has produced a treasure of a book. The text is thoroughly focused on the carer and not on the person being cared for. The writing has an inimitable style that allows the author to tackle home truths and taboo subjects in an unflinchingly head-on manner, including areas such as incontinence and sexual intimacy, feelings of rage, fears of going mad and abusive behaviour. It includes a mix of information and advice coupled with a dose of positive thinking.

Another good general source is the third edition of the *Carers' Resource Book* (McCrae, 1998). This is a Scottish publication and some information is centred around services in Aberdeen, but it gives excellent and wide-ranging coverage,