



ACT
Mental Health
Consumer Network

NETWORK NEWS

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Autumn celebration

Thursday April 1 (no joke) 12 noon to 3pm

Glebe Park, Civic



The Network welcomes our members to join us for an autumn celebration.

As our 2020 end of year get together had to be suspended due to COVID-19, we advised in our Summer newsletter that we would be looking to hold this event in early 2021.

The Public Health restrictions will apply to this event, with sign in using the Check-In CBR app as well as social distancing guidelines etc.

RSVPs are greatly appreciated for catering purposes and can be given to 02 6230 5796, SMS to 0408 274 053 or by email to actmhcncn@actmhcncn.org.au by Monday 29 March 2021.

We look forward to seeing you all, as it has been a very long time!

From the EO's desk



Dear Readers

Welcome to the first edition of the Network News for 2021... my, what a year it has been already!

As you know, last year was a very unusual one for the Network (along with everyone else!), with all our programs shifting to online modes of operation. We are pleased to have been able to recommence some programs face to face as well as retaining the ability for people to attend remotely – you'll see this model referred to as 'hybrid'. Currently, all programs except the Community Education Program (CEP) are starting to be offered in hybrid mode which we hope will support more consumers to participate than ever before! We expect the CEP will be able to start operating in hybrid mode later this year. To help make this happen we have purchased a special conferencing camera that will make hybrid meetings, training, forums etc work better for all participants. We just need to work out how to make that camera work!

As mentioned in the Summer 2020 newsletter, our Meet the Minister event went off without a hitch. This was a fantastic event where consumers were able to speak directly with the Minister for Mental Health, Emma Davidson, and she was able to start building her understanding of the mental health space for consumers in the ACT. We hope to hold

regular consumer meetings with the Minister throughout the year, so watch this space for more opportunities to engage with her.

As also mentioned, we will soon be holding our very very late BBQ! Details for this fun social event are located on the front of this edition – we hope to see you there for a chat and some good eating (and maybe a few sneaky Easter eggs).

There have been no changes to the staffing team, with the exception of Paul Thompson filling in for Allie whilst she's unwell. Paul will be working on organising some information and other sessions for upcoming Drop-Ins during Allie's absence. We look forward to Allie re-joining the team as soon as she's able, and thank Paul for his much needed assistance during this time. If you have any ideas for a Drop-In session, reach out to Paul on dropin@actmhc.org.au or call the office on 02 6230 5796 to let us know your ideas!

Until next time, thank you for reading and for all the fantastic work our members do to improve the lot of consumers throughout the ACT.

- Dalane Drexler

Vale, Tony Fitzgerald



It is with a heavy heart that we report to members that Tony Fitzgerald passed away in late 2020 after losing his battle with cancer. Tony was only diagnosed with cancer last year and the Network learned of his passing in January 2021.

Tony was one of the Network's founding members and was active in Consumer Representative and Board member roles for over two decades. In recent years, Tony was a regular visitor to the office who shared stories from the Network's past and his love for his grandson. We were also blessed with Tony's presence at most of our major events.

He will remain greatly missed by all who knew him.

Network Update

Drop-In

Our Drop-In sessions resumed in February 2021 in the regular timeslot of 10am to 1pm on Thursdays. It is uncertain at the time of print whether we will incorporate the online Drop-In, which we have been operating for social purposes during the pandemic. If this does continue, the details will be included in the Autumn 2021 newsletter.

As previously advised, funding has been received from the **Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Grants** program for the purpose of improving supports for consumers to conduct their self-advocacy needs and other activities during Drop-In. Through this program we have been able to purchase three new All-in-One computers available now for consumers to use. These computers also have inbuilt webcams, so Consumer Representatives are able to use these for attending online committee meetings etc.

Allie, who has been supporting members during Drop-In, is currently on leave and Paul Thompson has been engaged to fill in for her. Paul is available to assist consumers who attend Drop-In and organise events and activities that are of interest and benefit to consumers.

To organise Drop-In events, we need some guidance from consumers as to the types of activities, topics or skill shortages of relevance to you and of benefit if you were more informed. If you have ideas or wish to propose specific events, please send through an email to dropin@actmhc.org.au or call us on (02) 6230 5796.



Potential upcoming events

There are two Drop-In events that the Network is starting to organise. One is a presentation to consumers about the COVID-19 vaccine rollout. This will be a great opportunity for consumers to get factual information about the vaccines that are available.

We have also recently been approached by Services Australia to run a training workshop for consumers, particularly consumers from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) background, in the use of online services for Centrelink and Medicare. As 2020 saw a huge increase in the use of online facilities to conduct personal business, it is apparent that this will be a continuing norm. It is expected that this workshop will be held in late April 2021 and, due to the facilities available, participant numbers will be limited.

Both of these events are currently in a planning phase and when details are confirmed they will be included in our fortnightly bulletin. For any readers that don't receive this newsletter directly but have email, you can ask to be put on the mailing list, or request to be notified when this event will be held by contacting Val on 02 6230 5796 or email actmhc@actmhc.org.au

Meet the Minister

For Drop-In on Thursday 25 February, the Minister for Mental Health, Emma Davidson MLA, was in attendance to meet and speak with consumers about issues in the mental health space and help the Minister to develop a further understanding of mental health landscape in the ACT.



We were pleasantly surprised at the number of consumers who attended Drop-In to speak with the Minister (pictured in the white jacket) and we hope to be able to hold more of these gatherings at future Drop-Ins.

Policy Program

Policy forums and consultations will continue to be held via online platforms however there are limited spaces for members to attend via a computer within the Network Members Area. The use of online platforms enables continued member consultation and advocacy in the policy space and we hope to increase numbers of member face-to-face consultations during the return to work phase.

Since December 2020 the Network has responded to a number of policy issues via e-policy forums and e-consultations including:

The ACT Charter of Rights for people experiencing mental illness or mental disorder Handout

The Network and Carers ACT developed a joint response to the Office of the Chief Psychiatrist in relation to The ACT Charter of Rights for people experiencing mental illness or mental disorder handout. The Network initially advertised an e-Forum in October 2020 to Members. While a small number of expressions of interest were received no registrations were received so unfortunately this event did not go ahead. The Network partnered with Carers ACT to provide an organisational response and work continues with Carers ACT. HealthCare Consumers' Association (HCCA) opted to provide a separate response for those who are interested.

Handout - Your Privacy at Canberra Health Services e-Forum

The Network facilitated an e-Forum on 3 December 2020 regarding the draft handout *Your Privacy at Canberra Health Services*. Canberra Health Services (CHS) sought feedback to the draft which aimed to inform consumers how CHS will protect their privacy. Previous consumer feedback was submitted by the Network to the now endorsed, *CHS Consumer Privacy Policy* and that final document was shared with Members. The Network lodged a submission on 10 December 2020 to the Handout and the submission is available on the Network's website at <https://www.actmhc.org.au/submissions/>

Improving Mental Health Services for People with Intellectual Disability

An e-forum was held for Board Members, Policy Reference Group Members and Active and Eligible Consumer Representatives on 10 December 2020 to discuss the first draft of the *Improving Mental Health*

Services for People with Intellectual Disability Draft Position Statement. Early workshops were held in 2018 and 2019 and this is the first Health consultation regarding this document since that time.

Integrated Care Design Project, Canberra Hospital Services Reform

The Network was contacted by the lead of the Reform team at CHS seeking input to the Integrated Care Design Project program of work. As part of the initial phase, engagement with stakeholders across the whole health care system is being sought by CHS with the aim to understand NGO views and experiences and discuss the current landscape of services and integration models already in place.

A consultation was held by CHS in 2020 and we will continue to seek further information this year to advocate for our members engagement in consultation processes.

Safe Haven Cafes and the Quarterly Forum

Ongoing consultation and input across the ACT community sector continued in 2020 and 2021, as well as opportunities for consumer feedback and co-design during the scoping and design phase of the Safe Haven Cafes' development.

Efforts to secure the sites for two Safe Haven Cafes in the ACT continue. To enable information for consumers and others, the Network, Carers ACT and the Mental Health Community Coalition ACT chose the Safe Haven Cafes Design Process as the topic for the next Quarterly Forum on 7 April 2021.

Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan

A Sub-Committee of the ACT Mental Health and Suicide and Prevention Plan Steering Committee has been created. The Network continues as a Member of this Steering Committee .

Housing Issues for People with Psychosocial Disability - Rights and Inclusion Australia

Rights and Inclusion Australia (R&IA) hosted an e-forum regarding housing issues for people with psychosocial disability on 2 December 2020. The Network partnered in a support role with R&IA in the planning and online environment aspects for this forum and advertised the forum to members. Members of the Network attended and provided feedback at the Forum.

Canberra Health Services Operational Guideline Consumer Handouts

An e-policy forum is planned was held on 10 March

2021 for consumers to provide comment to the draft Guideline. The feedback received is now being drafted for submission.

Step Up/Step Down, Woden Community Services and Stride Consultation

Woden Community Services (WCS) and Stride provided consumer and stakeholder engagement sessions on the 24 -25 February for the new Southside Step Up/Step Down facility. An open day is planned for 16 April 2021. Board Members and Consumer Representatives attended the consumer consultation on 24 February, and Isobel attended the Stakeholder consultation session on 25February. Watch this space for further updates.

Joint Letter – NDIS Independent Assessments

The Network co-signed a joint letter to Minister for Mental

Health, Emma Davidson MLA, on 2 February 2021. A copy of the letter can be viewed on the Network's website: <https://www.actmhcn.org.au/>

The letter will also be sent to Federal Ministers and is co-signed by the following organisations:

- Advocacy for Inclusion
- People with Disabilities ACT
- ACTCOSS
- ADACAS
- Mental Health Community Coalition ACT
- National Disability Services
- Women with Disabilities ACT
- Health Care Consumers' Association
- ACT Mental Health Consumer Network

Peer Education Program

Peer Education has an exciting announcement! The long-awaited editable version of the My Rights My Decisions Form Kit is now available on the Network website:

www.actmhcn.org.au/mrmd

This version of the Form Kit will allow consumers to save their document electronically, and make changes to it as required. They can then print it off when they are ready to have it signed by their treating team.

This version is also a plain language version to improve on the language of the previous version – although the language is still constrained by legal requirements. For consumers who are vision-impaired, this version can also be read by screen readers.

Last year we sought your views on possible new courses to develop. Discussions lead to prioritisation of two workshops, both linked to consumer rights:

1. **Seclusion and Restraint**
2. **Reasonable Adjustment for Mental Health Consumers in the Workplace**

The Network will be holding a design consultation for these workshops on

Thursday 18 March, 10am-2pm

Please RSVP to peer.education@actmhcn.org.au or 6230 5796 if you would like to contribute to the design of these workshops. Please indicate whether you would like to attend in person at the Network or virtually via Zoom. We are restricted in how many people can attend in person so ensure you get in quick if needed.

PeerZone workshops

We will be running a range of PeerZone workshops over the coming few months. The following workshops have been selected for delivery at the Network:

Cluster 1

Introduction to PeerZone & each other	Fri 9 April
Rights when using services	Fri 16 April
Good relationships	Fri 23 April
Making decisions about medication	Fri 30 April
Building self-esteem	Fri 7 May
Finding a contributing role	Fri 14 May

Cluster 2

Introduction to PeerZone & each other	Fri 16 Jul
Leading our Recovery	Fri 23 Jul
Exploring our Stories	Fri 30 Jul
Dealing with Self-Stigma	Fri 6 Aug
Finding our Voices	Fri 13 Aug
Empowering ourselves in MH Services	Fri 20 Aug

Please RSVP to peer.education@actmhcn.org.au or 62305796 if you would like to attend these workshops. Please indicate whether you would like to attend in person at the Network or virtually via Zoom.

Note: To develop a strong rapport within each Cluster, we ask that participants enrol in the whole cluster. Rather than individual sessions wherever possible.

Community Education Program

Welcome back in 2021! We were excited to hit the ground running with a term Self-Advocacy and Consumer Representation facilitated online starting in February and March respectively.

The Zoom format has been popular, with participants commenting how they liked being able to attend from the comfort of their own home!

If you are thinking about enrolling in an upcoming workshop, rather than us telling you about the training here are some recent member comments about the workshops and what they got out of them:

Self-Advocacy training

'It provided a useful framework to consider and work on self-development.'

'The confidence to self advocate has assisted during the outbreak of COVID. The workshop assists in guiding self determination and to develop the self-confidence to ask for needs to be met.'

Consumer Representation Training

'It helped me see the strengths I have as someone with a lived experience in making a difference... I enjoyed it, and feel more confident and enthusiastic about this area.'

Mentoring Training

'I was able to consolidate what I already knew but also realize a lot of what I need to learn about'
'Comprehensive coverage of the role of the CRP mentor so ... useful!!! Once again, an attractive and user friendly workbook.'

Current Training Development

Jen and Petra are always working on new ideas and resources for developing the CRP Masterclasses. Recently they had a planning session with Terri to develop training about the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) standards! If you're not sure what these standards are, or how it's even related to Consumer Representation and the Network, make sure you come along to the next CRP Masterclass in April and find out!

For more information, to share suggestions or ideas for our Community Education Program or to register for training, please contact Petra at education@actmhc.org.au

Upcoming Training

For the first half of the year, our workshops will continue to be facilitated online using Zoom. We realise that this isn't everyone's favourite way of learning, so we will explore ways to make sure training is both accessible and safe for the second half of the year.

The following workshops scheduled over the next few months:

Workshop	Dates	Times
Mentoring Consumer Reps	24, 31 Mar	11:00 – 2:30
Understanding the NDIS	5, 12 May	10:30 – 4:30
Peer Co-Facilitation	2, 9, 16 June	10:30 – 4:30
CRP MasterClass	6 Apr, 1 June	11:00 – 11:45

Mentoring Consumer Reps

This 2-session workshop will educate the participants to:

- Develop personal skills needed for effective mentoring
- Use personal experiences and knowledge effectively to assist the person being mentored in consumer representation
- Use self-care strategies to maintain wellbeing as a mentor

Understanding the NDIS

By the end of this two-day workshop, the participants will:

- Learn about the NDIS, eligibility requirements and registration process
- Explore how to assist potential NDIS participants with decision making and planning
- Explore how the recovery approach relates to the NDIS
- Identify how they can support someone when accessing the NDIS

Speaking of online... did you know the Network also has a YouTube Channel? We have uploaded videos about our workshops as well as curated some playlists relevant to mental health and recovery – we'd love for you to check them out, and even suggest videos and topics that you think might be useful for us to know about. So please go there and check it out! Just search for 'ACTMHCN' in the YouTube search bar.

Consumer Rep Program

The Network thanks all Consumer Representatives who attended the first Consumer Representative Forum this year, and a special thank you goes to Maree Pavloudis for chairing the meeting. It is wonderful that the Network is again able to host Consumer Representative Forums, with all Forums being delivered in a hybrid format with consumer representatives either attending in person or via Zoom. This year the Forum will be held at alternating times, either in the morning (11am-1pm) or in the late afternoon (5pm-7pm). Hopefully the variability in time can support more consumer representatives to attend the Forums.

In February 2021, the ACT Health Directorate has undertaken a process in which some committees have been merged. All merged committees retained their current consumer representative/s and consumer co-Chair where relevant. The following committees were merged:

1. Seclusion, Restraint and Review Meeting merged with Dhulwa Seclusion, Restraint and Restrictive Practices Meeting to become the AAMHS Secure Mental Health Services Seclusion, Restraint and Restrictive Practices Review Committee (SRRPRC).
2. MHJHADS Clinical Governance Committee merged with the MHJHADS Corporate Governance Committee to become the MHJHADS Governance Committee.
3. AAMHS Clinical Governance Committee merged with the AAMHS Corporate Governance Committee to become the AAMHS Governance Committee.

In February, CHS advised the Network that a decision had been made that the Mental Health Short Stay Unit (MHSSU) that was to be collocated with the new emergency department would now be located elsewhere outside of the critical services building. A location has not been finalised. This decision was taken as Multiplex, the developers of the Canberra Hospital Expansion Project (CHEP), were unable to come up with an appropriate design that would provide the required environment to deliver the model of care. We have been assured that the MHSSU will still be built within the CHEP timeframe and has funding allocated to it. While there was no consumer consultation in the making of this decision, the Network and the relevant consumer representatives, continue to work with both CHEP and the CHS Executives regarding the MHSSU.

Acknowledgements, new and outgoing Consumer Representatives

Graham Jackson has resigned from consumer representation due to personal reasons and we all wish Graham and his family all the best.

AAMHS Secure Mental Health Services Seclusion, Restraint and Restrictive Practices Review Committee

The new Adult Acute Mental Health Services (AAMHS) Secure Mental Health Services Seclusion, Restraint and Restrictive Practices Review Committee met for the first time in February. This committee combines two committees, the AAMHS Seclusion and Restraint Review Committee, which reviewed data on restrictive practices in the Adult Mental Health Unit, Mental Health Short Stay Unit, Calvary Ward 2N and the University of Canberra Hospital Mental Health Rehabilitation Unit with the Dhulwa Seclusion, Restraint and Restrictive Practices Committee, which met monthly to review incidents of seclusion, restraint and other restrictive practices over the previous month and suggest changes in practice.

AAMHS and DMHU have some different operational procedures and use different tools to analyse individual episodes of restrictive practice:

- DMHU used a forensic tool known as the DUNDRUM Restrictive Intrusion of Liberty Ladder (DRILL). It analyses the level of acuity, based on the behaviour of the client, against the level of intervention and whether it was proportional to the behaviour, and
- AAMHS used an approach known as the 5W (Who, Where, When, What, Why) to compare an episode of restraint that led to seclusion and one that did not, and determine what differences there were.

The new Committee meets monthly and has a combined membership from DMHU and AAMHS, as well as two consumer representatives, a consumer Co-Chair, a member from the Public Advocate's office and the Official Visitors. This means it has a large membership, and the nature of the work sometimes means reviewing large amounts of quantitative data that is contained in the registers and reports on seclusion and restraint that are required by the Mental Health Act 2015 and the policies and procedures on restrictive practice within Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol and Drug Services.

This joined committee is an opportunity for the two acute inpatient units to learn from each other, and hopefully improve the way both services support consumers after an episode of seclusion or restraint and work towards eliminating the need for these practices.

Patricia Green (consumer rep), Erin Stewart (consumer rep) and Terri Warner (co-Chair)

Opportunities

There are currently five consumer representative vacancies that need to be filled, including:

- The Nurses and Midwives: Towards a Safer Culture Steering Committee
- ACT Recovery College Co-design Steering Committee
- Consumer Handouts Committee
- Capital Health Network: Adult Mental Health Centre Sub-Committee (new)
- Calvary Regional Community Advisory Committee (new)

If you are interested in any of these vacancies, please contact Jen at representation@acrmhcn.org.au or 6230 5796 and she will send you a nomination form or discuss how to become eligible if you aren't already.

Appointments

The following Consumer Representative appointments have been made since the Summer edition of our Newsletter:

- *ACT Safe Haven Café Steering Committee*
Maree Pavloudis
- *ACT Safe Haven Design Teams (short term, ended Dec 20)*
Liesl Mitchel; David Oliver; Maree Pavloudis; Bianca Rossetti; Paul Thompson; Thi-Nha Tran; and Terri Warner
- *UCH Facility Wide Operational Working Group*
Elise Crouch (first committee – congratulations!)
- *AAMHS Governance Committee*
Julia Bocking
- *Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan Steering Committee*: CHN Adult Mental Health Centre Sub-committee: ACT
Maree Pavloudis
- *Capital Health Network Community Advisory Council*
Paul Thompson

TheMHS 2021 Summer Forum Report

Jen Nixon and Jenny Adams attended The Mental Health Services (TheMHS) virtual conference, *Balancing the System*, in February 2021. Both thought it was an excellent conference, loaded with interesting talks and sessions. The conference was presented virtually for the first time due to COVID-19 and was inventive in the way it simulated a live conference, with virtual market stalls, virtual posters, and virtual conference rooms. Meditation and yoga was available as well.

A highlight was the talk by Oryx Cohen, Chief Operating Officer at the National Empowerment Centre US, who spoke about the history of the mental health consumer movement – “nothing about us without us”, “reawaken” and “emotional CPR”. Other highlights included description of a web-based tool called “Embrace”, that educates readers and organisations about multicultural mental health. A third highlight was a talk about an Indigenous online resource GUIR (Gamarada Universal Indigenous Resources). And another highlight was a talk about reducing restrictive interventions in Victoria. Lastly we will mention the online resource from Queensland University of Technology called eMHprac – e-Mental Health in Practice.

As this conference was held online, the Network was able to send more people due to the reduction in cost. Many thanks once again to the Mental Health Policy Unit for providing the funding support for additional consumers to attend.

Network Update

From February 2021, the majority of Network staff began returning to work in the office for a few days per week, with the remaining days still having the option of being worked remotely. This arrangement ensures that our office is more open Monday to Friday, 9am to 3pm whilst also providing flexible working arrangements for the team.

Our standard core events such as the Consumer Representative Forum, policy consultations and training workshops are still continuing either solely online or a hybrid mix of face-to-face and online attendance.

We can be contacted on our main phone number (02) 6230 5796. If unanswered, please leave a message and we will return your call as soon as possible. Also if the staff member you need to speak with is not in attendance on the day of your call, a message will be sent to that staff member who will contact you as soon as they are able to.

Events at the Network

The Network is required to comply with the Public Health Directives regarding the recording of attendees' details at our events, where in-person attendance is available. Currently the Network holds meetings etc. online or hybrid mode.

We have been registered with the Check-In CBR app system and our QR code is now on display around the office. This allows the Network to have attendee capacity at the one person per 2m² rule.

Use of this QR code system applies to face-to-face events such as Consumer Representative Forums, policy consultations, Drop-In, other events such as our upcoming Autumn celebration and other attendance to the office (including trade workers etc.). This is to ensure that should a breakout of COVID-19 be associated with the Network, all contacts who could potentially be infected are identified and contacted by health authorities.

The Check-In CBR app can be downloaded free from the App Store or Google Play, depending on your device. If you do not have a mobile phone or the Check-In app, we can manually enter your details into the system and only require you to provide your name and a current contact detail.

In addition, we will also conduct temperature checks prior to entry. The official guidelines are that a temperature above 37.5 is indicative of a fever being present and so admittance may be denied after checking the accuracy of the first reading. Of course, if you are feeling unwell, the Network asks that you not attend events in person, and seek advice from your GP about any symptoms you are experiencing.

While this is a new system that we have to work within, we hope that readers others people who attend our events understand the requirements that we have to uphold to keep us all safe.



Consumer Representative Profile

This is a new ongoing article within Network News, where each quarter we will be profiling one of our diligent Consumer Representatives, that you all read about collectively, but don't know individually.

Paul Thompson

Paul has been a consumer representative since 2019 as well as an ongoing Board member since 2017, currently serving as the Treasurer.

Paul is currently the consumer representative on numerous Committees including: Adult Mental Health Services Collaborative Engagement Forum; Health Care Consumers Association Accessibility and Design Consumer Reference Group; Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs (MHJHADS) Division Mental Health Mortality and Morbidity Committee; PACER (Police, Ambulance and Clinician Early Response) Community Working Group; Occupational Violence Prevention and Management Committee (OVPMC); Wellways and ACT Health Governance Committee and; Capital Health Network Community Advisory Council.

What do you enjoy about working with the Network?

I like engaging with other people in the sector including Network staff and engaging with the members of the Network. I enjoy listening to people's stories and providing support where I can.

What do you enjoy about being a consumer representative?

I like to listen more than speak. I have two ears and one mouth and, as my wife says, that means you should listen twice as much as you speak.

What would you tell people to consider prior to becoming a consumer representative (such as – make sure you meet the Chair first; remember you have the expertise in the room)?

Remember that this a fantastic opportunity to contribute to ACT Health policies. You work with the policy makers and the decision makers, participating in the development of programs and other requirements for mental health



services used by all.

The general person on the street is lucky to speak to a Minister's advisor regarding a policy or program issue. As a consumer representative, the door is open to meet these senior people and tell them how things really are.

What are you looking forward to regarding being with the Network?

I would like to see the Network push to get mental health services and programs all the financial support that they deserve. Mental Health services have been underfunded for a very long time.

What would you do to improve mental health services if money wasn't an option?

I would develop a stand alone, properly staffed, mental health hospital that specializes in mental health services. This is lacking in the treatment pathway at the moment with the focus tending to be on physical health issues with mental health being an after thought.

Do you have a pet? If yes, what is it and what/who is it named after?

One moggy around 8 years old called Ivana. Ivana demands to be let in and out on a *VERY* regular basis and has developed a way of letting me know this – squeaking her paws up and down on the glass door.

What are some small things that you do to make your day better?

Exercise, meet friends for coffee, ride my bicycle or motorbike, go to the movies. I enjoy inspirational movies, with favourite movies being Healing (Australia flick starring Don Hany) and Shawshank Redemption.

What's the title of the current chapter of your life?

Reluctant Retirement

What are three interesting facts about you?

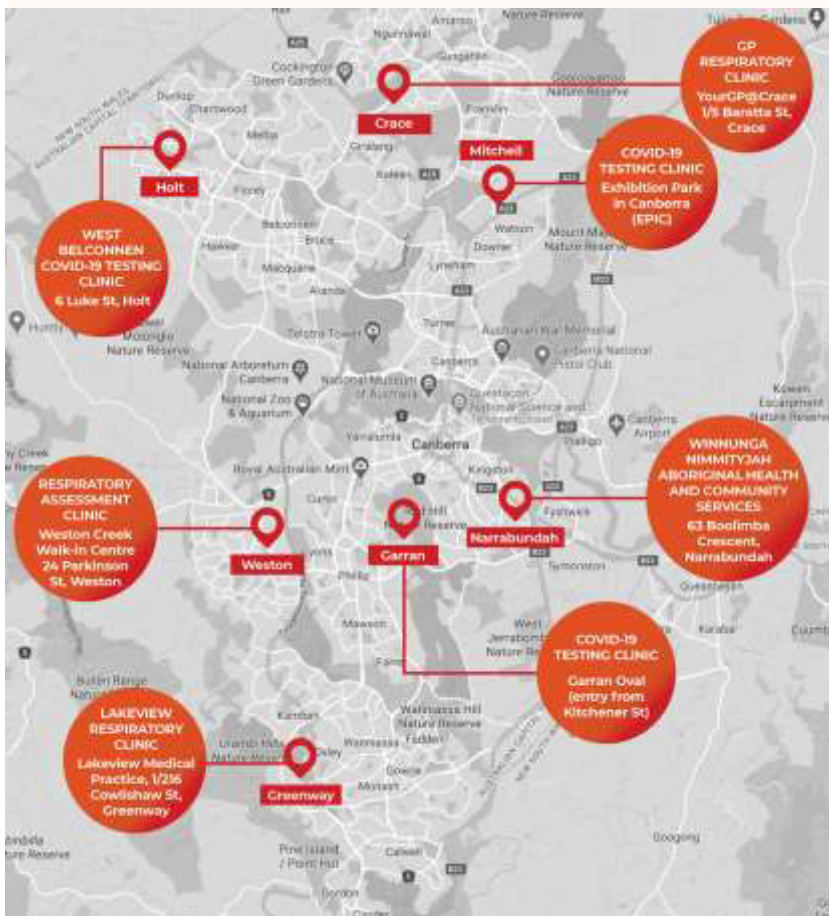
1. Rides a motorbike MAXSYM 400i (400cc scooter – can get up to speeds of 160km/hr)
2. Play squash two to three times a week since 1971 (yep, 50 years)
3. Has three children and five grandchildren majority of whom live in the ACT district.

COVID-19 Update

The ACT Health Directorate provides a website specific to COVID-19 in the ACT. This website includes Public Health Alerts, prevention guidelines, information on supports and resources etc. as well as information on the current testing criteria, travel advice etc. The website can be accessed at the following link <https://www.covid19.act.gov.au> and also contains links to other relevant State/Territory Health websites. Information about COVID-19 is also available 24 hours a day, seven days a week from the national Coronavirus Health Information Line on **1800 020 080**.

Testing locations

In response to a surge in demand for COVID-19 testing, Canberra Health Services has opened several more free testing clinics to make it easier for Canberrans to be tested. Below is a map of all COVID-19 testing locations around the ACT. The majority of testing locations do not require an appointment with the exception of the Respiratory Assessment Clinic in Weston and Lakeview Respiratory Clinic in Greenway which do require an appointment. Further information about the testing locations can be found via the [ACT COVID-19 website](https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/stay-safe-and-healthy/symptoms-and-getting-tested) (https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/stay-safe-and-healthy/symptoms-and-getting-tested)



COVID-19 vaccine program

As many readers should be aware of by now, the COVID-19 vaccination program has commenced in the ACT.

The program has been separated into various demographic phases with staggered starting dates. The first phase (1A) covered essential frontline workers, residents in aged care facilities etc. Phase 1B is expected to commence in late March 2021, with the other phases to commence later in the year.

Information about the program and which phase you can receive the vaccine in, can be found via the COVID-19 ACT website (<https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/stay-safe-and-healthy/vaccine>)

As mentioned earlier, the Network is looking to organise a presentation for consumers about the vaccine program (see page 4). This will be an opportunity for consumers who do not have internet to become more informed.

Hold The Date:

Quarterly Forum

Safe Haven Café Co-Design Process

Mental Health Community Coalition ACT (MHCC ACT), the ACT Mental Health Consumers Network (Network) and Carers ACT invite you to save the date for the first Quarterly Forum in 2021 on the **Safe Haven Café Co-design process**.

When: Wednesday 7 April 2021, 2:00pm - 3:30pm

This forum will be opened by the Minister for Mental Health, Minister Emma Davidson. The forum will cover:

- What is the Safe Haven Cafes project
- The Co-design process
- Where to from here – what's ahead.

The speakers and panel members will be confirmed closer to the date.

Please register your interest via [Humanitix](#) by Wednesday 31 March 2021

This forum will be held online using the zoom platform. A link will be emailed to you when you register.

If you have any queries please contact: Ben.Matthews@mhccact.org.au

Design a poster competition

The 4th International
This Is My Brave
Mental Health Film Festival
will be screening again this
October 2021

We are looking for artists with a lived experience of mental health issues to design our festival poster for this year with the competition winner winning a \$250 art supplies voucher from Eckersley's
Details on our website



Dedicated to breaking the stigma surrounding mental illness one story at a time



www.thisismybraveaustralia.com

DISABILI-TEA

MEETING AT THE INTERSECTIONS

For LGBTIQ+ folks with disabilities, neurodivergence, visual impairment, chronic health and mental health conditions, and members of the d/Deaf/HoH communities

About the Network

The ACT Mental Health Consumer Network is an organisation that is run by consumers for consumers. Our aim is to bring about a higher standard of health care in the mental health sector, through representation, lobbying and active involvement in new developments in the mental health sector.

Our organisation is extremely committed to the rights of mental health consumers. We promote a respectful and accepting system that involves Consumers, Carers and Professionals listening and respecting one another in an active healthy relationship. We also promote the development of support structures for all these groups.

All people who identify as being a mental health consumer are welcome to join the Network. An application form can be found on the following pages or by filling out and submitting via our website.

Drop-In

The Network is very pleased to offer a venue for Consumers to Drop-In for a chat and a cuppa, participate in activities, and/or to use the computers or phones for their self-advocacy needs. This service has now recommended and we welcome consumers to attend.

Due to Public Health Directives, the Network operates with the use of the Check-in CBR QR code system, which applies to the operation of the Drop-In service.

For details, please read page 10.



Level 2, Room 11
The Griffin Centre
20 Genge St, Civic

**CURRENTLY CLOSED
DUE TO COVID-19**



(02) 6230 5796



www.actmhc.org.au



[www.facebook.com/
actmhc/](https://www.facebook.com/actmhc/)



ACT
Mental Health
Consumer Network

APPLICATION FOR PRIMARY MEMBERSHIP

NB: Primary membership is **free** for mental health consumers.

CONTACT DETAILS *Your name and at least one contact address/email is required	
Title:	<input type="checkbox"/> Mr <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs <input type="checkbox"/> Ms <input type="checkbox"/> Miss <input type="checkbox"/> Other
First Name	
Surname:	
Address:	
Postal Address: (if different)	
Email:	
Home Phone:	
Work Phone:	
Mobile Phone:	
Other contact:	
Do you have lived experience of mental illness?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (please complete the rest of the form) <input type="checkbox"/> NO (do <u>not</u> complete the rest of this form. Ask for an Application for Associate Membership instead)
COMMUNICATION PREFERENCES:	
What is the BEST way for us to contact you?	<input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Home Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Post <input type="checkbox"/> Text <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Phone

Do you want to receive Newsletters and other information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes by email <input type="checkbox"/> Yes by post
How should we send information about AGMs and other major events?	<input type="checkbox"/> Home Address <input type="checkbox"/> Postal Address <input type="checkbox"/> Email
DEMOGRAPHICS	
Year of birth:	
Aboriginal:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Torres Strait Islander:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Language other than English:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> No, English only
Gender:	<input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Transgender <input type="checkbox"/> Intersex <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
INTEREST and INVOLVEMENT IN NETWORK ACTIVITIES	
Self-Advocacy and Consumer Representation Training (SCR)	<input type="checkbox"/> I have completed Self-Advocacy Course <input type="checkbox"/> I have completed Consumer Representation Course <input type="checkbox"/> I want to attend ART <input type="checkbox"/> I'm not currently able to attend <input type="checkbox"/> I have completed a similar course at (organisation)
Consumer Rep Program	<input type="checkbox"/> I'm interested in becoming a Consumer Rep <input type="checkbox"/> I'm not currently able to be a Consumer Rep
Policy and Projects Program	<input type="checkbox"/> I want to be involved in discussions and projects: In these areas: <input type="checkbox"/> I'm not currently able to be involved
Network Events:	<input type="checkbox"/> I want to be involved in planning events <input type="checkbox"/> I'm not currently able to be involved

Thank you for taking the time to complete and return this information