



ACT  
Mental Health  
Consumer Network

# NETWORK NEWS

ACTMHCN is delighted to again be holding

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Spring 2018

Offering You a Voice

# From the EO's Desk



Dear Readers

Welcome to the Spring 2018 edition of the Network News.

By the time you receive this newsletter, Purity will be back from overseas! Strangely, it feels both like it has gone very quickly, and like it has been much longer since she first took leave at the beginning of June. Petra has set her return date as 22 October to

enable her to take a trip overseas before returning. Terri will continue to facilitate our training courses until that time. Sadly, we had to say farewell to Jo Hargense before her contract was due to end; she made the difficult decision to resign due to some unexpected health concerns. This led to Jen returning to the Consumer Rep Program coordination role, and she and Terri each undertaking some work on the policy program.

Pema Choden started with us over winter, undertaking administration tasks for the program areas, to free up some much needed time for the coordinators to work on higher level tasks. Pema is settling in well and we hope to be able to extend her contract beyond the initial six months, particularly given this is a new role and it has taken some time to build its capacity to assist the coordinators. Val will be taking planned leave from mid-October to complete his unrelated qualification, and may not return until the end of January time permitting. As the end of the year tends to be reasonably quiet we have decided to share the regular admin tasks amongst the remaining team members. This should be able to be well managed with the rest of the permanent staffing team expected to be fully on deck during the period.

Jenny Adams is still busily working on the *My Rights, My Decisions* program to support consumers to better utilise their rights under the *Mental Health Act 2015* (ACT) with funding for her role through Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol and Drugs division of ACT Health. Jenny receives direct supervision and support from the Chief Psychiatrist, Denise Riordan; until recently the role was temporarily held by Mandy Evans. On this note, I would like to take a moment to warmly welcome Denise to this crucial role which has been formally vacant for quite some time since Peter Norrie's resignation. I'd also like to thank Mandy for the great work she did supporting Jenny and the project in the interim. Jenny is working closely with Woden Community Service, Carers ACT, Wellways and a

number of other key stakeholders in the community to ensure staff who are supporting consumers are appropriately skilled to support and complete consumers to complete their *My Rights, My Decisions* forms.

The recent change to Drop-In times has been working very well so far. On 23 August Chris Corcoran assisted several consumers with their health and fitness and the following week consumers learned more about Common Ground accommodation services.

Back by popular demand, this year for Mental Health Month we will be repeating our 'A Beary Lovely Morning' teddy bear making workshop and lunch at Grill'd. Check in this edition for more information and register to avoid missing your place at this fun filled event!

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

**An early notice to members that the ACT Mental Health**

**Consumer Network Annual General Meeting for 2018 will be held on**

**Tuesday November 20, 2018**

**12.30pm to 2.30pm**

**Formal notification of the AGM and papers will be mailed out to Members in early November 2018. If you need to update your contact details with the Network or change how you want to receive future communications, please contact us on 02 6230 5796, SMS to 0406 457 557 or email [actmhcncn@actmhcncn.org.au](mailto:actmhcncn@actmhcncn.org.au)**

# Chair's Report

Terri is seconded to the staff team at the moment, so I am acting as Chair for the time being. In the last Chair's report, it was noted that the Canberra Hospital had been given 90 days to remedy shortcomings identified in the Accreditation Audit. I am pleased to confirm that the hospital has subsequently made the appropriate changes and has now satisfied the accreditation authority on the relevant criteria.

Visitors to the Network will notice some changes to the furniture. The large wooden table has been replaced with multiple collapsible units. This will provide flexibility in setting up the members area for meetings, training, drop-in and forums and will

allow us to make significant savings on room booking fees.

Mental Health Month is rapidly approaching and the Network will again be running a Beary Lovely Morning event on Thursday 25 October. I encourage you to register for this fun event. The Network will also be running a stall at the Mental Health Expo on Thursday 11 October and we will be looking for volunteers to represent the Network on the stall. Further details will be announced shortly.

*Chris Corcoran  
Deputy Chair*

## Quarterly Community Forum

### The new Model of Care at the ACT's Adult Community Mental Health Service

12.00 Midday - 2.00 pm, Tuesday  
11 September 2018 (please note  
the time of this daytime Forum)

Room 8, 2nd Floor, The Griffin  
Centre, 20 Genge Street,  
Canberra City

The Forum is free, all are  
welcome, and light  
refreshments will be provided,  
but must RSVP via Eventbrite.

A new Model of Care (MoC) is currently being implemented for the Adult Community Mental Health Services (ACMHS) in Canberra. It is an evidence-based framework that outlines the way these specialist services have been redesigned to provide mental health treatment and care services for people.

The ACMHS MoC was developed to provide more accessible, specialised and responsive services to help support a person's recovery. It was developed with extensive consultation with internal and external stakeholders.

The benefits of these changes will include clearer referral pathways to services, a more targeted service to ensure people get the right treatment at the right time, more responsive services and more treatment and care options.

The implementation of these changes has already commenced with the launch of the Assertive Community Outreach Service on 14 June 2018 and with the remainder of these services gradually coming online before the end of 2018.

The new Model of Care will be presented by:

- Thomas Roberts of the Adult Community Mental Health Services Model Of Care Project, Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol and Drug Services; and
- Bruno Aloisi, Operational Director, Adult Community Mental Health Services, Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol and Drug Services.

As at all of the Quarterly Forums, there will be plenty of time for a Question and Answer session after the main presentation.

Any queries to [charlie.richardson@mhccact.org.au](mailto:charlie.richardson@mhccact.org.au) or 6249 7756.

# Network Update

## Drop-In

The Network's Drop-In service now runs on Thursdays 10am to 1pm. Once or twice per month from February through to the end of November we will arrange information and/or support sessions for consumers to encourage attendance and ensure consumers are receiving information that is important to them.

If you have any ideas for session topics, or if you have a skill you would like to share, please contact Pema by email on [programs@actmhc.org.au](mailto:programs@actmhc.org.au), phone the office on 02 6230 5796 or let us know during Drop-In.

On Thursday 23 August, the Network hosted the first in a new series of drop-in clinics for members wanting advice on a range of health and fitness issues. Three members took advantage of this free service, to get advice on various topics including diet and sleep hygiene.

The clinic was organised by Chris Corcoran, Deputy Chair of the Network, who is a Fitness Australia accredited personal trainer and an Athletics Australia registered Level 2 Recreational Running coach. Chris is also a Consumer Representative, a co-facilitator for Self-Advocacy and Consumer Representation training, a SMART (Self Management And Recovery Training) Group facilitator, and a disability support worker. Chris is currently studying for a double degree in Psychology and Sports & Exercise Science at the University of Canberra.

A second Drop-In event was held on Thursday 30 August, with Kate Dawson presenting on the Common Ground initiative. Common Ground is a proven model that supports the most vulnerable in our community by providing supported, safe, affordable housing. Canberra has one Common Ground in Gungahlin. Kate talked about it's successes and plans for the next Common Ground in Dickson.

Coming up on Thursday 6 September, Feros Care Local Area Coordinators, will be attending Drop-In to speak with consumers regarding applying for the NDIS.

## New Furniture

After making the decision to reduce the regularity of our Drop-In service and make more use of the area for our training workshops and meetings, in early August the Network invested in new furniture to accommodate this increased usage, which can support greater attendance at no ongoing cost.

Replacing our old meeting table are four new tables that can be arranged to accommodate a greater number of attendees and offer more space for moderate sized groups.

The old table was put on offer for free via CDNet, and we would like to thank the Eternity Church for their interest in this, and hope that they get as much use out of it as we did.



## Community Education Program

It has been a busy few months for the Education Program, with Terri delivering training and Petra working on reviewing and updating training resources, writing administrative procedures and developing the outline for mentoring training off site, the latter of which we hope to run for the first time before the end of the year.

Our last Understanding the NDIS for Peer Workers workshop for the year was held in August. Even though the NDIS has been operating in the ACT for five years now, there is still a need for people to access reliable, clear and balanced information about the NDIS so that people can be well supported through the process of applying for entry to the Scheme. This workshop aims to provide that information, and the feedback from participants indicates that they find it really valuable.

Next up in the training schedule is Self-Advocacy and Consumer Representation Training, which will be run in September in intensive format. Self-Advocacy will run over two consecutive days, followed by Consumer Representation over two Mondays. Even if you have completed the training in the past, it is worth considering registering. Petra and Terri both learn something new about self-advocacy every time they take part in the training, and for people who are interested in doing our co-facilitation training, recent completion of current courses is a prerequisite, and completion of Consumer Representation Training is recommended for all consumer representatives.

Co-facilitation training will be running in October, and places are limited to ensure that participants can be well supported to meet the learning outcomes. Successful completion of the training and all practicum activities qualifies a participant to become a consumer co-facilitator for the Network, which is a great opportunity to use lived experience expertise to support other consumers to develop their self-advocacy skills, get involved in consumer representation and become co-facilitators themselves!

## Consumer Rep Program

New reporting and confidentiality requirements have been introduced to the terms of reference for the consumer representative forum held monthly. A pledge of confidentiality must now be signed by all members attending a Consumer Representative Forum. By signing this pledge, attendees acknowledge that some things discussed at the Forum are confidential in nature and should not be shared with people who were not in attendance. In order to maintain this system, each attendee will also sign into the Forum using the Attendance Register. If you have any questions regarding this change, please contact either Jen or Deigh.

In addition, in order to allow appropriate time for papers to be collated and distributed ahead of Consumer Rep Forums, consumer representatives are asked to submit their meeting feedback no later than the Monday one week prior to the Forum. This ensures Consumer Reps have time to read the papers prior to the meeting. Feedback received after the cut off time will be placed in the table for the next month.

### Appointments

#### Policy, Procedure and Guidelines Review

Bianca Rossetti

#### ACACIA ACT Consumer and Carer Research Unit Advisory Group

Graham Jackson

### Vacancies

The following vacancies are available for representatives to nominate for. Note that these vacancies close Friday 14 September 2018.

- MAJIC-eR Advisory Group (2 year term completed)
- ACT Lifespan Steering Committee (starts September)
- UCH Management of a Deteriorating Patient Committee
- MHJHADS Occupational Violence Committee
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Unit Model of Care Steering Committee (expected to be re-starting in October 2018) .
- Detention Exit Community Mental Health Outreach Program (DECMHOP).

### Newly Eligible Consumer Representatives

Following the completion of the recent Self-Advocacy and Consumer Representation training in July and August, the Network welcomes our new eligible consumer representatives, Jason Cebalo and Denise Rostirolla.

The *My Rights, My Decisions* program is off to a good start, with the *My Rights, My Decisions* Form Kit now on our website at [www.actmhc.org.au/mrmd/](http://www.actmhc.org.au/mrmd/)

The *My Rights, My Decisions* Form Kit includes Nominated Person, Advance Agreement and Advance Consent Direction forms, which allow mental health consumers to express their views and preferences about their treatment, should they have reduced decision-making capacity in the future. The Form Kit was developed in consultation with consumers and a range of organisations including ACT Health, ADACAS, the ACT Human Rights Commission, Legal Aid ACT and Carers ACT.

In addition, the first *My Rights, My Decisions* consumer workshop was held in July. The workshop is held over two Fridays, from 11am to 2pm, and will be run every month between now and the end of the year on the following dates:

- 28 September & 5 October
- 26 October & 2 November
- 23 November & 30 November

Registrations are required for the workshops. Please email [actmhc@actmhc.org.au](mailto:actmhc@actmhc.org.au) to register or phone 02 6230 5796, indicating any dietary or other requirements. Consumers are welcome to bring a support person, but this person must also register.

The workshop covers the rights of mental health consumers as set out in the *Mental Health Act 2015* (ACT), what to expect from services, and the concept of decision-making. It introduces the *My Rights, My Decisions* Form Kit, Wallet Card Keyring which consumers can fill in with the detail of their views, preferences and contacts. Speakers from ACACAS, the ACT Human Rights Commission and Legal Aid ACT attend on the first day of the workshop. A draft of the *My Rights, My Decisions* Form Kit is completed on the second day of the workshop, ready for discussion, agreement and signoff by the consumer's treating team.

A significant part of the *My Rights, My Decisions* program is outreach. To date there have been presentations to a wide range of community organisations, including Woden Community Service, Carer's ACT, Wellways, ACTCOSS and the Mental Health Foundation. These presentations give staff in these organisations the information necessary to support people they work with to attend the *My Rights, My Decisions* workshop, or complete the Form Kit outside the workshop. Presentations to ACT Health staff are expected to commence in September.

Recently the ACT Government announced funding for a two year trial for a Recovery College to be established and operated in Canberra. A recovery college is a place of learning, connection and hope for people with mental illness, their carers, families and friends. Colleges operate in a similar way to adult learning centres, but with a focus on mental health.

Colleges are developed and operated entirely on the principles of co-design and co-production – that is, in equal partnership between mental health professionals and people with lived experience of mental illness. They are well-established in the UK but relatively new in Australia.

In 2017, several workshops were organised by the Mental Health Community Coalition ACT to canvas the views of consumers, carers and other stakeholders within the mental health community, about the types of courses that they would like to be provided by a Recovery College in the ACT. This resulted in a list of topics that people would like to learn about. Further work will be undertaken to gather information on the availability of co-produced courses in the ACT and Australia more widely. Since the funding is for a two year period only, it is important that courses which would attract high levels of enrolment and can provide the most benefit to participants are identified. The views of the mental health community are vital to ensure that the Recovery College can deliver services that are wanted and co-designed by the community that it will serve.

As such, it is hopeful to hold a series of workshops to gain advice on a number of different aspects including:

- What courses people would like to attend in the first semester (these will likely to be courses that are already developed and ready to be presented)
- What other topics would people like to see on the curriculum for the second half of the first year of the College and who would be willing to help produce these courses.

One of these workshops will be held at the Network by the end of September. Please keep your eye out for more information which will be shared as soon as the dates and times are set.

We encourage as many people as possible to participate in these workshops and other aspects of the College to help make sure that YOUR college is a success. If you would like to get the latest information on the Recovery College, please fill in the form on the [MHCC ACT website](#) or contact MHCC ACT on 6249 7756 to be added to their contact list.

# Network Events

Sept

**Thursday 6 September**  
10am—1pm

*Feros Care LAC Information Drop-In, Members' Area*

**Monday 10 and Tuesday 11 September**  
10am— 4pm

*Self-Advocacy Training (Intensive), Members' Area*

**Mondays 17 and 24 September**  
10am— 4pm

*Consumer Representation Training (Intensive), Members' Area*

**Tuesday 25 August**  
11am—1pm

*Consumer Representative Forum, Members' Area*

**Friday 28 September**  
11am—2pm

*My Rights, My Decisions workshop, Members' Area*

Oct

**Friday 5 October**  
11am—2pm

*My Rights, My Decisions workshop, Members' Area*

**Monday 15 October**  
10am—4.30pm

*Co-facilitation Training (Day 1), Members' Area*

**Tuesday 16 October**  
11am—1pm

*Network Board Meeting, Members' Area*

**Monday 22 October**  
10am—4.30pm

*Co-facilitation Training (Day 2), Members' Area*

**Tuesday 23 October**  
11am—1pm

*Consumer Representative Forum, Members' Area*

**Thursday 25 October**  
10.30am—2pm

*A Beary Lovely Morning, Westfield Belconnen (Office Closed)*

**Friday 26 October**  
11am—2pm

*My Rights, My Decisions workshop, Members' Area*

**Monday 29 October**  
10am—4.30pm

*Co-facilitation Training (Day 3), Members' Area*

Nov

**Friday 2 November**  
11am—2pm

*My Rights, My Decisions workshop, Members' Area*

**Tuesday 20 November**  
12.30pm—2.30pm

*ACTMHCN Annual General Meeting, The Griffin Centre*

**Friday 23 November**  
11am—2pm

*My Rights, My Decisions workshop, Members' Area*

**Tuesday 27 November**  
11am—1pm

*Consumer Representative Forum, Members' Area*

**Wednesday 28 November**  
11am—1pm

*Policy Reference Group, Members' Area*

**Friday 30 November**  
11am—2pm

*My Rights, My Decisions workshop, Members' Area*

# Upcoming Training

## Self-Advocacy

Would you like to

- Have more control in your life?
- Be able to ask for what you need and want?
- Know your rights and responsibilities?

Self-Advocacy is the ability to speak up for yourself and the things that are important to you. Our training will support you to identify how effective you can be as a self-advocate.

Self-Advocacy Training educates mental health consumers to:

- Feel good about themselves
- Express their feelings
- Recognise the importance of responsible decision-making
- Make informed decisions

### Workshop Details:

Dates: Monday 10 & Tuesday 11 September 2018

Time: 10:00am - 4:45pm

Venue: Members' Area, Network office

Cost: Free - *Morning tea and light lunch will be provided.*

## Co-Facilitation

Dates: Monday 15, 22 & 29 October 2018

Times: 10am – 4:30pm

Location: Members' Area, Network Office

Objective: The purpose of this training is to provide eligible members the skills and opportunity to use their expertise of lived experience by becoming co-facilitators in the delivery of the Network's training.

This 3-day workshop consists of training modules, as well as the opportunity for the participants to put into practice the skills learned during the training by facilitating practicum activities.

Module 1 – Why Peer Work?

Module 2 – Group Facilitation Skills 1 (How We Learn and Introduction to Facilitation)

Module 3 – Group Facilitation Skills 2 (Facilitation and Co-facilitation Skills)

Module 4 – Self Care

Morning tea and light lunch will be provided.

Contact the Network to determine if you are eligible!

The Network is pleased to offer the following FREE training courses for the remainder of 2018. If you are interested in participating, please contact Terri by email [education@actmhc.org.au](mailto:education@actmhc.org.au), 02 6230 5796 or SMS to 0406 457 557. You can also complete the registration form on page 15 and send it in.

## Consumer Representation

Consumer Representation Training enables mental health consumers to become informed and confident Consumer Representatives, equipping them with the skills to represent themselves and other consumers in the provision of mental health services.

Consumer Representation Training 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

### Workshop Details:

Dates: Tuesdays 17 & 24 September 2018

Time: 10:00am - 4:45pm

Venue: Members' Area, Network Office

Cost: Free - *Morning tea and light lunch will be provided.*

**2019 Training  
calendar will  
be available by  
the end of  
2018.**

# Mental Health Month

Mental Health Month is just on the horizon, and will kick off with a carnival style event in Garema Place on Friday 5 October. The theme for this year is 'Stronger Together'.

A calendar of events is currently in development and will be available as October draws nears.

Further information about Mental Health Month, events and awards, can be found via the Mental Health Month website

([www.mentalhealthmonthact.org/](http://www.mentalhealthmonthact.org/)).

## A Beary Lovely Morning

Following our successful event last year for Mental Health Week, the Network will

again be holding 'A Beary Lovely Morning'. We warmly invite consumers to participate in this event on Thursday 25 October. At this event participants will build their own personal teddy bear buddy to help in their recovery journey, whilst making new friends or reconnecting with old ones.

All materials and lunch will be provided. Carers and support persons are welcome to attend but must register if joining in as places are limited.

**RSVP's are essential!** Participant numbers are limited to 20 people, so get in quick. If you register and are later unable to come, please let us know ASAP so we can fill in your spot. Workshop details will be provided to registered participants closer to the date.

To book your place contact the Network via email: to [actmhcn@actmhcn.org.au](mailto:actmhcn@actmhcn.org.au) or call 6230 5796.



## Mental Health Month Awards & Michael Firestone Memorial Scholarship

The ACT Mental Health Week Awards are still open for nominations. There are six Awards and a Scholarship.

The awards are: Promotion Prevention and Early Intervention Award; The Mental Health Carer Award; The Mental Health Volunteer Award; the Mental Health Consumer Award; AND the Reciprocity Award and the David Perrin Award which are presented in conjunction with the ACT Mental Health Consumer Network.

The Scholarship is the Michael Firestone Memorial Scholarship, a reimbursement worth up to \$500 recognising mental health consumers who are furthering their education by providing scholarship(s) to cover general education expenses such as computers, course texts and course fees.

Information about the Awards and Scholarship, as well as nomination forms are available for download from the Mental Health Week website: <https://www.mentalhealthmonthact.org/awards>

Readers who require nomination forms can contact us on the details below and we will forward them out to you.

If you have any awards questions or require clarification, please contact us by email to [awards@actmhcn.org.au](mailto:awards@actmhcn.org.au) or phone 02 6230 5796.

**Nominations close 4pm Friday 21 September 2018.**

# National Suicide Prevention Conference

The issue of suicide prevention as a systemic advocacy priority for mental health consumers has been highlighted this year, with the number of deaths by suicide at the Canberra Hospital, particularly in the Adult Mental Health Unit, impacting accreditation outcomes for the hospital, just as they have impacted consumers, staff, carers and the wider community over time. With this in mind, I attended this year's National Suicide Prevention Conference in Adelaide. This was my second time attending this conference, and I remember last time being struck by how the mental health and suicide prevention sectors sometimes converge but sometimes run in parallel because one can't entirely encompass the other.

Like mental health services, suicide prevention services need to understand the impact of the social determinants of health and the importance of cultural contexts in order to support the development of meaningful, enduring outcomes for service users. In both cases, meaningful outcomes can be hard to define and demonstrate, and funding for programs is subject to the vagaries of national and jurisdictional health and social policy priorities. Suicide prevention programs and services, like their mental health counterparts, are increasingly incorporating lived experience in design, delivery and the provision of individual services. Both sectors have growing and committed peer workforces (both voluntary and paid positions), and consumer voices are driving change.

During the conference, Suicide Prevention Australia released a position statement on mental illness and suicide prevention, acknowledging that people with a diagnosed mental health condition, particularly those with complex mental illness, are at increased risk of suicide. The statement takes the position that it is incorrect to assume that the risk is entirely explained as a feature of the mental health condition. Any approach to addressing these issues at the either the public health or individual level needs to be multifactorial and person-centred.

Interestingly, this is the only conference I have been to in years where nobody has mentioned the National Disability Insurance Scheme. While funding specific to programs addressing suicide may not be directly affected by the NDIS, I don't think it's accurate to say that there is no need to discuss either issue in the context of the other. This is particularly true for the cohort of NDIS participants who experience psychosocial disability, for whom the issues of complex mental illness (which, as previously mentioned, is a risk factor for suicide) and the NDIS naturally coincide. Further, I think we need to be having a discussion about the impact of social and health policy reform on suicide vulnerability.

As mental health consumer advocates, we know that suicide is not always part of a person's lived experience,

just as people with a lived experience of suicide know that having a mental health condition is not always a part of theirs. However, there are those of us whose lived experiences include both, and within our current health system it is likely that a person with a lived experience of suicide will interact with mental health services at some point. For that reason, being aware of the conversations, research outcomes and developments in both areas is not only personally useful but also essential if we are going to advocate for positive systemic change that includes and supports everyone who accesses the systems and services that are available, for whatever reason.

*Terri Warner*



Thursday 13 September is R U OK? Day, a national day of action dedicated to reminding everyone that any day is the day to ask, "Are you ok?" and support people in need of help.

Taking part can be as simple as learning R U OK?'s four steps so you can have a conversation that could change a life.



Further information about R U OK? Day and how to begin having a conversation is available from the R U OK? website ([www.ruok.org.au/](http://www.ruok.org.au/))

And remember, if you do find yourself encountering a crisis, you can always contact Lifeline on 13 11 14.

# National Mental Health Consumer & Carer Forum

NMHCCF members represent mental health consumers and carers on a large number of national bodies, including government committees and advisory groups, professional bodies and other consultative forums and events. Members use their lived experience, understanding of the mental health system and communication skills to advocate and promote the issues and concerns of consumers and carers. Further information about the NMHCCF can be found via their website: <https://nmhccf.org.au/>

The NMHCCF session for 24-25 May

- presentations from organisations around Australia including the Victorian Mental Health Complaints Commissioner, Mental Health Advocacy and Representation and Human Rights Objectives.
- presentation by the Primary Health Network with involved NDIS discussions. Speakers included CEO PHN North Western Melbourne and Mental Health Advisor to the National Disability Insurance Agency.
- engaged in a workshop concerning how to communicate effectively as representatives on committees. The Forum then engaged in discussions to the direction of plans and programs to be developed heading forward.
- an inspiration presentation from the CEO of Beyond Blue as she spoke of her mental health journey within and outside the role of an Executive Officer of a major organisation.
- face to face meeting with Minister Hunt (Minister for Health). Pre-prepared questions were asked of the Minister. After the presentation experienced Forum members considered the session successful with Minister Hunt seemingly taking the issues on board.

One of the major features for me as a Consumer Representative concerned the canvassing of a lengthy KPMG report which details the long-term Return On Investment (ROI) through appropriate funding in mental health and vocational training. This report was forwarded to the Policy Unit of MHJHADS.

The NMHCCF session for 21-22 June

The first day of the Forum consisted of significant discussions across many mental health areas, focussing on 3rd National Mental Health Information

Development Priorities, Mental Health Phases of Care, Measuring Consumer and Carer Experience of Service in the Mental Health Sector and Developing a New nationally Consistent Consumer Self Rated Measure.

The second day of the Forum was focused on the group breaking into working groups. These groups included:

- NMHCCF carer and consumer participation: NMHCCF vision, mission and organisational plan for the next five years. The difference between the NMHCCF and National Register. The role of consumers and carers in each state and territory and how this differs. Strong focus on improving the accessibility and quality of mental health services in rural and remote Australia. Rural lack of accessibility and quality may be impacting on the increased level of homelessness in the ACT (see Australian Institute of Health and Welfare data).
- From the previous question and answer session with Minister Hunt a clear, consistent, transparent and focused participation plan is to be agreed upon and integrated with a communications and marketing plan.
- Marketing and communications (Marcomms) working group: focus on the strategic direction and leadership necessary for raising the NMHCCF profile by the working group developing and implementing marketing, promotional and communications material and strategy which is practical, effective, efficient and economical. The objectives are to: a) Identify sector opportunities to promote NMHCCF work; b) Identifying market needs for publications/ advocacy; c) Develop strategies for engaging with key stakeholders; d) Develop tools for members to use to promote our work; and e) Targeted advocacy activities. The timeline for completion of plan, tasks and activities of the group will be aligning with the 2018-2021 NMHCCF work plan.

- Matthew Martin  
NMHCCF ACT Consumer Representative

# Events & Notices

## Hearing Voices Group in Woden

Woden Community Service facilitates a fortnightly social support group for people who hear voices and/or experience other auditory, tactile and visual sensations.

The groups aim is to offer a place where people can feel accepted and comfortable discussing their experiences with others in a non-judgemental and safe atmosphere. Hearing Voices groups offer an opportunity for people to accept and live with their voices, and aims to help people gain back some control and empowerment over their lives and experiences. Attendees are welcome to attend with supports, and to participate as much or as little as they feel.

The group is facilitated by a Mental Health worker and Peer worker.

When: Fortnightly on Tuesday afternoons 2.30-4.30pm

Where: The Smith Family Building, cnr Easty and Launceston Street, Woden ACT

Cost: Free, open to the public

Please feel welcome to contact the Transitions to Recovery program (TRec) at Woden Community Service on 6282 2644 for further information.

## My Health record – What's the fuss?

By the end of the year all Australians will have a My Health Record unless you choose to opt out. The My Health Record is a way of digitally storing summaries of your visits to GPs, medicines, tests, pathology results and allergies. It has huge potential to improve health outcomes, although a number of concerns about privacy, use and accuracy have been raised. The opt-out period is until 15 October, 2018. Further information available at the My Health Record website <https://www.myhealthrecord.gov.au/>

The Health Care Consumers' Association and the Chronic Conditions Seminar Series will host an information session on:

Monday 10 September, 2-4pm.

SPEAKERS: Elizabeth Moss, Capital Health Network and a representative of the Australian Digital Health Agency.

VENUE: Large meeting room, 100 Maitland St, Hackett.

REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED

Please RSVP to [adminofficer@hcca.org.au](mailto:adminofficer@hcca.org.au) or phone 62307800.



## Member contribution

Vijaya Sen, a member of the Network and talented artist, recently sent through one of her latest pieces that we thought to share in this edition of Network News.

This is a self-portrait done in plain black ink and is a very good likeness. Well done Vijaya!

We are always on the lookout for members to make contributions like this for our newsletter, so if you feel inspired to do so, please feel free to send in your artwork, poetry etc. for inclusion.



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:	
<b>Do you have lived experience of mental illness?</b>	<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 <b>BEST</b> 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
<b>DEMOGRAPHICS</b>	
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: .....
<b>INTEREST and INVOLVEMENT IN NETWORK ACTIVITIES</b>	
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*



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## Training Registration Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

(Suburb) \_\_\_\_\_ (Postcode) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (m) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Which training are you registering to attend? (*Training Name and Date*)

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you have any additional needs? (*e.g. wheelchair accessibility, dietary requirements*)

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Please explain why you want to attend the above training.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. How did you hear about this course?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your registration. We will confirm your place as soon as possible.

# 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, and/or to use the computers or phones for their self-advocacy needs most week days. 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.

A notice of expected opening times for the current and following week is posted at the front door to the office.

Our Drop-In hours are 10am – 1pm, Thursdays.



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



(02) 6230 5796



[www.actmhc.org.au](http://www.actmhc.org.au)



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