

# E-zine Special

**Dale DiLeo** "Career and Recovery for People with Psychiatric Disabilities"

August 2010



## focus on ABILITY

### NOVA OFFICES

#### NSW

- Bankstown
- Blacktown
- Bourke
- Broken Hill
- Camden
- Campbelltown
- Canterbury
- Caringbah
- Cobar
- Forster
- Hurstville
- Ingleburn
- Katoomba
- Penrith
- Port Macquarie
- Richmond
- Rockdale
- Rouse Hill
- Springwood
- St Marys
- Taree
- Windsor

#### QLD

- Baubadesert
- Beenleigh
- Logan

### CEO Comment— Martin Wren

*The brief we gave Mr DiLeo was simple: give us the world's best employment program for staff working with job seekers that have experienced mental illness.*

Dale delivered: "Career and Recovery for People with Psychiatric Disabilities"

Our program ran over 5 days and was part of an organisational development program supporting our work with such job seekers.

NOVA has a first class record of supporting workers and job seekers that have Psychiatric Disability with a history that pre-dates the majority of Australian service providers (we had a specialist unit in 1992).

However, the number of persons presenting at NOVA that have experienced mental illness is rapidly growing and we are very keen to develop and broaden our ability to find suitable work and provide appropriate pre and post placement support.

In 2008 we began a research and development program that included the creation of a large number of qualified WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) facilitators, the creation of specialist staff training and support and the promotion of the successes we have enjoyed assisting our job



seekers to become valued employees.

Dale's work forms part of this effort and represents a significant milestone in our progress. However, as they say in sales, "that's not all" and we have more exciting developments to introduce including a program of overseas internships for selected staff.

This Ezine presents a "staffs eye" view of the DiLeo program, something that was enjoyed by everyone that took part and will lead to better service delivery for all NOVA job seekers.

- RICHMOND  
1st September
- PENRITH  
2nd September
- BLACKTOWN  
3rd September
- KATOOMBA  
8th September
- ST MARYS  
9th September
- CARINGBAH  
10th September

# Dale DiLeo

*“Career and Recovery for People with Psychiatric Disabilities”*

*Bernie Davey - WOW – what a week!  
What an experience!*

Having the world’s foremost expert and advocate in Disability Services coming to down town Penrith to share his knowledge and experience with us is truly awe inspiring and invigorating.

How one could not act ‘like a sponge’ and absorb the words and wisdom expressed by Dale DiLeo as he shared his life and mind. One would be foolish not to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to learn and to continue on along the path of best practice in delivering a supported employment service. Not only did we receive a world renowned expert but this was also backed up with a comprehensive and well presented training curriculum. A wealth of back ground information and discussion supported with practical and friendly user aids.

Of particular interest to me was Dale’s thoughts on disclosure.

“.....Despite this, some job developers feel it is dishonest and unfair to not tell the employer about the disability of the person they are representing. But with good career planning , vocational assessment, and job matching , the most important factor is whether or not the person can perform the essential functions of the job.....”

While the decision to disclose or not lies solely in the hands of the individual , we should ensure that the individual is making an informed decision.

How could we come away from a week like that and not feel warm , fuzzy



and better equipped to service our job seekers with psychiatric disabilities. And to top it all off Dale says, of NOVA as an organisation and as individuals providing a disability service.... “You guys are head and shoulders above the rest”

Smart guy that DiLeo.

*Jennifer Byrnes* - The key to a successful working environment for a person with mental health is flexibility. Understanding people rather than controlling them and not labelling the person is vital, and positive affirmations build a positive working environment.

Dale was a fabulous presenter and his wealth of knowledge was greatly appreciated.

Some more NOVA Employment links



*Joanne Legh* - I found the week to bring some new information, revising things we already incorporate and also opened me up to ways of looking at how we speak. In terms of labelling and the stigma attached to it, I was amazed to realise how often we can use labels, “Johnny the guy with Bi Polar or Sue with Depression”. I have now realised that by using labels it groups people together which creates stigma. “The greater the difference, the less value”. This is something I will surely be changing for me; it will now be “Johnny the guy who wants to work in retail”. By making this change I will be educating people in the workplace to see ability rather than disability – focusing on what the person is capable of not what their disability is.

*Paule Jarvis*- I recently had the pleasure of undertaking Career and Recovery training with Dale DiLeo. From the very start i was impressed by his insight into the issues facing people with mental illness. The training was of a level far beyond any mental health training I have previously encountered. Dale spoke of issues that I could relate to, he reinforced what i thought was my scant knowledge of mental health issues.

He has taken it from the unknown to no problem, this is how it is done and this is how I will do it. I can do it!  
I realise that this training puts NOVA in a league of their own as a Disability Employment Service; it will give a dramatic rise to the level of service we are able to provide to our job seekers with psychiatric disabilities.

*Elena Naoumenko* - I would like to thank NOVA for giving me the opportunity to attend the Dale DiLeo training, it was very important to learn what a meaningful job we do!

The training seminar I attended with no doubts was very informative! This training was extremely important , it gave us an opportunity to get together and discuss how we can improve our service for people who have psychiatric disabilities.

*Clare Bourke* - On the whole I felt the program Dale presented confirmed that Nova’s model of service delivery is on par, if not best practise.

Some of the things I have come away with are the way to present our job seeker to employers based on their skills and abilities and then the support needs on the job.

This will be an invaluable tool working with jobseekers who have mental illness. Also as a method to market job seekers who are not yet comfortable with disclosure.

Dale’s obvious commitment to self determination or client choice and decision making was inspiring and made me think about my level of respect for this aspect of service delivery.

Dale Dileo’s program was well presented, informative & inspirational. I am grateful for the opportunity to participate and learn.

- CAMPBELLTOWN  
16th September
- HURSTVILLE  
17th September
- FORSTER  
21st September
- TAREE  
22nd September
- PORT MACQUARIE  
23rd September

# Dale DiLeo

*“Career and Recovery for People with Psychiatric Disabilities”*

**Amie Ross** - The very fact that almost half (45 %) of the Australian population aged between 16 – 65yrs ( working Australians ) , have , at some point in their lifetime experienced mental illness, shows that there is a dire need for specialised supported employment programs to assist the almost half of the Australian working aged population back into (or into) the workforce. Focusing not only on getting a job but on their Career and Recovery.

The training that we experienced with Dale DiLeo , ensured me that the assistance that NOVA is providing is on the right track with the key elements and values presented being close to the same that NOVA has had for 20 years.

- Employability
- Rapid Placement
- Integrated Setting
- Individualised Service
- Ongoing Support
- Integrated , Holistic Service
- Natural Supports
- Self Determination and
- Person Centered Planning

The thing that rang true to me was self determination , each one of our job seekers has the potential to be employed – with good career planning and mentoring each of our job seekers has the potential to want to work.

I feel that the training that we underwent, whilst affirming NOVA’s already existing policies and model of service, also opened our eyes to new ways in which we can relate and educate our job seekers, market on their behalf and support them not only in a placement but throughout their careers.

I am hugely thankful for the opportunity and the knowledge.

**Colleen Francis**- This is a man that can talk for 5 days and share a life time of experiences and still maintain his composure and a great smile. I am impressed but more importantly I am enriched.

What did I learn? Well firstly I learnt that the stigma attached to our job seekers is huge and the labelling we all do in society is so limiting. Heaven forbid that you should belong to one of the following 3:

- Physical Disability
- Intellectual Disability
- Psychiatric Disability

Which is most feared? Psychiatric Disability. Grouping people is not beneficial because it magnifies perception. If you a scared of one person with mental illness just imagine how you would feel if you saw 10 people with mental illness all grouped together.

I learnt that when you meet an individual you are not to take on the role of caretaker , as much as human nature encourages us to care and be seen as caring. Our role should be to look at the individuals capabilities and ask the individual – What do you need?

So much more of the 5 days was worth sharing in this story , but i would like to finish by saying that Dale’s passion and motivation for the people he serves is like the gold thread that in a finely woven fabric, I feel drawn to pick it up and wear it every day.



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