

- **Thankyou Barbara &Carolyn. I am most excited and honoured to be here to night at the launch of your work, and to represent the Bridges & Pathways Institute as a recipient.**

[Pause]

- **The prominent medical scientist and clinician J M CHARCOT around a century ago quoted that "*Disease is very old and nothing about it has changed. It is we who change as we learn to recognize what was formerly imperceptible.*"**
- **Charcot began unraveling the mystifying symptoms labeled as 'hysterical paralysis' (predominantly in women and often in institutionalized care). As a result of his meticulous work, the condition became better understood as multiple sclerosis. Even today, although the cause and a cure is not known, sufferers are**
- **supported by care and services that are best practice and evidence based, to assist them maximize their quality of life.**

[pause]

- **Established in 1999 by Cathie Powell & Glenn Ash -a committed carer of Tracey, since sadly passed away-**
- **Bridges & Pathways Institute Inc is an Australian not for profit charity that is working collaboratively to provide equal access to services for people with poorly understood complex chronic illness.**
- **B&P has connections and partners both throughout Australia, and internationally , including links with consumers, professionals, professional bodies, the**

govt., and service agencies. It also is involved in academic activities at Flinders, Adelaide and Melbourne universities, as well as internationally - in Canada and the Stanford University in the US.

- **Our services, research and activities are based on proactive modern understandings of health and health management – aimed at being holistic, inclusive, appropriate, quality based, and outcome focused.**

We believe that people should have access to the best care available today (Current Best Practice Care) and that might lead to evidence based care tomorrow.

- **Our goal at B&P is to reduce the burden of chronic illness to limit the multiple losses associated with ill health, disability, and improve quality of life.**
- **Our priority is for timely and appropriate services and up-to-date information to meet the challenges of living daily with a chronic illness.**

Since 2001 we have provided services for over 6000 Australians who fall through the gaps of current Australian programs and services).

[pause]

- **Emphasising an area of special interest for 2008, ‘Women & pain’, the work of B&P particularly recognizes that 20% of the Australian population experience chronic pain, and in one quarter of these the severity of pain results in high-level disability.**

- **Around 4% of the population, mostly women (7:1) have FMS, a poorly understood chronic widespread pain condition, whose level of disability is similar to rheumatoid arthritis.**

Some Bridges & Pathways FM Service Activities include:

- **Providing professional reference material**
- **Trialling a multidisciplinary service care planning model**
- **Distributing the Canadian Fibromyalgia Clinical Practice Guidelines for Australian Doctors (collaboration RACGP)**
- **Identifying standardised FMS evaluation and monitoring tools**
- **Development and provision of service interventions and education modules (professional & consumer)**
- **Provision of risk management reports**

- **With help, we at B&P can keep our focus on the achieving lasting changes to assist people who have until now fallen through the gaps.**

Please feel free to take home some of our project pamphlets and talk to me later. and

Contact the Bridges and Pathways Institute on 8358 6086

or visit our website for links and to donate

<http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/bridgesandpathways>

Thank you