



ACT
Mental Health
Consumer Network

NETWORK NEWS

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FAREWELL JENNY



Jenny Adams has made the decision to retire and she finished up working at the Network in early April. Jenny has held numerous roles within the Network, firstly as a Consumer Representative and Board member, then as the Peer Educator Officer and moving briefly into the Consumer Representative Coordinator role at the end of 2021.

The *My Rights, My Decisions* form kit was Jenny's crowning achievement here at the Network. Through her hard work this tool has become a reality for consumers in the ACT.

We wish Jenny all the best throughout her retirement and we're sure that we'll see her again at some future Network events.

Terri Warner has been engaged to continue the Peer Education Program. The new Consumer Representative Officer, Eva Damarjati, will be starting just after Easter. We will formally introduce Eva to members in the next newsletter.

From the CEO's desk



Dear Readers

Welcome to the spring edition of the Network News for 2022... It has already been quite a big year despite being so early!

Things are finally returning to a more 'normal' state following all the difficulties stemming from the

COVID-19 pandemic. We're very pleased to have finally been able to reintroduce face to face participation for most Network events, as well as maintaining virtual options for people who are unable to come in person. This has been one of the key positives of the pandemic for the Network – that consumers who are usually very isolated have been able to participate more which is a fantastic achievement for them as well as for us. Our Community Education training programs will continue online for the next little while, although our My Rights, My Decisions workshops are expected to be available face to face sooner.

We have a couple of major (for us anyway!) projects on the boil at the moment, and in recent months. We have been busily updating documentation such as internal policies, database and newsletters to reflect the changes to our Constitution in November 2021. In addition, we recently worked with a community provider to have our My Rights, My Decisions information sheets translated into a series of languages that are commonly spoken at home by consumers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. These will soon go to print and be available in a variety of venues.

We have just started our long-awaited website redesign project which will take a few months to get working effectively. This will be a major achievement not only for us but for consumers more broadly as it will mean consumers will be able to access more information and have more and varied ways of participating at the Network. We hope to launch our new website this coming July.

Another project currently underway is the review of our Strategic Plan. All were in agreement that our existing plan was very strong, but needed some adjustments to

bring it in line with current processes and acknowledge goals that have already been achieved. We expect to launch the 2022-27 Strategic Plan on 1 July and will circulate it to all members as well as placing it on our website and with linking it to our Facebook page.

Finally, starting in July we will be undertaking an exciting new project in our Community Education Program. This project will be undertaken to look at the ways we provide workshops and how we can make them accessible to more consumers.

Expect to see your 2022 Consumer Survey arriving in the next months or so via post or email. We hope you will be able to find the time to provide us invaluable feedback to improve not only our programs, but also services and programs across the ACT.

And last, but by no means least, I would like to extend a fond farewell to Jenny Adams who has been working with us over the past few years. Through Jenny's hard work and determination, consumers now have access to the My Rights, My Decisions kit which is an essential tool for consumers and people who provide care, support and treatment for consumers. We look forward to having Eva Damarjati join our team on 19 April to take care of the Consumer Rep Program, while Terri Warner has accepted a position to look after the Peer Education arm of our Community Education Program.

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

Network Update

The Network office is now open and lightly staffed Monday to Friday 9am to 3pm. As staff continue to have remote and in-office working arrangements, we cannot always guarantee that there will be someone in attendance, should you visit or call.

Where possible, events such as the Consumer Representative Forum, policy consultations and Drop-Ins will be held in a hybrid format, which is a combination of face-to-face and online participation.

Training workshops will continue to be held online, however, the use of computers to participate in the Members' Area may be available by arrangement.

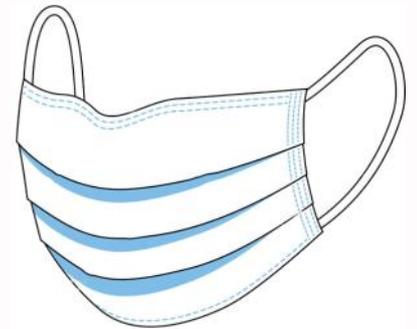
We know that participating in events solely online has been problematic for some members and we look forward to seeing you in the person at future events in 2022.

As we begin to host people at events again, some COVID-19 Safe measures will be in place, particularly throughout winter with the expected increase in colds and flu cases:

- Face masks are **encouraged** but **not mandatory**



- Hand sanitiser and hand washing facilities are available
- Please do not attend if you feel unwell
- Please let us know if you are physically attending—this lets us determine if we need to hold the event in a larger area and make those arrangements.



New website

Something that has been on our radar for a while is finally starting to happen, which we're very excited about!

The Network will be having a new website built and we expect that our new site will be launched sometime in July 2022 at the earliest.

Regular visitors to our site will have noted that not much has really changed over the past 10 years or so. With this new site, our aim is to make it more modern, interactive and time saving (particularly around events), while giving the Network a fresh new digital presence. Stay tuned for further updates.



Drop-In

The Drop-In service has reopened for 2022 and is available for in-person or online attendance.

In person Drop-In is held on Thursdays from 10am to 1pm. At times, due to working arrangements etc., Drop-In may need to close a little early some weeks at 12pm. If this happens, we will try to give members as much notice as possible.

We continue to offer the online Drop-In as well from 11am to 12 noon via Zoom. This is for members to connect with us for social contact purposes.

To join the Online Drop-In click on the following link and enter the passcode:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85389263153?pwd=MVNkaWZIR21wWDMrSjY1MVhkZ2JjQT09>

Meeting ID: 853 8926 3153

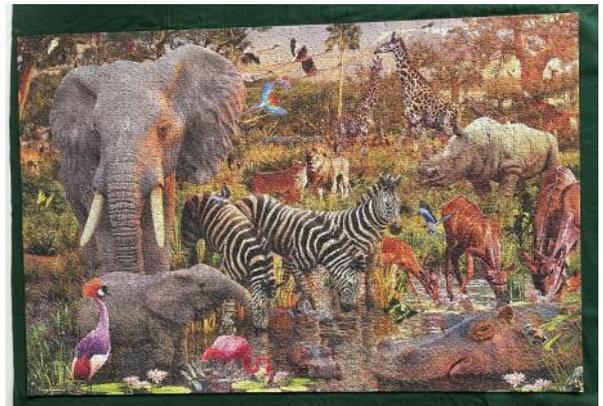
Passcode: 991826

We are seeking some ideas from members about what type of activities would be of interest in attending Drop-In. If you have any ideas, please forward them to Paul by email to dropin@actmhc.org.au

At the time of distribution, we expect to host Sally Holliday from Landcare ACT on 14 April to give a presentation and talk with consumers about their Wellbeing through Nature program, which is a really great initiative for mental wellbeing.

If you missed out on this presentation you can find out more about the Wellbeing through Nature program via the Landcare website (<https://www.landcareact.org.au/wellbeing>) or become a friend on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/wellbeingthroughnature/>).

An activity for Drop-In that we commenced in late 2019 has now been completed. We bought this giant 3000 piece jigsaw puzzle for people to come in and work on back in November 2019 but, as we've been closed for the most part of the last 2 years, progress on piecing it together couldn't happen. A few of us here are jigsaw fanatics, so Val took it home when lockdowns started and he continued working on it after each work day. As can be the case, one piece was missing – but eventually it was found at the end of March. Below is where it got up to by March 2020 and at completion in March 2022.



This puzzle and others are still available for anyone to come in and restart work on.

Consumer Rep Program

Attention Consumer Representatives! On Tuesday 18 April we will have a brand new CRP Officer, Eva, joining the team. She will take the time to introduce herself in the next edition, but we wanted to let you know to expect her to contact you all in the weeks following her start date, once she has had time to learn about the organisation and her new role. We look forward to welcoming Eva into the team!

Since our last update, there have been some big changes commencing in Canberra Health Services (CHS). CHS is reducing their number of committees to better meet their needs, and this is having a flow-on effect to our Consumer Representatives. At this time, the Network is still waiting on notice as to which committees will be affected.

As a result of this decision to reduce the number of committees, three (3) representative opportunities advertised late last year became void as those committees have now ceased. For this reason the Network has decided not to make any Consumer Representatives appointments to CHS committees until we have clear information on the ongoing status of the particular committee/s. Existing Representatives will be extended beyond their two (2) year period if necessary, until such time as the fate of each committee is known.

From the last round of committee vacancies, the Way Back Support Services Governance Group (Woden Community Services) was the only committee available to continue and Rose Beard was appointed as the Consumer Representative.

The first CRP Forum for 2022 was on held on 1 February. Part of the Forum was a Masterclass by Petra, this time on Health Literacy, which everyone found informative. The CRP also introduced a non-compulsory meeting on the alternate months to the Forum. This meeting is more like a chat, with no agendas, but with space given to allow all Consumer Representatives an opportunity to talk about anything that impacts their role, in a confidential environment. This way Consumer Representatives can support each other and share experiences, and seek advice from staff and each other if they wish.

Peer Education

Three My Rights, My Decisions sessions for clinicians/ACT Health staff have already taken place in the first quarter of 2022 at:

- Gungahlin Community Mental Health Team
- Mental Health Service for People with Intellectual Disability
- City Community Mental Health Team

Three more workshops for clinicians/ACT Health staff scheduled to be completed before the end of June will be held at:

- Psychiatry Registrar Training
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
- Older Persons Mental Health Service

Seven consumer workshops have been scheduled, though it is not anticipated that all will go ahead. The reason for scheduling this number of workshops is to ensure equal access to face to face and online delivery, and to compensate for the lack of Recovery College based workshops, which previously happened at least once per Recovery College term. The first workshop will also be open to consumers who have completed the Network's Co-Facilitation Training, to increase the number of available co-facilitators.

If you wish to participate, please contact Terri by email to peer.education@actmhc.org.au for the upcoming dates and to register.

Staff from external organisations who attended our My Rights, My Decisions workshops expressed an interest in making the consumer workshops available to people who attend their service who would feel more comfortable in a peer-led learning environment. We are looking into ways to make this happen.

Community Education

Every time we facilitate a workshop we learn something new, and the knowledge learned can be transferred to other training. In the lead up to recommencing our training workshops in 2022, some things learnt from the last round of workshops in 2021 were able to be applied to the recent Self-Advocacy (currently running) and Co-Facilitation workshops.

Some features new to our online training are

- Using online interactive tools like MS Forms, Google Jamboard and word clouds.
- Developing resource pages on our website to allow training participants to access all the training resources and extra information/links/videos for the workshops. We have trialed it in recent training and will continue refining it in 2022.
- Curating our YouTube playlist for videos in workshops and 'More on...' playlists for participants to find out more about related topics
- Creating a media/resource guide to make it easier for a tech support person to provide background Zoom/ media sharing support for training.

We are exploring the best way of having a tech support person in training with Zoom support to assist the facilitators by sharing videos/images/websites during training.

In the first quarter of 2022, we held Peer Co-Facilitation training and we were pleased to welcome Maree Pavlouis to our pool of Co-Facilitators.

A reminder about what this training is about, the Peer Co-Facilitating training is for eligible members to develop skills to co-facilitate the Community Education and My Rights, My Decisions training at the Network. If you would like to expand your skills and are interested in more ways to volunteer at the Network, this is the workshop for you!

To be eligible, members need to:

- Have participated in and completed current Self-Advocacy training, along with any other workshop they are interested in co-facilitating.
- Have a desire to share expertise gained through lived experience in training/workshop settings!

Contact Petra on education@actmhc.org.au if you would like more information or to see when the next course will be running.

CRP Masterclasses

We are continuing to work on new ideas and resources for the CRP Masterclasses. We are hoping to have some exciting guest speakers and events, and are currently finalising the topics to schedule for 2022.

In February a Masterclass on **Health Literacy** was provided for our Consumer Representatives as part of the CRP Forum.

Upcoming Training:

Currently we are facilitating a term of Self-Advocacy and Consumer Representation Training which is running online only from April to June.

If you have previously completed the Self-Advocacy course, you can enrol to continue your training into Consumer Representation

Consumer Representation

27 May, 3, 10, 17, 24 June, 10:30am-1:30pm

Educates mental health consumers about:

- Consumer Representation
- The consumer movement and systemic change
- The importance of human rights and legislation
- Skills for Consumer Representatives on committees

People who have completed Consumer Representation Training can choose to participate in our volunteer program as Consumer Representatives on various committees.

In the second half of the year we are taking a break from our regular training calendar to focus on an exciting new training project! Watch this space!

A sneak peek into the project will be happening at the next CRP Masterclass, so if you want to find out more, make sure you attend the June CRP Forum!

Policy Program

Despite the beginning of the year being generally quiet on average, we still received numerous requests to gather consumer input on a range of policies and developments on behalf of Canberra Health Services (CHS) and other associated departments/organisations. As this input is formulated into responsive submissions, these will be made publicly available via our website (www.actmhc.n.gov.au/publications/submissions/)

The following consultations were held with consumers via Zoom:

February

- CHS Draft Animal Guideline
- Seclusion of persons with mental illness or mental disorder detained under the *Mental Health Act 2015* (ACT)

March

- Head to Health Centre
- CHS Mental Health Supported Accommodation Project
- CHS Procedure: Restraint of a Person Detained under the *Mental Health Act 2015* (ACT)
- CHS Restrictive Practices Procedure. This consultation was cancelled due to a lack of confirmed participants.
- CHS Procedure: MHJHADS Ligature Use Response and Ligature Risk Management

In addition, we were also approached to facilitate consumer participation on the following external consultations:

- Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing ACT Mental Health Workforce Planning Strategy
- CHS website user testing

The call outs for participants for the above consultations were made broadly to our members via email and in some cases on Community Development Network of the ACT (CDNet) where appropriate to do so.

We will also be holding a forum for any consumers affected by the ACT Public Housing Relocation Program on Wednesday 20 April 2022. Further details are provided on page 8.

Submissions

The following recent submissions are now available to read via our website:

[Nurses and Midwives Towards a Safer Culture \(NM TASC\) Managers Mutual Behaviour Expectations for patients, consumers, carers, visitors, healthcare staff, students, and volunteers](#) (December 2021)

[Canberra Health Services Draft Animal Guideline](#) (February 2022)

[Canberra Health Services Clinical Procedure Seclusion of Persons with Mental Illness or Mental Disorder Detained under the Mental Health Act 2015](#) (February 2022)

[Canberra Health Services Procedure: Ligature Use Response and Ligature Risk Management MHJHADS](#) (March 2022)

[Canberra Health Services Restrictive Practices Procedure in non-Mental Health Areas](#) (April 2022)

[Canberra Health Services Restraint of a Person Detained under the Mental Health Act 2015 \(ACT\) Procedure](#) (April 2022)

Housing Relocation Program Forum

The Network has been made aware of the ACT Public Housing Relocation Program and the associated forced relocation of ACT public housing tenants.

The Network will be holding a Forum to discuss this Program with consumers who have been affected.

We would like to invite any consumer who is being affected by this forced Program to join us to discuss how you are feeling, what you have/haven't been told about the Program, and any other issues you may be having regarding this Program.

The Forum details are:

- When: Wednesday 20 April 2022
- Time: 10am – 12pm
- Where: via Zoom (details below) and in person (Network Office, Level 2, Rm 11, The Griffin Centre, 20 Genge Street, Canberra City).

Please RSVP by Monday 18 April 2022 to executive@actmhc.org.au

Zoom details

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82484754603?pwd=VUF6TIFGdk44SDQrdHc4SFdwcWVEZ09>

Meeting ID: 824 8475 4603

Passcode: 899782

One tap mobile

+61731853730,,82484754603#,,,,*899782# Australia

+61861193900,,82484754603#,,,,*899782# Australia

Dial by your location

+61 2 8015 6011 Australia

Head to Health Centre

The [Canberra Head to Health Centre](#) is a new, free adult mental health centre to help Canberrans find the mental health support they need. The centre is staffed by psychologists, social workers and other mental health professionals who work closely with GPs, psychiatrists and non-health services to support connections to services your patient may need.

The Head to Health Pop Up clinic is for anyone over 12 years of age experiencing feelings of anxiety or depression or for their family or carers. For an initial assessment, please make contact using the details below.

No appointment or referral required. Just:

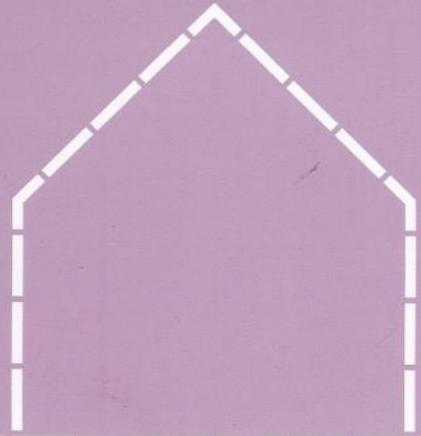
call **1800 595 212** or

drop in at ALIA House, First Floor, **9 Napier Close, Deakin** (Mon-Fri, 8.30am-5pm).



Feeling
distressed?

Need a
Safe Haven?



Safe Haven

We provide a safe space to talk for adults and young people 16+ in emotional distress.

Talk to our caring support team today.

We're here to help. Walk in, no referral needed.

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Belconnen 2617

Tue to Sat
4:30pm - 9pm

+61 421 154 147
Stride.com.au



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Government

ACT Health

This service has been made possible by funding from ACT Health.

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 resumed face-to-face from 10am to 1pm Thursdays and include online participation via Zoom between 11am to 12pm. (see page 4 for details)

Due to the nature of the Networks business, there are times when the Drop-In service unfortunately will be closed, and we try to keep members informed of any closures.



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



0449 127 941



www.actmhc.org.au



www.facebook.com/actmhc/



APPLICATION FOR INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

NB: Individual membership is **free**.

MEMBERSHIP TYPES AND CRITERIA

Primary Membership

- Has lived experience of mental illness
- Lives and/or accesses services for mental health in the ACT

Associate

- May have lived experience of mental illness but does not live and/or accesses services for mental health in the ACT
- Is a carer or support person of someone with mental illness
- Supports the aims of the Network

(Associate memberships are to be renewed annually)

I AM APPLYING FOR:

Primary Membership

Associate Membership

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:					
Mobile Phone:					
Other contact:					

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
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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) Primary Members only	<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 SCR <input type="checkbox"/> I'm not currently able to attend <input type="checkbox"/> I have completed a similar course at (organisation)
Consumer Rep Program Primary Members only	<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

