

Service Practice Groups: Rewriting The Script For Program Development

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Abstract

Group programs are an integral part of family law services – they must respond to client needs and reflect current circumstances. To ensure currency, programs are regularly reviewed, updated and rewritten. At Interrelate, service practice groups (SPGs) have become part of the landscape to review programs and other aspects of the organisation's delivery of services. In this presentation, the creation of SPGs, their functionality and wider organisational purpose will be outlined.

The formation of SPGs is a ground-breaking initiative designed to provide programs of high quality based on the expertise held at all levels of the organisation. The groups are built on a foundation that engenders engagement by staff, reinforces a new collaborative and cooperative culture, and provides a platform whereby ideas and original thinking can be applied to enhance and develop offerings for clients. In an organisation that is relatively widespread in its locations, SPGs bring together streams of thought and individual creativity that otherwise may not have been revealed and put to use for the benefit of clients and Interrelate.

This presentation will utilise a number of media to fully elaborate upon the organisation and operation of SPGs to enable attendees to potentially apply a similar methodology in their own organisations. In addition to an informative PowerPoint presentation, there will be video clips of meetings and interviews with those who have worked within an SPG to provide a full understanding of the internal dynamic of a group, and to detail how groups integrate with the organisation as a whole. As SPGs in Interrelate are newly established and still evolving, the presenters will catalogue their learning and share their insights relating to the introduction and management of SPGs.

SPGs are an exemplar for program development currently and into the future, based on an understanding that client services must continually adapt and improve in line with community changes and client expectations. Organisations such as Interrelate are the repositories of great knowledge and understanding, and the ongoing challenge is to tap into that practice wisdom, knowledge and understanding so services remain as relevant as possible to the environment in which they are delivered. SPGs internally create cohesiveness and a strong sense of purpose, and may, in due course, be a model for use across organisations and sectors.

To learn more about *Service Practice Groups: Rewriting The Script For Program Development*, contact Interrelate's Research & Service Development team on rsd@interrelate.org.au.