

Who we are: culture and why we exist – working for change

Bridges & Pathways /Fibromyalgia Australian is a community development, social justice driven charity working to advocate and improve the lives of Australians living with chronic conditions. In Australia volunteer organisations providing services have an expected obligation to meet the standards of regular employment and contribute at a high level to meet insurance and community expectations.

B & P works collaboratively with other community health and welfare organisations as part of a **client centred integrated management service model**. Together we aim to empower clients to proactively manage their condition. Our groups, education programs, care management, and helplines promote best practice care, to help people find services and accurate information. Our clinical research centre works in partnership with the health sector and university researchers.

Our current priority conditions are **ME/CFS and Fibromyalgia**. These are overlapping (50 -70%) complex multisystem physical conditions. There are no specialist clinics in Australia and long waiting lists for services. People range from mild to severe where they are completely bedridden. Early intervention and management can limit unnecessary disability while improving quality of life. Management is multidisciplinary so for best outcomes people require a health care team and referrals to appropriate providers.

Goals of Client Services

- To listen and respond to people's requests in a professional and supportive manner
- To provide a safe place where people feel accepted
- To provide up-to-date accurate information
- To focus on solutions and what is possible
- To encourage people to be proactive managers and partners in their health care
- To promote multidisciplinary management and good care planning
- To encourage participants to work together with us for change.

Background and culture 2000-2024

- For many Australians the gaps between research and daily care are unacceptable
- Accurate information is an issue – many websites, etc., provide out-of-date and unrealistic miracle cures
- ME/CFS/FMS is mostly managed for better health outcomes and minimum life style disruption. While many treatments are trial and error, a good or a bad outcome is important to make the decision for the next step/intervention.
- Just like diabetes, ME/CFS/FMS programs focus on monitoring and providing reliable feedback towards a balance of activity and healing
- Management is mixture of medical, health and lifestyle interventions
- Energy management is the core intervention
- Planning ahead/taking control improves quality of life
- **Many useful treatments are missed** because people use all their energy for action and not healing
- Monitoring and feedback particularly in the beginning and during treatments is crucial for optimum treatments
- It is important to note that some people at the severe end are at **high risk** of another underlying condition so they managed differently.

Bridges & Pathways and their collaborators focus on:

1. Providing solutions and up-to-date information
2. Extending the Clinical Research Centre networks so services and records are in one place
3. Promoting consumer directed change, working for change, people power, etc.
4. Piloting and facilitating service improvements to benefit daily care
5. Identifying equal access to affordable services
6. Supporting and prioritising research that improves patient care
7. Training health providers.

The South Australian Clinical Research Centre –is multi-agency service collaboration of universities, service providers, and consumers working together with a central platform. The clinic program is rolling out in stages according to funding. It integrates continuous improvement, action research, and quality assurance processes.

For the health and welfare system, we work for system change; to represent ME/CFS and Fibromyalgia at policy and program level, providing reports and discussions about client issues at every opportunity. For consumers, we work to provide the latest up-to date information on chronic condition interventions appropriate to Medicare and other Australian funding programs.

For more information or if you would like your service to be included contact

Bridges & Pathways Institute Incorporated (SA) at bpprojects02@gmail.com



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'Consumers & Providers working together to improve services'

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Charitable Licence No CCP2731

Volunteer Expression of Interest Form

1. About You

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ Postcode: _____

How did you find out about us: _____

2. About the Role

Volunteers join us for many reasons, and we like to tailor your time with us. Reason for volunteering:

- Job Re-entry
 Work Skills
 Centrelink
 New Migrant
 Social Activity
 University Placement
 Other: _____

Volunteer Objectives / goals: _____

Availability: Monday _____ Friday _____
Wednesday _____ Other _____

Special Conditions Required: _____

	Please specify your program, certificate or degree
Qualifications	
Skills and experience	
Interests	

While volunteers work online, it is a requirement for volunteers attend the Office for orientation and to familiarize themselves with their role and the culture of Bridges & Pathways /Fibromyalgia Australia!

Comments:

Name (PRINT) _____ Signature _____

Date _____