

# SE CONNECT

Summer 2010

Welcome to the spring edition of 'SE Connect' the South East's regional newsletter. This newsletter will bring you quarterly updates on what is happening in and around your region, so that we can share ideas and explore new developments and catch up on all the updates.



## NACC South East Members Go Down Under

Neel Radia, South East Chair and Era Varellas from London Borough of Haringey were invited to present at 6 seminars in 5 states across Australia in March 2010 part of the Institute of Hospitality in Healthcares (IHHC) National Seminar. Neel and Era flew off for 2 weeks and presented on the Meals service in the UK and some of our national initiatives in place. The seminar co-ordinator from the IHHC wanted to share the experience with South East Members:

### Travelling Around the Country Side.....Neel and Era on Tour!

By Nanette Taylor

It was the pleasure of the Australian Institute of Hospitality in HealthCare to invite Neel Radia and Era Varellas to visit our shores to present six whirlwind seminars in five states of Australia to 180 delegates. Neel and Era had been gracious hosts to a group of IHHC members that visited the UK via Copenhagen in 2009.

The International Seminar topics centred on the: -

- Wonderful meal service provided for recipients in the Haringey Borough,
- The tendering process for internal and external service providers,
- The service model,
- Changes in the Meals on Wheels funding allocation
- Options for ethnic specific choices for recipients and
- A range of policies, which created much interest re hydration and service provision plus much more.

The National Association of Care Catering (UK) policies, activities, commitments and initiatives were also outlined including the firm links with government and policy bodies in injecting care and responsibility into the provision of food related services.

The variation of the Meals on Wheels Service and the provision of Community Meals vary across Australia, which required some registrants to look forward to a point in time where our ageing population may have to work longer and volunteer availability may not be able to support the current service. Regardless, there was 'food for thought' and the UK meal delivery vans equipped with an oven were certainly a 'hit' along with the 'holistic' care provided to the clients via the trained delivery staff.

Continued



The camaraderie and commitment shown by Neel and Era was amazing and I had the opportunity to transport the merry duo between Hobart and Launceston in Tasmania. The exchange of information was continual and it was a privilege to be in the company of two special people with such a wealth of knowledge.

The difference between Neel and Era was interesting as well, where Neel would view a native animal as a potential pet, Era wondered how it could be prepared as gourmet fare. Lambs, kangaroo, goats and rabbits were all potential meals; with the only animal not under close inspection for a future entrée was the spiny anteater!

The journey also undertook a visit to Port Arthur, the convict settlement of the early colony. An interesting mix for the international and local visitor to ponder the beginning of our Australian Heritage and the links with the 'Mother Country'. It was here that Era established that the meal ration for prisoners was greater than that currently supplied to Meals on Wheels clients! Oh Era – forever vigilant re details and certainly 'shock value' for other visitors within earshot!!

Whilst each state looked after our special guests their parting comment was we came to Australia to present a seminar and we leave now with a wonderful extended family!

The departure of our two dear friends was sad; however the visit has created some interest in a study tour to the UK. If you may be interested, please do not hesitate to contact the IHHC re future plans for 2011 via the website at [www.ihhc.org.au](http://www.ihhc.org.au).

**Nanette Taylor**  
Coordinator- National Seminar

To hear more about this trip there will be an  
**Australian Themed South East Meeting on  
September 29<sup>th</sup> 2010 at Electrolux Head Office,  
Luton.**



### Regional Care Cook Off Competition @ Unilever, Leatherhead



Congratulations to Mark Ord from Sanctuary Care who won the South East Care Cook Off competition in March at Unilever Head Office. Mark will join the other regional winners at the Care Cook finals in July at Birmingham College.

### South East Study days

The South East Region has held 3 fully booked study days for its members over the past 4 months. The first two were free study days with partnership of Caroline Lecko from the National Patient Safety Agency on 'Nutrition and Safety'. The last one was an accredited RSPH Level 2 Award on Healthy Eating and Special Diets that was held at a discounted rate of £52 for South East Members.

We are planning on holding further study days in the future for South East members. Details to follow...



Ken Crosland (KC) is the man who leads the Ark for Business - the Hospitality industry initiative that helps employers tackle alcohol and drug misuse within the workplace. Neel Radia (NR) met him to find out more about his work.

**NR: So what is the Ark for Business?**

**KC:** The Ark Foundation was founded by Michael Quinn (the first English Head Chef of the Ritz), who lost his own career to alcoholism. He recovered and set up the Ark to raise awareness of alcohol and drug misuse within the industry. It's now a key part of industry charity Hospitality Action, and its' Chairman are Jamie Oliver and Heston Blumenthal.

In 2007, we launched Ark for Business to help hospitality employers implement best practice in managing the risk of alcohol and drug misuse. We offer three areas of expertise:

Drug and Alcohol Policy Design  
Management Awareness Training  
Employee Awareness Education

**NR: How big a problem is it within Hospitality?**

**KC:** The UK tops European league tables for alcohol and illegal drug consumption, and this comes at a price. In 2006, the UK economy lost up to 26 million working days from alcohol related absenteeism alone.

Hospitality has always been one of the worst affected sectors - largely because of the culture of long hours, stress, and the availability of alcohol. Booze is still the main offender, but drugs are increasingly an issue. In 2008, a survey of 300 hospitality professionals by Caterer and Hotelkeeper magazine found that 70% had witnessed other employees misusing drugs, alcohol (or both) at work or immediately prior to work.

**NR: How does it affect a business?**

**KC:** Absenteeism and timekeeping are big problems, as is "Those present (employees are at work but performance suffers through hangover). It also impacts on morale, customer service, staff turnover, health and safety, and increases the risk of theft, fraud, litigation and employment tribunals. It's an expensive problem.

On a human level, the effects can be devastating. Nobody sets out to develop a problem and it happens to good employees as well as bad (not just in the kitchen). Too often it remains a hidden problem - the individual is in denial, and managers don't recognise it - it worsens to the point where the individual, and the business are seriously harmed.

**NR: What should an employer be doing?**

**KC:** Take the issue seriously - If you employ people, many of those will consume alcohol or drugs, and some will do so to excess. Firstly, make sure you have a policy in place. This ensures you meet legal obligations and should clearly state the company's objectives, employee responsibilities, rules, and the consequences if the rules are broken. It should also state the help that's available if anyone seeks help for a problem. The policy should be seen to be fair and reasonable, two important considerations if judged by an Employment Tribunal or Court of Law.

Secondly, make sure your managers and supervisors are able to recognise a problem early in development - physical signs, performance, attendance, behavior, relationships with colleagues, lack of care etc. Ensure they are able to manage it properly and with confidence.

Finally, provide your employees with good quality information - the workplace is an excellent environment for promoting the sensible use of alcohol, awareness of the side effects of medicines, and an understanding of the harmful effects of illegal drugs.

The uniqueness of the Ark is that the presenters involved were hospitality industry professionals who beat their own addiction to alcohol or drugs, and are in long term, successful recovery. We know about this problem, and can help managers understand it better, and protect against it. Perhaps more importantly, we're able to reach individuals who may be struggling, and show them a way to change. Very few training sessions end, without contact in confidence afterwards from an individual who wants help or advice. We've helped a fair few people get their lives back on track. Ark is addressing a critical issue for our industry, and the entire sector should get behind and support it" JAMIE OLIVER

For more information on the Ark Foundation visit there website: [www.hospitalityaction.org.uk](http://www.hospitalityaction.org.uk)

The next SE regional Seminar & Business Meeting will be held on 29<sup>th</sup> September at Electrolux, Luton

**Guest Speakers to include:**

**David Harrison – Food service Manager**  
Queensland Meals on Wheels Association  
Australia

**Dr Mabel Blade**  
The G.I Diet

**RSPH Level 2 Awards Presentations**  
& Much more....

Booking Forms to be sent out soon

**SE Christmas Seminar/Training Day & Christmas Celebrations 2010**

**The Park Inn Hotel  
Heathrow**

**Friday 26<sup>th</sup> November  
2010**

**Details Coming Soon**



**October 11<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> 2010 is Community Meals Week  
HEROES**

For more info visit  
<https://thenacc.org.uk/events/show/118>

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