



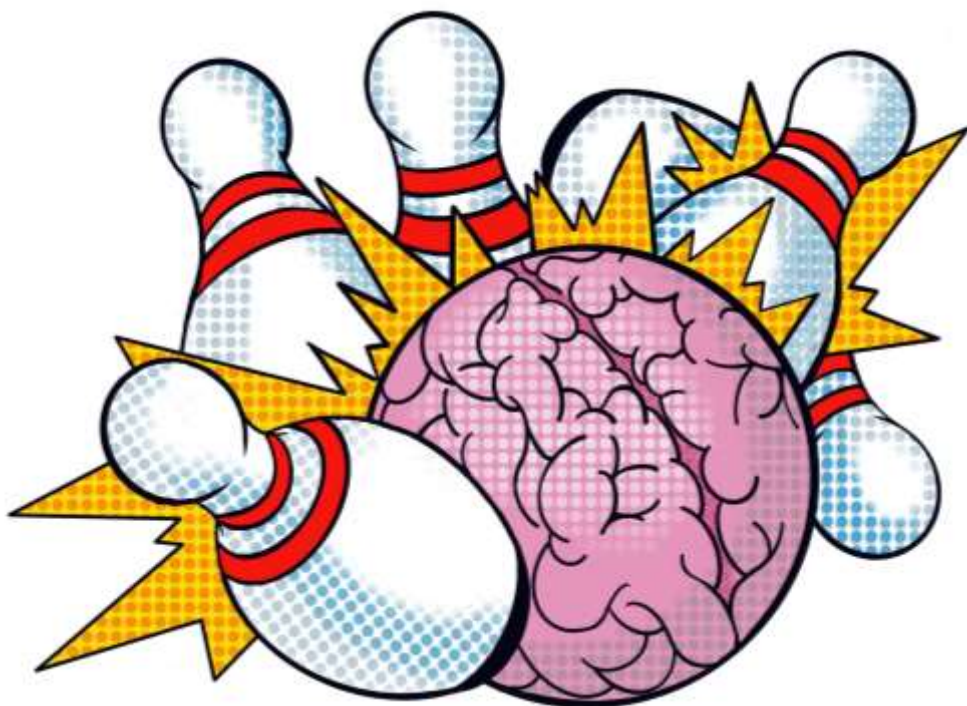
ACT
Mental Health
Consumer Network

NETWORK NEWS

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STRIKE UP SOME FUN FOR MENTAL HEALTH!



**THURSDAY 22 OCTOBER, 12PM - 2PM,
KINGPIN BOWLING, CANBERRA CENTRE**

Details on pages 10 and 11

SPRING 2020

Offering You a Voice

From the Chair



Our Executive Officer, Dalane Drexler, is currently on leave whilst this edition of Network News is being produced. The Network Chair, Bianca Rossetti, has provided the following message to readers in place of the usual From the EO's Desk segment. Dalane will be back in the Summer 2020 edition of Network News.

Dear Members

Welcome to the Spring edition for 2020. I am looking forward to a lovely Spring.

In less than two months it is the ACT election and as a systemic advocacy group we should be focusing on issues that impact mental health consumers. Recently ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS) released a brief ([link](#)) with the focus on rehabilitation and social supports. As one of the Network's values is social justice, I feel that the Network should promote the perspectives of people with lived experience of mental illness in these briefs. As I will be joining the 2020 ACT election leaders forum I would like hear your voice on what the community priorities should be for the ACT election so I can share these with the ACT Chief Minister Andrew Barr MLA, Leader of the Opposition Alistair Coe MLA, Leader of the ACT Greens Shane Rattenbury MLA and other leaders in the mental health sector. Please email chair@actmhc.org.au if you would like to share your views/ It is important to get involved and to share your knowledge and understanding for us to be unified.

In collaboration with consumers and the community, the National Mental Health Commission has launched an initiative, #GettingThroughThisTogether: Supporting our mental health during COVID-19, to support mental health and wellbeing during uncertain times. The initiative encourages each of us to prioritise our mental health and support each other against the impacts of the pandemic while also responding to the physical requirements of COVID-19. I feel that there is a continuous gap in reaching out to the community to understand their needs. I hope that together we can identify ways in which the Network can improve our outreach to provide a true representation of mental health consumers. More information about this initiative is available at <https://www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/>

[GettingThroughThisTogether](#)

As your Chair, I aim to organise a meet and get to know more of you when the weather improves and we can gather in an outdoor space. I have been busy working on Network policies, consumer representation on various committees, advocating with other peak bodies to increase consumer voices nationally, liaising with ACT Health and organisations to increase the peer workforce in the ACT, and to support people with psychosocial disability to engage with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA).

I would like to recognise and acknowledge the work that the staff do at the Network. These past months workloads have increased as the staff settle into working from home and trying to meet the needs of the community whilst facing technical challenges. Thank you all for your continuing efforts and achievements. I look forward to acknowledging the staff and consumers at the Mental Health Month Awards and discovering who the winners are. Please remember to send through your nominations online via the Mental Health Month ACT website (<https://www.mentalhealthmonthact.org/awards>) or via post or in person. Nominations close Sunday 20 September 2020. I will also look forward to meeting you at the Network's annual Mental Health Month activity held in October on Thursday 22 October. More details about this event are on pages 10 to 11.

Last but not least, the Network is preparing for the 2020 Annual General Meeting. Currently the Network is looking at various locations that are suitable for a sizeable gathering during the current pandemic, however, in light of recent legislative changes, we may hold this event on Zoom. The date for the AGM is Tuesday 17 November 2020. Formal notice of the AGM, including time and venue, and other documentation will be sent to members a few weeks prior. As Chair I encourage you to save the date for this important event and take time to consider whether you might like to apply for one of our Board vacancies.

Thank you for reading this edition. I am thankful for all your contributions in advocating for change and reform for mental health consumers in the ACT.

Bianca Rossetti
Chair

Network operations

As reported last newsletter and through our electronic communications with members, staff have been working remotely since early March 2020. At this point, due to the COVID-19 situations in Melbourne, Sydney and surrounding areas, the returning of staff to the office has been put on hold until further advised.

We can still be contacted on our main phone number (02) 6230 5796 or, if unanswered, 0449 127 940 (9am to 3pm Monday to Thursday). As an alternative you can contact staff direct on the numbers and emails listed below for the following purposes. Please be advised that these phones are turned off at the end of each working day and on non-work days.

Consumer Representation (Jen)	representation@actmhc.org.au 0449 127 941
Policy (Isobel)	policy@actmhc.org.au 0424 468 620
Education (Petra)	education@actmhc.org.au 0408 069 423

The Network is still being asked for consumer input on policy matters, so please regularly check your email for invitations to comment. Most consultations and other forums and events are now being held online via Zoom, with the exception of any hosted by ACT Government staff as they use Webex. If you are interested in commenting on policy but do not use email, please contact Isobel on the above details to let her know, so she can send you any documents.

An early notice to members that the ACT Mental Health Consumer Network Annual General Meeting for 2020 will be held on

Tuesday November 17, 2020

Time and location to be confirmed.

Formal notification of the AGM and papers will be mailed out to Members in early November 2020. 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 0424 468 620 or email actmhc.org.au

Online Drop-In

The Network continues Drop-In online via Zoom every Thursday from 10:30am to 12:30pm. Anyone who wants to join can enter the session at any time while the session is open.

There are two ways to join the online Drop-In: via internet or calling in. The details are to the right in the blue bubble. Zoom is available for computers and mobile devices. If you haven't used Zoom before, when clicking on or typing in the meeting link provided you will be prompted to download and install Zoom for free on your device.

To join the Online Drop-In, click on, or type/copy and paste into your browser, the following link and enter the required passcode

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84043322259?pwd=SmhLZUN6cnUxdnJpciB3SGh2K1lWZz09>

Meeting ID: 840 4332 2259

Passcode: 357520

To join by phone

One tap mobile

+61370182005,,84043322259#,,#357520# Australia

+61731853730,,84043322259#,,#357520# Australia

Dial by your location

+61 2 8015 6011 Australia

Network Update

Community Education Program

New Videos!

Over the last year or so, we have been working on an exciting video resource project. Final drafts of 6 new videos featuring interviews with our members and other stakeholders are now completed, and we have starting to use them in our training. Come along to our courses to check them out! We will be screening several of the videos during our AGM!

CRP Ongoing Skill Development Training

The Network is committed to supporting our volunteer Consumer Representatives to best accomplish their role. To assist ongoing development of representatives' skills, we will be holding short workshops designed in collaboration with Consumer Representatives.

The sessions will be held before the bi-monthly CRP Forums. The first session was conducted on 4 Aug and explored how the role of Consumer Reps can align with values identified in the Network's strategic plan. A training calendar is being developed around 10-12 topics identified by our reps.

The next session will be in October, focusing on My Rights My Decisions toolkit. Other topics include Self-Care, problem solving and 'Who's who' (understanding Health Department and where your committee fits in). Anyone who has completed the Consumer Rep training can come along the CRP Forums, and that way not miss out on any of the training sessions!

Upcoming Training

The following workshops will be delivered via Zoom.

Self-Advocacy	Wed	2, 9, 16, 23, 30 Sept	12:30 – 2:45
Consumer	Wed	7, 14, 21, 28 Oct, 4 Nov	12:30 – 2:45
PeerZone	Wed	11, 18, 25 Nov, 2, 9 Dec	1:00 – 2:30

Please contact education@actmhc.org.au if you would like to attend, or just find out more!

PeerZone

Earlier this year, the Network organised a train-the-trainer workshop for PeerZone training in Canberra. As a result, we now have 11 qualified facilitators who can run the workshops. This November we have scheduled 6x Toolkit Workshops online. We will be hosting an online forum soon, with more information about PeerZone, and an opportunity for our members to discuss which topics they would be interested in discussing first! Keep an eye out for forum dates!

What is the PeerZone Toolkit?

The toolkit consists of 52 Workshops with user-friendly activities and resources to explore, share and self-manage challenges with a trusted support circle – leading to better health, life, and work outcomes.

Toolkit domains include: Mental wellbeing, Physical wellbeing, Self-management, Housing, Services, Work, Income, Relationships, Belief and purpose.

The workshops are approximately 1.5 hrs long.

Peer Education

Since our last newsletter, the Network received some very welcome news that the Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing has approved funding for an electronic editable version of the My Rights My Decisions form kit. The form will also be tagged for appropriate scanning by screen readers, and thereby be accessible to people with a vision impairment. The My Rights, My Decisions program is currently investigating the potential of undertaking some further improvements to the form kit including:

- a plain English re-write of the form by professional writers;
- an indigenous version of the form; and
- translation of the form kit into up to five languages.

A My Rights My Decisions workshop was held for Woden Community Service participants on 19 August. Further workshops for the indigenous and multicultural communities are currently being arranged.

To expand the opportunities for more Peer Education at the Network, the Network would like to invite ideas from members for new workshops you would like to see organised.

Some examples of ideas so far are:

- Seclusion and Restraint – what and why
- Reasonable Adjustment for Mental Health – in employment situations
- Having fun! – the psychology of fun as well as sharing fun things to do
- Our stories – coming up with a book of our stories
- Helping – what helping means and how we can do more
- Speaking Out – what training is available and learning from others

If you are interested in any of these workshops, please tell us what your priority is. And please add any others you can think of that you would like to see developed.

Please respond with your ideas and/or interest to peer.education@actmhc.org.au or call (02) 6230 5796.

Consumer Rep Program

To support the CRP program, Pema Choden, who previously worked as the program officer, was employed on a short term basis to the end of July.

One of our long time consumer representatives, Matthew Martin, resigned from all his active representative duties with the Network due to personal reasons. Matthew was a committed and active consumer representative and he is sorely missed. The Network thanks Matthew for all of his work in representing the views of mental health consumers for the past 8 years and wish him well going into the future. All Matthew's committees, including the National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum, have been advertised.

Consumer Representative Program Forums

Two Consumer Representative Program Forums (CRP Forum) were held using Zoom on 2 June and 4 August. The next CRP Forum is scheduled for Tuesday 6 October from 11am to 12 noon again using ZOOM.

To encourage attendance and to keep our consumer representatives up to date with their training, it has been agreed that there will be a half hour education segment included in the Forum to be co-designed with consumer representatives, the Community Education Officer and the CRP Program Manager. The first segment to be held in October will be on My Rights, My Decisions –

this was suggested by the consumer representatives as they are often asked about the program.

Representative Opportunities

A number of committee vacancies have been advertised for existing and new committees in May, June and actmhc.org.au July 2020. Not all vacancies advertised since May have been filled and these are being readvertised.

1. Adult Mental Health Services (AAMHS) Clinical Governance Committee
2. UCH Facility Wide Operational Management Meeting
3. AdMHU Steering Committee
4. Nurses and Midwives: Towards a Safer Culture the First Step Advisory Group (new)
5. The National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum is a nomination process only, with the Health Directorate choosing the consumer representative to put to the Forum for their appointment. Three nominees are currently with the Health Directorate for selection.

Appointments

Congratulations to the following representatives for their appointments to the following committees between May and August 2020:

Evalyn Smith

- Adult Acute Mental Health Services (AAMHS) Clinical Governance Committee
- Seclusion and Restraint Review Meeting

Bianca Rossetti

- Mental Health Month Organising Committee
- Mental Health Clinical Services Plan Steering Committee

Patricia Green

- MHJHADS Physical Health Steering Group
- Secure Mental Health Services (SMHS) Forensic Mental Health Services (FMHS) Seclusion, Restraint and other Restrictive Practice Meeting (Dhulwa) (re-appointed)
- MHJHADS Corporate Governance Committee
- Mental Health Act 2015 Implementation and Monitoring Committee

Maree Pavlouis

- Southside Community Step-Up Step Down Project Control Group
- ACT Safe Have Café Steering Committee

Policy Program

The Network facilitated numerous forums and consultations with consumers and members since our last newsletter. These forums and consultations, as well as the PRG, were well attended by members and feedback provided to the relevant stakeholders.

Policy Reference Group

A Policy Reference Group (PRG) meeting was held on 21 July 2020. This was the first PRG since April 2019 due to staff changes, PRG Member availability and the Network staff transitioning to work from home due to COVID-19. A draft Terms of Reference (TOR) was carried over from the September 2019 meeting Agenda, this meeting not being held due to quorum not being reached. The draft TOR and proposed changes were reviewed by the PRG attendees at the July 21 and accepted.

Members also provided comment to the Police, Ambulance, and Clinician Early Response (PACER) Factsheet. It was agreed that confirmation be sought by the Policy and Participation Coordinator from the PACER working group regarding the most up to date version of the Factsheet and a request for additional policies and information to enable feedback from the PRG and consumers. Since the request, the Secretariat of the PACER working group confirmed that a final draft will be available week commencing 11 August 2020 for further member feedback.

Another PRG meeting is scheduled to discuss the Network's policy direction for the next two years and to review a list of Canberra Health Services (CHS) policies. CHS provided the list of policies for review and the Network's feedback regarding priority areas of focus.

Policy forums and Consultations

The following e-Consultations and Policy forums were held to gain member feedback.

Discussion e-Forum Exploring the benefits of a community therapy garden

A discussion forum was hosted via Zoom by the Network for two Master of Occupation Therapy students undertaking a research project placement with Mental Health, Justice Health, Alcohol & Drug Services (MHJHADS). The e-forum enabled member feedback regarding the benefits of a community therapy garden via the forum and email for members who were not able to attend. The Network circulated the students' online survey to members.

e-Consultation Forum: A consumer's guide to health care complaints in the ACT

The Network hosted an e-Consultation on 23 July 2020 and the consultation was facilitated by the Health Care

Consumers' Association (HCCA) to gain input to the development of a consumers' health care complaint guide. This guide forms part of their broader health literacy project. HCCA outlines that the project aims to improve the health literacy skills, knowledge and confidence of consumers and support health and community services to build organisational health literacy.

e-Forum Proposal for a Peer-led Service within Mental Health, Justice Health, Alcohol and Drug Services MHJHADS

Submission: A Policy e-Forum was held on 27 July and well attended by Members. Connie Galati, Assistant Director of Allied Health, MHJHADS and Keith Mahar Peer Work Advisor, Peer-Led Reference Group attended for half an hour to answer consumer questions. Consumer feedback was provided in a Submission to the Director of MHJHADS on 30 July 2020.

e-Consultation Territory Wide Education and Training Framework

The Network hosted an e-Consultation to enable member feedback to a broad Territory Wide Education and Training Framework on Monday 10 August 2020. Narelle Aldridge of CHS is facilitating this consultation.

Safe Haven Cafes, Office of Mental Health and Wellbeing

Haven Cafes is one of the funded projects under the COVID-19 Mental Health Support Package. Ongoing consultation and input across the ACT community sector continues as well as opportunities for consumer feedback during the scoping phase.

The Network shared the recording of the Office of Mental Health and Wellbeing (OMHW) Safe Haven Café Webinar with members for feedback via email to the Network's Policy and Participation Coordinator. All feedback was provided to the OMHW.

The Network holds a membership role and a consumer member role on the ACT Safe Havens Steering Group Meeting. The purpose of this group is to guide all aspects of the project including consultation and co-design of the model(s). Two meetings of the Expert Panel Group meeting have been held and attended by the Network's Executive Officer and Policy and Participation Coordinator. Appointment of a consumer representative to this group has been finalised.

PACER – Police Ambulance Clinician Emergency Response

Paul Thompson continues as the consumer representative member on the Police, Ambulance and Clinician Early Response (PACER) Working Group. The Policy Reference Group reviewed the PACER

Factsheet and as outlined above, further information and confirmation of draft was requested.

An updated draft Factsheet is being finalised by the working group following the PACER Working Group meeting on Friday 24 July 2020. This draft will be provided to the Network for member feedback. PACER continues increased hours of operation in response to COVID19.

Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan (The Plan)

ACT Health have endorsed the Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan (The Plan). This finalises the plans' endorsement from all working group member organisations. The Easy English version of The Plan is being reviewed by two consumers.

In preparation for the launch of the Plan, a final working group meeting was held week commencing 17 August. The Plan was launched on Monday 31 August at 12:30pm. Attendee capacity included only five representatives from each member organisation of the Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan Working Group due to physical distancing spacing at the venue. The launch was also live streamed via social media and YouTube.

See left of this page for details about the launch.

Clare Holland House Focus Group

A Focus Group was convened by Clare Holland House to gain consumer and community input to their redevelopment and growth. Bianca Rosetti attended the focus group on behalf of the Network on 24/7/2020.

Mental Health Month 2020 Advisory Committee meeting

Mental Health Month Reimbursement Grants have been reviewed and successful applicants notified. Meetings following this have focussed on the launch of Mental Health Month and the Awards ceremony,

This year's Launch will be an online event in the form of a video to highlight community organisations within the ACT. Five organisations have been targeted to be involved in management, staff and consumers or carer interviews.

The Awards Ceremony is being planned with consideration of COVID-19 restrictions. The Consumer and Carer Awards have been reintroduced to this year's Awards and the 2019 theme '*Conversation and Connection*' is continuing in 2020 as particularly relevant due to the impact of COVID19 physical distancing requirements, isolation and reduced social interaction.

Safe Haven Cafés Development

In May 2020, the ACT Government announced a \$4.5 million mental health stimulus package to support mental health services and implement new programs in response to the summer bushfires and the current COVID-19 pandemic. You can read more about this stimulus package via the following link [https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open_government/inform/act_government_media_releases/rattenbury/2020/\\$4.5-million-covid-19-mental-health-support-package-to-help-canberrans](https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open_government/inform/act_government_media_releases/rattenbury/2020/$4.5-million-covid-19-mental-health-support-package-to-help-canberrans)

As part of this, the ACT Government has committed \$342, 000 to deliver a pilot program of two Safe Haven Cafés (Cafes) here in the ACT. A Safe Haven Café is a non-clinical, safe space that people can go to if they are experiencing personal difficulties, mental health concerns, loneliness or simply seeking social connection and support. It offers an alternative for people who might otherwise present to the emergency department and mental health crisis services when no other options are available.

Safe Haven Cafes currently operate at St Vincent's Hospital in Melbourne and in Queensland, with the Western Australian government currently in development phase for their own Safe Haven Café.

Consultations are currently only being held online and the Network endeavours to get notification of these consultations to our members. Please contact the Network on (02) 6230 5796 if you would like to receive notifications about events like this by email.

A webinar was held in July 2020 and can still be accessed via <https://health.act.gov.au/about-our-health-system/office-mental-health-and-wellbeing/resources> for your information.

Launch: ACT Mental Health & Suicide Prevention Plan

The Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan (ACT Plan) was created to address the mental health needs of the community in the ACT in alignment with the 5th National Mental Health Plan.

The ACT Plan is a five-year plan that identifies local mental health and suicide prevention programs and service planning priorities and actions. The ACT Plan is informed by the priorities of the Fifth National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan and speaks to the local context and needs of the ACT region.

The ACT Plan was co-created with peak bodies including ACT Mental Health Consumer Network, Mental Health Carers Voice, Mental Health Community Coalition, The Canberra Health Services, Office of Mental Health and Wellbeing and The Mental Health Policy Unit in conjunction with consultation from the ACT community.

This Plan was officially launched on Monday 31 August, with ACT Minister for Mental Health, Shane Rattenbury launching the Joint Regional ACT Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan. Due to COVID-19, attendance at the launch was limited to representatives from key stakeholders. However, Capital Health Network made this launch available for live streaming via YouTube and other social media outlets.

Click on the following link to read more about the Plan and to watch the launch.

<https://www.chnact.org.au/about-us/publications/other/>



ACTMHCN Consumer Representative, Terri Warner, speaking at the launch



CELEBRATING 30 YEARS
BALANCING THE SYSTEM
TheMHS Perth Conference
9 - 12 February 2021



Important Announcement TheMHS Perth Conference Goes Virtual

It has never been more important for our mental health community to connect, learn and grow.

While the challenges of COVID-19 now preclude TheMHS from having a face-to-face event in Perth, they've had such a fantastic response to their Call for Abstracts that they are taking the event online.

All the things you love about TheMHS conferences will still be there – outstanding speakers, engaging content, creative sessions and yes, even networking!

We are determined to bring you the very best in a virtual conference experience and to deliver easily digestible 'blocks' of content. That means the conference will now be accessible to the many of you affected by travel restrictions.

We believe this is the safest, most responsible and inclusive way to bring you an inspiring TheMHS Perth Conference 2021. So, if you haven't already, put 9-12 February 2021 in your diary.



MENTAL HEALTH MONTH ACT

Each year 1 in 5 Australians experience a mental health issue.

Recent studies suggest this may increase to one quarter of Australians under the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic. This could be you, a loved one, a family member, a friend, a colleague, a neighbour.

People struggling with mental health issues often find themselves isolated, lonely and left to cope on their own.

Mental Health Month is a yearly reminder of the responsibility we all share to reach out and support those in the community who suffer in silence.

The 2019 Mental Health Month theme for the ACT was 'Conversations and Connection', which is being carried over to 2020, as it coincides with the isolating practices Australians have had to do because of COVID-19.

Key Dates

Due to COVID-19 the official events for Mental Health Month in Canberra will be held virtually via Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/MentalHealthMonthACT/>)

2020 Launch Event

Saturday October 10, 10am online via Facebook

2020 Mental Health Month Awards

Thursday 29 October, 3:30pm online via Facebook

A full list of events can be found on the Mental Health Month website (www.mentalhealthmonthact.org/calendar)

Mental Health Month
AWARDS
2020

Do you know someone who is doing something great in the area of mental health and wellbeing in the ACT? Nominate them for a 2020 Mental Health Month Award!

The Mental Health Month Awards recognise exceptional people, organisations, businesses and initiatives working to promote and improve the understanding, awareness, service provision, and general mental health and wellbeing of the Canberra community.

Award Categories

1. Mentally healthy community
2. Enhancing the lives of individuals, families and carers
3. Innovated person-centred valued supports
4. Research Evaluation
5. Lived Experience Ally Recognition Award (LEARA) (ACTMHCN)
6. David Perrin Award (ACTMHCN)
7. Michael Firestone Memorial Scholarship (ACTMHCN)
8. Rufus Scholarship (private donor via ACTMHCN)
9. MHCC ACT Training

Nominations close 20 September 2020

A copy of the nomination form and award information has been included as an insert with this edition of Network News or you can nominate online by visiting <https://www.mentalhealthmonthact.org/awardnomination> and don't forget to get your own nominations in!

Any inquiries can be made to communications@mhccact.org.au or call 6247 7756.

STRIKE UP SOME FUN FOR MENTAL HEALTH!

***THURSDAY 22 OCTOBER, 12PM - 2PM,
KINGPIN BOWLING, CANBERRA CENTRE***

This year for Mental Health Month, the Network is organising a bowling event for consumers. As we are all aware, 2020 has been a challenging and isolating year for many people – more so for mental health consumers, due to COVID-19. It is hoped that this event will help people living with mental illness and those experiencing poor mental health for perhaps the first time, to shrug off the previous 6 months, begin re-engaging with the world and have a bit of fun!



While there are currently no active COVID-19 cases in the ACT at the time of print, this event will be COVID safe within the current guidelines. This will mean maintaining the social distancing and hygiene management requirements.

In the event that the COVID-19 situation changes for the worse in Canberra and this event is deemed too risky to people's health or restrictions are rolled back, the bowling event will be postponed to a safer date and a contingency event will be held online and on the same date and time as originally scheduled.

This event will see participants receive a paint your own craft kit. Participants will all gather together online via Zoom and decorate their items. All materials will be supplied prior to the event.

There are limited places available and RSVP's are required. A waiting list will be available.

If you are unable to attend after registering please advise the Network as soon as possible.

If you would like to attend our bowling event, please call us on 02 6230 5796 or email to actmhcncn@actmhcncn.org.au

Please include contact details in your RSVP and also indicate whether you are interested in participating in the craft event. Additionally if participants are from the same household, please advise us of this.



IMPORTANT DETAILS

So you can make an informed decision about participating in this event, below are some details for your consideration:

- Participants are required to wear footwear suitable to for a bowling alley as shoe hire will not be available. Footwear such sneakers are ideal.
- Participants are encouraged to wear a face mask. We will have face masks at hand should participants require one.
- Temperature checks will be conducted prior to entry. Where a temperature is above 37.5 degrees Celsius, entry will be denied.
- The Network encourages anyone intending to participate to be mindful of their health leading up to the event, particularly if they intend to travel to areas where there are active cases and/or experience hay fever. If you do have concerns about your health, please consult your GP prior to this event.
- Leading up to this event, registered participants will be contacted to conduct a health check.
- Carers and support persons are welcome to attend and will count towards the maximum number of participants.



Attendees who do not register will not be admitted.

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

Hayfever and COVID-19

As we are now into Spring, it is important to be aware that incidents of people experiencing hay fever will be on the rise.

Hay fever is triggered by pollen from grass, plants and trees. Asthmatic conditions can also be triggered from these pollens.

Normally hay fever would not be considered a major health issue by many and easily addressed. However, now with COVID-19 in existence, symptoms of hay fever can be confused with those of COVID-19.

Symptoms of hay fever include:

- runny, itchy, blocked nose
- sneezing
- irritable, itchy, watery and red eyes
- itchy ears, throat and roof of the mouth

Symptoms of asthma:

- [feeling breathless](#) (you may gasp for breath)
- a tight chest, like a band tightening around it
- wheezing, a whistling sound when you breathe
- [coughing](#), particularly at night and early morning

The main symptoms of COVID-19 are **fever, cough, sore throat and shortness of breath**. Less common symptoms are loss of smell, loss of taste, runny nose, muscle pain, joint pain, diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting and loss of appetite.

Having a fever is the defining symptom between these conditions.

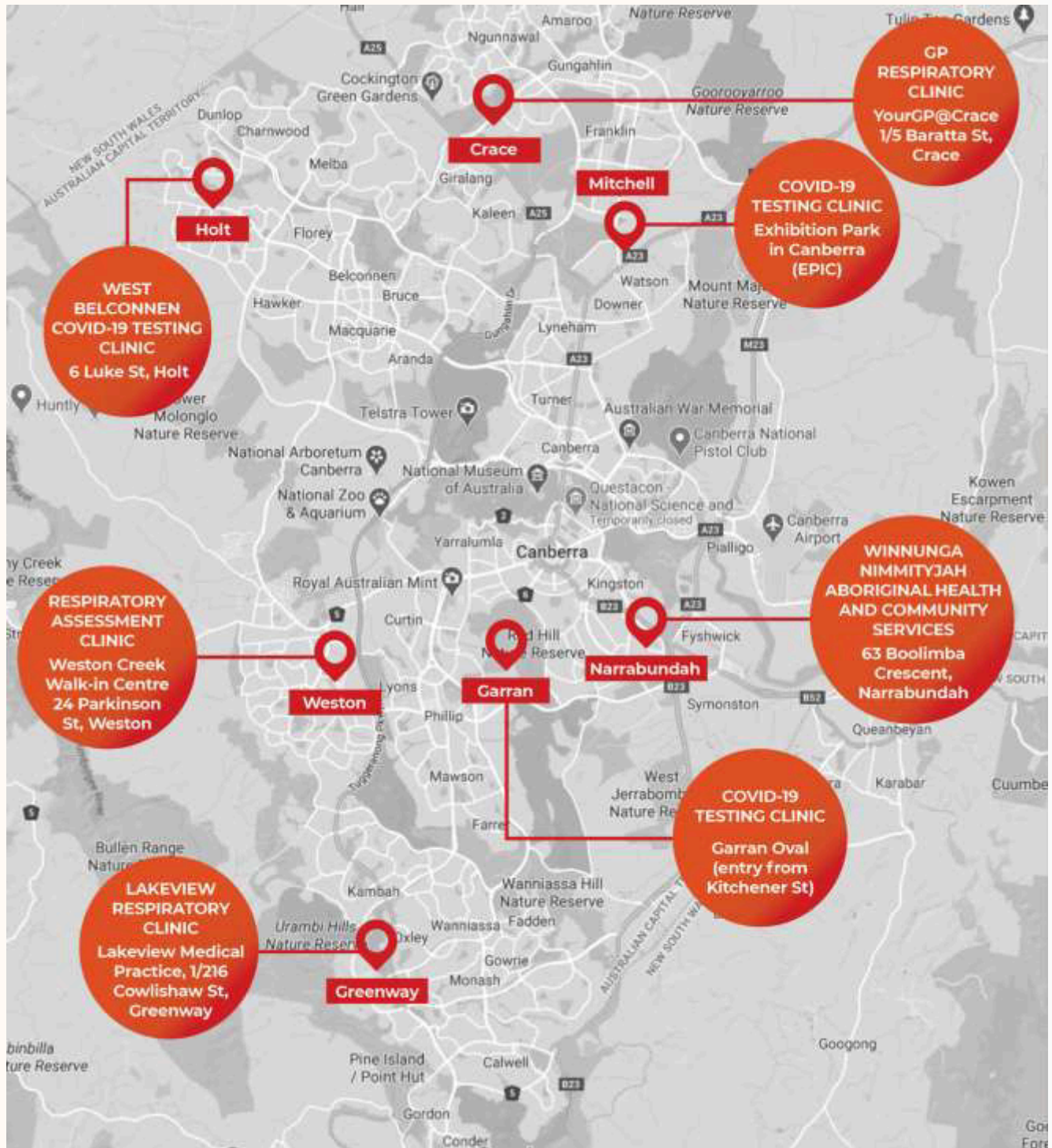
If you feel concerned about any symptoms you are experiencing, please contact your GP to discuss your symptoms and determine if you need to present for a COVID-19 test.

You can also check your symptoms online using the [HealthDirect symptom checker](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/symptom-checker/tool?symptom=GNRC) (<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/symptom-checker/tool?symptom=GNRC>)



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)



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. As the ACT Government has announced a Public Health Emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Network has closed face-to-face Drop-In for the foreseeable future.

Although physically closed, the Network holds online Drop-In for consumers. See page 9 for details.

We will notify members through our communications when we are able to recommence this face-to-face operation.



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

**CURRENTLY CLOSED
DUE TO COVID-19**



(02) 6230 5796



www.actmhcn.org.au



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



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