

FIRST GRADUATES FROM THE MASTERS OF FORENSIC MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM AT UNSW.



Left to right: Donna Blomgren, Maria Hatzidimitris, Toni Anderson, Victor Piggott (rear), Stephen Purkis, Dr. Adam Martin (rear), Dr. John Kasinathan.

The Masters of Forensic Mental Health is taught out of the School of Psychiatry at the University of New South Wales. It was set up in 2007 in partnership with Justice Health, the focus being on training a broad range of staff for the new Forensic Hospital, Malabar. However, it has also attracted lawyers, nurses, occupational therapists, psychologists, administrators as well as psychiatrists. There have also been enrolments from police officers, defence personnel and a broad range of government agencies and NGOs says Project Manager, Dr. Elizabeth Kaziro

'There is no equivalent course at any other university in Australia', said Scientia Professor Philip Mitchell, head of the School of Psychiatry. 'UNSW has been working closely with Justice Health to enhance education and research in Forensic Mental Health,' he said. 'The Masters program is one of the critical components of this relationship.'

The course covers areas such as mental health law, violence, substance abuse and the law, deviant and criminal sexual behaviour, families, children and adolescent forensic psychiatry and research methods in forensic psychiatry. One of the core courses, Administration, Institutions & Services provides students with the opportunity to hypothetically design a mental health service.

One of the graduates, Dr. Adam Martin holds the appointment of Deputy Clinical Director of the Forensic and Long Bay Hospitals. This position includes clinical governance and planning for the future of the hospitals. The Forensic Hospital is a new 'state-of-the-art' facility designed to provide a safe, secure and therapeutic environment for patients with mental illness who have been found not guilty by reason of mental illness for serious criminal offences, and mentally ill prison inmates. It will also provide a limited number of beds for patients who need a very secure hospital environment. The hospital opened in late 2008.

Dr. Martin graduated in medicine in London in 1994, did basic psychiatric training at Prince of Wales hospital from 2000-2004 and joined Justice Health in 2004 as a senior registrar. He completed his Fellowship examinations and Advanced training certificate in Forensic Psychiatry and also has a General and Forensic private practice in Macquarie Street.