You are invited to a

PUBLIC SEMINAR

hosted by the Social Justice Social Change Research Centre, UWS, Sector Connect & Western Sydney Community Forum

to launch

“To Market, to Market...”:
Competitive Tendering and Purchase of Service in the Community Sector

Friday 22nd May
9:30am – 12:30 pm

Western Sydney Community Forum
Suite 4002, Level 4
136 Marsden St, Parramatta

Lunch will be provided

RSVP: sjsc@uws.edu.au

“To Market, to Market...”
Presented by Dr. Michael Darcy

Over the past decade the nature and role of non-government, or ‘community based’, organisations in the Australian welfare sector has been subjected to intense scrutiny and change. Broadly viewed across the sector, government agencies have moved to position themselves less as responding to needs identified by local communities, and more as purchasers of pre-defined services. Community organisations have thus become ‘vendors’, of services, and in many cases are required to ‘compete’ with each other for a share of ‘the market’.

Peak councils and co-ordinating bodies for the Community Welfare sector in NSW, have attempted to understand and mediate this new environment, to represent and reflect the experience of their members, and to protect the interests of local communities, and there has been extensive discussion and debate.

The research to be reported resulted from collaboration between SJSC, Western Sydney Community Forum, and Sector Connect Inc. (formerly Macarthur Community Forum). The study comprised an extensive on-line survey of community organisations followed by a further seminar and focussed discussion with community workers.

The report reflects considerable refinement and interpretation of the results of the initial survey and also of subsequent input from seminar and focus group participants, and members of the study steering committee who jointly developed the recommendations.

Michael Darcy has lived and worked in Western Sydney all his life, starting work in the 1970s as Community Development Worker in Airds near Campbelltown. He has also worked as a community worker in Local Government. As an academic at UWS for the past two decades, researching and teaching about social policy, one of his enduring interests has been community management and especially the relationship between community organisations and government. He has conducted research with and for many partners including National Shelter, Housing NSW, and local councils including the City of Sydney. He has also served as expert member of the NSW Housing Assistance Plan Advisory Committee, and as a Director of Shelter NSW.