

Wednesday, 22 September 2010, 6-8pm

WORKING EFFECTIVELY WITH REFUGEE CLIENTS FROM SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Guest Presenter Profile—Dr EDWARD NAHIM



Dr Edward Nahim is the sole psychiatrist in Sierra Leone, West Africa and has worked in the field for over 30 years. He is the nation's leading mental health expert. He had a key role in demobilising child and adult soldiers after the ten year civil war in Sierra Leone.

He currently holds several positions including Consultant to the Government of Sierra Leone, Director of Sierra Leone Psychiatric Hospital and Medical and Dental Registrar.

Dr Nahim contributed to the development of the World Health Organisation's Rapid Assessment of Mental Health Needs of Refugees, Displaced and Other Populations Affected by Conflict and Post Conflict Situations.

In 2004, in recognition of his work in mental health, Dr Nahim was recipient of the Commander of the Order of Rokel (COR), the second highest civilian award in Sierra Leone.

Guest Presenter Profile—Dr MOHAMUD SHEIKH



Dr Mohamud Sheikh is a published international public health specialist with over 17 years experience in communicable diseases control in developing countries and resettled refugees in Australia.

Having graduated from the University of Sydney with double a Masters and a Doctorate in Public Health, Dr Sheikh currently holds a four year fully funded National Health and Medical Research Council Public Health Research Fellowship.

Dr Sheikh migrated from Kenya to Australia nearly 9 years ago. He has a number of key peer reviewed publications on international and refugee health, and also reviews for a number of national and international journals.

He is the convenor World Health Organisation training of humanitarian aid workers on communicable diseases control in humanitarian emergencies, held yearly at the School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of New South Wales.

STARTTS Presenter Profile—NAOME MADUT



Naome Madut has been working at STARTTS as a Bi-cultural Counsellor for the last 5 years.

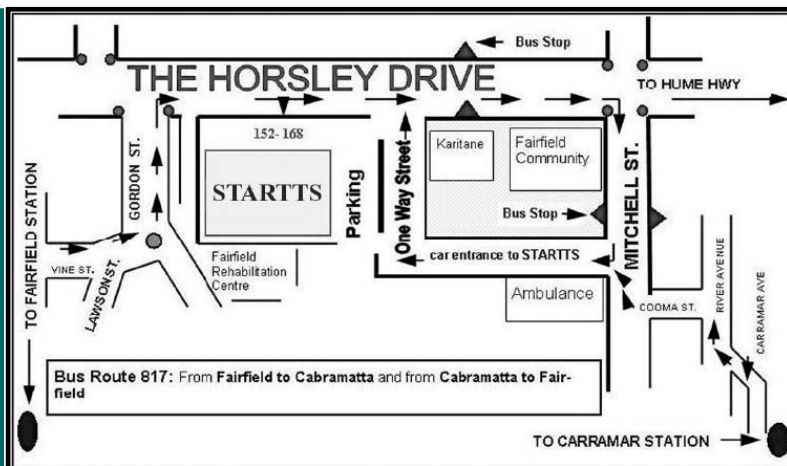
She has extensive experience working with different UN agencies in various refugee camps in different countries in Africa including: Ethiopia; Uganda; Kenya; and the internally displaced camps within the conflict areas of Southern Sudan.

Prior to coming to Australia she worked with Humanitarian Landmine Action, Demobilisation and Disarmament of Child Soldiers Task Force, and the Sudan Human Rights Association in Southern Sudan.

Naome is currently completing her Social work degree at Charles Sturt University.

Program

Registrations & refreshments	6.00 pm
Address Jorge Aroche Executive Director STARTTS	6.30 pm
Guest Presentation Dr Edward Nahim	6.35 pm
Guest Presentation Dr Mohamud Sheikh	6.55 pm
STARTTS Presentation Naome Madut	7.10pm
Discussion Panel	7.25 pm
Closing Remarks	8.00 pm



Venue Details:

Large Group Room, STARTTS Office
152-168 The Horsley Drive, Carramar
For more information about STARTTS: www.startts.org.au

Presentation Outlines

Dr Edward Nahim

“Integrating Traditional Healing Practices with Psychiatry in Sierra Leone”

The 10 year barbaric civil war in Sierra Leone saw human rights violations perpetrated against the general population. Consequently a high percentage of the population suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Bipolar Affective Disorders, and Alcohol and Substance Abuse.

In this presentation Dr Nahim will explore the medical and culturally available treatments used with traumatised war survivors. He will highlight the significance of traditional healing in the treatment of severe mental illness in Sierra Leone, a country where the outside world is blamed for the cause of problems such as being evil with witchcraft, evil spirits, juju, witch gun and fangay. These cultural and traditional methods include religious prayers and counselling, herbal treatment, JuJu rituals, sacrifices and clandestine rituals.

Dr Mohamud Sheikh

“The Role of Culture in Mental Health Outcomes for Sub-Saharan African Refugees: Challenges, Opportunities and Strengths”

The challenges faced by newly resettled refugees in Australia, particularly those from Sub-Saharan Africa, in accessing and utilisation of Australia’s mental health services is enormous. Evidence suggests that this group of refugees often find the Australian mental health services an unfamiliar and complex web to untangle, from cultural to complete ignorance about their rights to access these services. A vast amount of research suggests that culture plays a significant role in the mental health treatment outcome for patients from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

In this presentation Dr Sheikh will explore some of these challenges and the trans-cultural aspects in working with refugees from Sub-Saharan Africa. The speaker will also traverse the issues and challenges this cohort face in accessing Australia’s mental health care services, with some highlights of a few case reports obtained locally and internationally. He will also suggest some recommended approaches for mental health workers that would help them work effectively with clients from these communities.

Naome Madut

“Cross-cultural Counselling: A Case Study of a Sudanese Refugee”

In most Sub-Saharan African cultures, including Sudanese culture, views on mental illness are tied with traditional healing and cultural beliefs. Practises such as prayers and religious rituals, animal sacrifices, and purification from the evil eye, have long been utilised in the treatment of mental illness.

This presentation will explore some of these traditional beliefs and their impact upon utilising mental health services. It draws extensively on a case study of a 32 year-old male Sudanese client who had presented with complex PTSD symptoms and multiple losses. Naome Madut will illustrate how it is possible to incorporate traditional healing and the western modules of therapy.

PLEASE REGISTER with STARTTS’ reception (donation encouraged for food on day)

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