WORKING CLINICALLY WITH ASYLUM SEEKERS FORCED TO RETURN TO THEIR COUNTRY
10 August 2016, 6–8pm

WORKING PSYCHOLOGICALLY WITH ASYLUM SEEKERS WHOSE CLAIMS HAVE BEEN REJECTED

In this presentation Guy Coffey will explore his work with asylum seekers whose claims have been rejected. There are a group of asylum seekers who have experienced trauma and, who as a consequence, are in need of psychological treatment and security, but who are not owed protection. Among this group are clients whom we treat but who are repatriated. This cohort of clients can be categorised in two groups which have implications for our work: that of legal status and mental health status.

There are some clients for whom no further assertion of their claims is warranted. However there is a subgroup for whom psychological evidence may be relevant to persecution; the capacity of the person to survive physically and psychologically upon repatriation as a consequence of their mental state; and the psychological aspects of the reasonableness of internal relocation.

Regardless of whether it is possible to make further claims, we have to decide what way we can work with a client whose future is profoundly uncertain and who appears destined to re-enter the country from which they have fled. Some questions considered are the following: are the essential preconditions to trauma focused work always absent? What are the psychological and ethical considerations at play in preparing clients for repatriation? Should we be speaking about the possibility of return from early in our engagement with a client? Should we advocate; to keep a client out of detention prior to return, or for a delay in return while treatment is undertaken?

TARGET GROUP
Suitable for all interested clinicians, students and other service providers (everyone is welcome).

COST
Free if you attend in person
$5.99 to watch the live broadcast (6.30pm start)

REGISTRATION ESSENTIAL
To attend in person:
Online: www.startts.org.au (go to clinical evenings page)
Phone: (02) 9794 1900 (enquiries)
To watch the live broadcast:
Online: www.startts.org.au (go to clinical evenings page)

PROGRAM
Registrations and refreshments 6.00pm
(Gold coin donation encouraged for food)
Welcome Address 6.30pm
Jorge Aroche
CEO STARTTS
Guest Speaker Presentation 6.40pm
Guy Coffey
Clinical Psychologist, Lawyer, VFST
STARTTS Case Presentation 7.10pm
Sivaharani Mayuran
Counsellor, STARTTS
Questions and discussion 7.30pm
Closing remarks 8.00pm

GUEST PRESENTER PROFILE – GUY COFFEY

Guy Coffey is a clinical psychologist and a lawyer who has conducted psychological assessments of detained asylum seekers for the past 20 years. Guy has worked as a clinical psychologist for over 25 years in public mental health and specialist psychological trauma services. He is currently the Direct Services Coordinator at the Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (VFST); he is a sessional clinical psychological at the Psychological Trauma Recovery Service; the Austin and Repatriation Medical Centre, as well as holding a small forensic private practice. He also works part time at Victoria Legal Aid where he is a solicitor in the migration and refugee team. His particular interests are refugee mental health; and psychological evidence in legal decision making, particularly in relation to refugee status determination and in the criminal courts. He is the author of multiple publications and he regularly takes part in various submissions raising concerns about the rights and mental health of asylum seekers and detainees.
ABOUT STARTTS

The NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors helps refugees recover from their experiences and build a new life in Australia. We are committed to promoting excellence in clinical practice and invite local and international speakers recognised as experts in their field to run clinical seminars and clinical master class evenings relevant to the treatment and rehabilitation of torture and trauma survivors. Over the last few years STARTTS has hosted very successful seminars presented by high calibre speakers such as Dr Bessel van der Kolk, Dr John Briere, Dr John Arden, Dr Daniel Siegel and Dr Louis Cozolino. Please refer to STARTTS’ website www.startts.org.au for more details. STARTTS is a registered charitable organisation and donations over $2 are tax deductable.

NO HOME TO GO TO: A CASE STUDY

In this presentation Sivaharani will present a case study of a 35 year old Sri Lankan Tamil man who had a history of multiple torture and trauma experiences, and other human rights violations based on his political involvement. He managed to escape and travelled by boat to Australia as an asylum seeker. He presented with severe PTSD symptoms, anxiety, fear of returning home, and difficulty in remembering his trauma experiences, dissociation and avoidance which affected his protection visa claims, and resulted in a negative hearing, and is currently in the process of deportation. Sivaharani will explain the effect of trauma symptoms on the client’s ability to represent his protective claims, and the reasons why the client’s protection claim was rejected. This includes a possible lack of understanding of trauma issues amongst case workers, lawyers and immigration officials. Furthermore, she will also elaborate on the therapeutic approach she used while working with this client to help him cope with this difficult situation.

VENUE

STARTTS
152-168 The Horsley Drive, Carramar NSW
(Enter STARTTS from Mitchell St)

STARTTS PRESENTER PROFILE – SIVAHARANI MAYURAN

Sivaharani Mayuran is employed as an Intake Counsellor at STARTTS. She has worked with clients from different age groups and diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds in Australia and Sr Lanka. Prior to STARTTS, Sivaharani worked an an adolescent counsellor for ‘Messengers Program - Canberra’. She has over 11 years experience as a counsellor (including 3 years as a Clinical Diet Counsellor). She has clinical experience in diet counselling, trauma counselling with tsunami victims and grief counselling with families and people affected by cancer. She holds a Bachelor of Nutrition and Dietetics, Advanced Diploma in Psychological Counselling and Psychotherapy, and a Master of Counselling at the Australian Catholic University/ University of Canberra.

FREE LIVE WEBINAR

If you can’t make it to Carramar, then you can save on time and petrol by watching the free live webinar of these events from your own computer. You will be able to participate in the panel discussion by sending in your typed questions which are answered live.

ONLINE LECTURES

These events are recorded by Psychevisual and are available for viewing on the internet at a later date for a fee. Please see the Psychevisual website www.psychevisual.com.