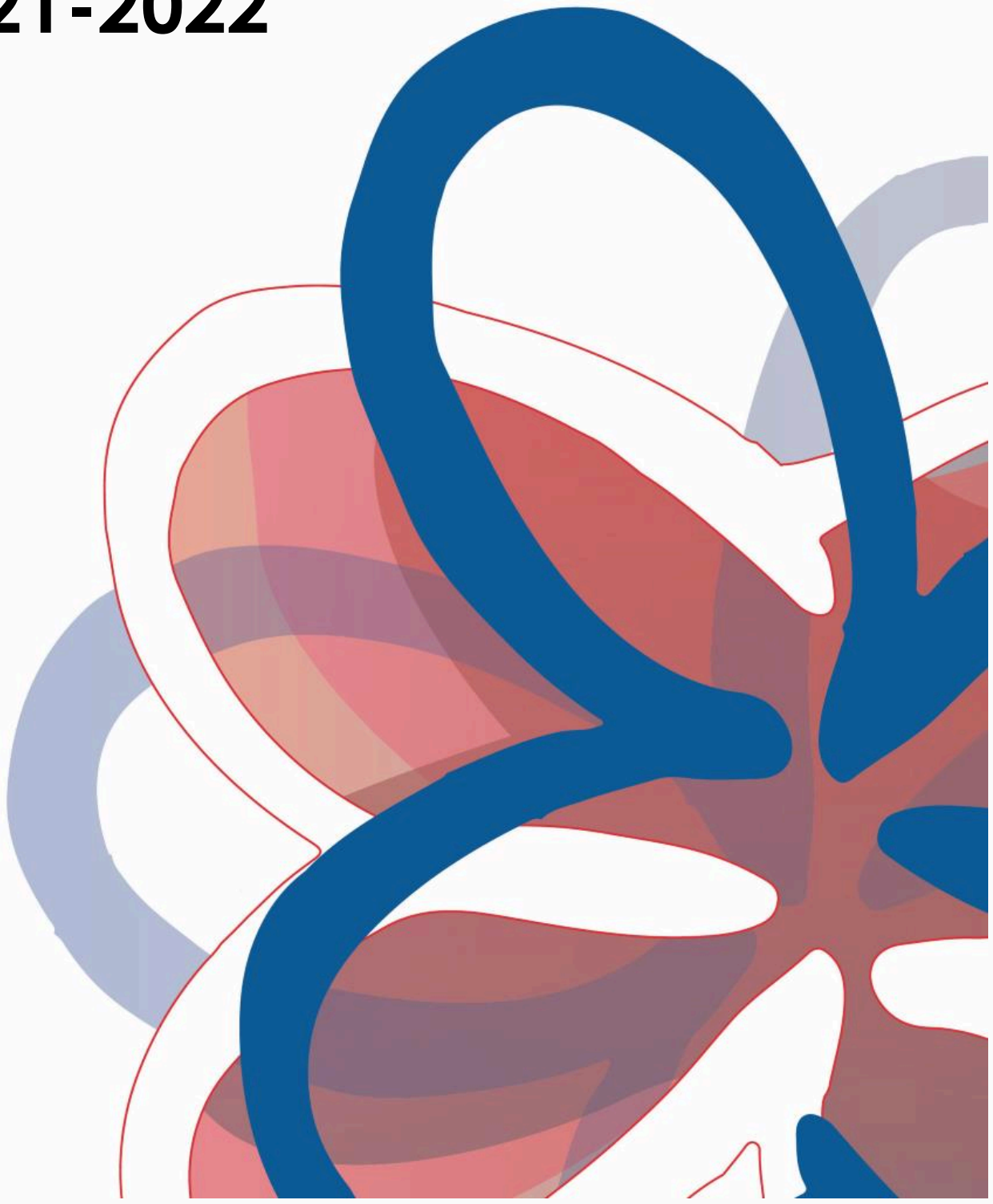




ACT  
Mental Health  
Consumer Network

# Annual Report

## 2021-2022



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## VISION

A community of connected voices achieving positive change.

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

To advocate all means to improve and enhance services, systems and practices for consumers in the ACT by

- ◆ discovering and promoting the collective voice;
- ◆ facilitating and supporting consumer participation at all levels of decision-making; and
- ◆ ensuring a commitment to consumer driven recovery.

## VALUES

- ◆ Empowerment
- ◆ Respect
- ◆ Courage
- ◆ Social justice
- ◆ Meaningful inclusion

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our guiding principles reflect our values of empowerment, respect, courage, social justice and meaningful inclusion. They also reflect what our Board, members and staff expect of each other in their work together and how we work with others in representative, advocacy and collaborative capacities.

**V**alue of lived experience

**O**pen dialogue and advocacy

**I**ncreased self-awareness

**C**onsumer-driven recovery

**E**nsure social justice and human rights are upheld

**S**ense of community

## **BOARD 2021-22**

<b>Bianca Rossetti</b>	Chair
<b>Lachlan Atyeo</b>	Deputy Chair
<b>Paul Thompson</b>	Treasurer
<b>Kathryn Dwan</b>	Secretary
<b>Rose Beard</b>	Ordinary Member
<b>Pema Choden</b>	Ordinary Member (until 06 May 2022)
<b>Phillip Green</b>	Ordinary Member
<b>Maree Pavloudis</b>	Ordinary Member
<b>Lucas Spensberger</b>	Ordinary Member
<b>Thi-Nha Tran</b>	Ordinary Member

## **WORKERS**

<b>Dalane Drexler</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>Jennifer Nixon</b>	Program Manager Policy and Participation Coordinator (from 28 October 2021) CRP Coordinator (until 27 October 2021)
<b>Isobel Shearman</b>	Policy and Participation Coordinator (until 28 October 2021)
<b>Petra Kallay</b>	Community Education Coordinator
<b>Jennifer Adams</b>	CRP Coordinator (28 October 2021-28 March 2022, retired) Education Officer (Peer Identified) (until 27 October 2021)
<b>Eva Damarjati</b>	CRP Coordinator (from 1 April 2022)
<b>Terri Warner</b>	Peer Education Officer (temp) (from November 2021)
<b>Valan Phoenix</b>	Administration Coordinator
<b>Paul Thompson</b>	Drop-In Volunteer (temp)

## **PEER CO-FACILITATORS**

<b>Bianca Rossetti</b>	<b>Maree Pavloudis</b>
<b>Jenny Adams</b>	<b>Thi Nha Tran</b>
<b>Terri Warner</b>	

## CHAIR'S REPORT

In my position as chair I often wear many labels or have many labels put on me. The most important and collective of these is that I am a person with Living Experience of mental health. I have the privilege of hearing a community that focus on kindness, connection and respect as individuals and even more so as a group. Together we focus on the networks vision of '*a community of connected voices achieving positive change.*'

I would like to thank Dalane and the staff for their work this year. It has been challenging with the staff changes, roles and responsibility changes and welcoming new staff. Together they have communicated the needs of consumers and continue to work on the pressures of being the peak organisation for mental health consumers in the ACT.

The upcoming 2022-23 budget acknowledges the increase in demand for mental health services, however, the focus is more on acute and clinical care. The budget needs to cater for the growing gaps in services and the need for systemic changes in the mental health sector. More funding needs to focus on supporting struggling Canberrans access supports whilst the cost of living skyrockets. A comprehensive system of integrated care for Canberrans living with mental health conditions needs to be addressed.

I would like to thank all the members of the Network for your contributions, perspectives and insights into the mental health sector and the great work of the Board that continues to manage the governance of the organisation and implement changes to strengthen the community. We continue to focus on the vision, principles and strategic plan to make Canberra an inclusive community for all.

**Bianca Rossetti**

Chair

## TREASURER'S REPORT

The auditor's report, indicating the Network's financial position for the 2021-22 financial year, is located at the rear of this report.

The Network finished the year with an overall surplus of \$3,045, which is well below the balance of the previous year. This is mainly because the Network returned to a more "normal" financial year as we begin to move out of the most serious parts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Members' funds at the end of the period totalled \$158,470, which is slightly lower than last year.

The Board and Auditor are in accord that the Network retains sufficient funds to meet future contingencies.

The Network is now back to paying the regular amount of rent, after the ACT Government returned from a rent "holiday" over the COVID-19 period. Publicity, resources and website costs are much higher this year, with a new website being constructed to minimise online threats, create more opportunities for consumers to participate, and better explain what we do to the public.

This latter strategic move is an important measure because previously office staff were adversely impacted by phone callers who were upset by a lack of understanding that the Network is a peak body and not a service provider.

We thank our primary funding body, ACT Health through the Mental Health Policy Unit, as well as the National Disability Insurance Agency and other providers and community partners for their continued support of our valuable work for consumers and the broader community.

**Paul Thompson**  
Treasurer

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

We've had a very busy and productive year, achieving some goals and progressing others. The ongoing impacts of COVID-19 continued to present both challenges and opportunities for consumers, the Network and the broader community.

Our team of dedicated paid and voluntary workers pulled together to ensure the consumer voice continued to be heard and valued by government and the community, despite challenges stemming from the review of the very system through which most Consumer Representative achievements are reached.

Among other accomplishments of the year, mentioned throughout this annual report, we completed a much needed review of our Constitution. Although our existing Constitution was excellent and needed little adjustment, the adjustments that were made were important ones. In particular, as we have all found over the past couple of years, there was a need to formally allow the use of digital resources in the management and holding of general meetings. We thank the many members who engaged in this process to bring the Network into the technological age—as they say.

The staffing team and I are immensely grateful to our Board for their ongoing support and assistance throughout the year. Bianca Rossetti, as Chair, has led a team of dedicated members through the myriad of hurdles we all faced to ensure the Network reached the end of the year in good shape.

Likewise, we could not achieve all we do without the hard work and dedication of our Consumer Representative team. Our Consumer Reps stayed strong and engaged, despite the challenges that continue to cause issues in their tiresome work for consumers. Their commitment to advocating for systemic change for the benefit of all people who live or access services in the ACT is strongly evidenced by their strong will and determination in very trying circumstances.

We continue to be blessed with an exceptional staffing team, although we did need to say a couple of farewells this year. October saw Isobel Shearman leave her role with us, however, as she moved into a collegiate role in government, we were pleased to be able to maintain a strong working relationship with her. Then, in March, we said vale to Jenny Adams who decided to take her well earned retirement from the paid workforce. Jenny remains dedicated to the consumer movement, and we hope we'll soon see her return to her previous volunteer roles.

Thank you all for your dedication and service to the Network and to consumers more broadly.

**Dalane Drexler**  
Chief Executive Officer





# Australian Service Excellence Standards

## ACT Mental Health Consumer Network Inc

*achieved*

## Accreditation Certificate Level

A handwritten signature in brown ink that reads "Fiona Curnow".

**Fiona Curnow**

*Director*

*Community Services*

*Department of Human Services*

*Period of Accreditation*

*5 November 2019 – 5 November 2022*





## COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAM REPORT

The Network's Community Education Program offers free training to members and the community on self-advocacy, consumer representation and mental health topics.

At the Network we believe that the lived experience of our members can make a valuable contribution to our core activities and training, so we are committed to creating opportunities for members to be involved in the process of selection, design, development and delivery of our training and workshops.

In addition to providing in-house training during 2021-2022, to best support our members' training needs, CRP Masterclasses included guest speakers and external training through Mental Illness Education ACT (MIEACT), supporting our Consumer Representatives to develop skills and understanding of the principles of DoNoHarm in relation to their volunteer work.

In 2021-2022 we continued to offer training via Zoom. The flexibility of this approach meant that we could use more multi-media options, and people were able to participate in training from home.

### Current Workshop Curriculum

***Self-Advocacy (consisting of 5 modules):*** this training supports participants to identify how effective they can be as a self-advocate and explore how they can develop self-advocacy skills.

***Consumer Representation Training (consisting of 5 modules):*** this training supports mental health consumers to become informed and confident Consumer Representatives, equipping them with the skills to represent themselves and other consumers to government and the broader community.

***The CRP Masterclasses (bi-monthly workshops on Consumer Representation topics):*** this training provides ongoing support and further skills development for the Network's Consumer Representatives.

***Peer Co-Facilitator Training (consisting of 5 modules, for eligible members):*** this training provides eligible members the skills and opportunity to use their expertise of lived experience as co-facilitators in the Network's training programs.

***Mentoring Consumer Reps Training (consisting of 4 modules, for eligible experienced Consumer Reps):*** this training supports experienced Consumer Representatives to use personal experiences and knowledge effectively to mentor and assist new Consumer Representatives

## Training Events in 2021-2022

The following workshops were facilitated (using Zoom) during this period:

- ◆ July 2021: Peer Co-facilitator Training
- ◆ August 2021: CRP Masterclass - Committee Family Tree
- ◆ August 2021: Self-Advocacy Training
- ◆ September 2021: Consumer Representation Training
- ◆ October 2021: CRP Masterclass – Committees Problem Solving ('Stop this meeting – I want to get off!')
- ◆ October 2021: Mentoring Consumer Reps Training
- ◆ February 2022: Peer Co-facilitator Training
- ◆ April 2022: CRP Masterclass: Do No Harm (MIEACT - external provider)
- ◆ April 2022: Self-Advocacy Training
- ◆ May 2022: Consumer Representation Training

## Co-Facilitators

Although the Network has a number of trained Co-facilitators who have completed our Co-facilitation Training, due to difficult circumstances, not all have been able to be active in that role during 2021-22. We hope that we might have the opportunity to facilitate together again sometime in the future!

### Eligible Co-Facilitators *\*Active during 2021-2022*

Jenny Adams*	Julia Bocking
Chris Corcoran	Peter Dwyer
Ruth Dunicliff-Hagan	Matthew Martin
Liz Moran	Maree Pavloudis*
Bianca Rossetti*	Evalyn Smith
Thi Nha Tran*	Terri Warner*

### **Petra Kallay**

Community Education Coordinator

## PEER EDUCATION REPORT

Jenny Adams, the designer of *My Rights, My Decisions (MRMD)*, retired in March 2022. The Network thanks Jenny for all her work on this hugely important work for consumers, and we wish her all the very best in the future. Long-time Consumer Representative, training facilitator and previous Chair of the Network board, Terri Warner, took on the role of delivering this program in November 2021.

To add to last year's plain language version of the *MRMD* Form Kit, this financial year the Network was able to transcribe the *MRMD* information sheet into six (6) of the most commonly spoken languages in the ACT, other than English – Chinese (simplified and traditional), Vietnamese, Arabic, Hindi and Punjabi.

*MRMD* workshops are regularly held for consumers (open to all people with lived experience of mental illness) to help them learn about their rights under the *Mental Health Act 2015 (ACT)* and to complete the necessary paperwork to appoint a Nominated Person or set up an Advance Agreement or Advance Consent Direction. In addition, we also deliver training for people who are involved with caring and treating consumers. This supports workers to assist consumers to complete their *MRMD* documents, as well as supporting them to implement these instruments when consumers become unwell. This financial year, seven sessions were run for workers: Civic and Gungahlin Community Mental Health Teams; Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services Clinical Team Managers; Canberra Health Services Psychiatric Registrars; the Older Persons Mental Health Unit; and the Woden Community Service Mental Health and Wellbeing Learning Program.

As a result of the session delivered for Woden Community Services, a *MRMD* consumer session is now scheduled to be delivered every two weeks at the Southside Step Up Step Down (SUSD) House in Garran. The House is the first two weeks of the SUSD program, so each session will be delivered to a different group as the previous group will have progressed to outreach support.

As well as the SUSD sessions, consumer sessions have been run in ACT Libraries in Woden and Gungahlin for consumers who find coming into Civic difficult. If you are interested in completing a *My Rights My Decisions* workshop, please email [peer.education@actmhc.org.au](mailto:peer.education@actmhc.org.au).

**Terri Warner**  
Peer Education Officer

## POLICY AND PROJECTS PROGRAM REPORT

The Network has been busy providing mental health consumer systemic advocacy in a range of ways, including responding to Canberra Health Services' policy and procedure update and review requests, participating in ACT Government inquiries, providing the consumer voice in the development of new mental health agencies, inpatient buildings and units as well as ongoing work with the other ACT peak organisations.

Change has been the key in 2021-22, with Isobel Shearman leaving the Network in November 2021 and Jen Nixon taking on the Policy and Participation Coordinator role along with her adjunct Program Manager responsibilities. As the COVID-19 pandemic continued through most of this financial year, members were provided the opportunity to attend policy forums and consultations in person as well as online, referred to as 'hybrid mode'. This model has opened the door for more consumers to participate in important policy discussions, not only continuing but increasing the member voice in responses to government and other organisations across the full 2021-2022 financial year.

Consultations were held, allowing government and non-government officers to obtain the consumer voice first hand, including the following topics:

- ◆ Canberra Health Services Draft Territory-Wide Health Services Plan
- ◆ Canberra Health Services Procedure Community Duress Device
- ◆ ACT Health Directorate National Mutual Recognition Project
- ◆ Older Persons Mental Health Community Team Model of Care

The Network submitted many reports and submissions based on the consumer voice attained either through Forums or written feedback. These submissions include the following, with majority available on the Network's website:

- ◆ Dhulwa Mental Health Unit Searching Policy and Procedure
- ◆ Canberra Health Services Occupational Violence Procedure and Policy
- ◆ Nurses and Midwives Towards a Safer Culture (NM TASC) Managers Mutual Behaviour Expectations for patients, consumers, carers, visitors, healthcare staff, students, and volunteers
- ◆ Seclusion of Persons with Mental Illness or Mental Disorder Detained under the Mental Health Act 2015 procedure
- ◆ Canberra Health Services Draft Animal Guideline
- ◆ Canberra Health Services Ligature Use Response and Ligature Risk Management Procedure
- ◆ Canberra Health Services Restraint of a Person Detained under the Mental Health Act 2015

- ◆ Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety Inquiry into Community Corrections

In addition, the Network participated in forums, meetings and events to ensure the consumer voice is included, such as in the development of reports and design of services. In 2020-21 this included participating in:

- ◆ Mental Health Short Stay Unit Dreaming Workshop, along with 3 consumers
- ◆ Drafting of the Health Care Consumers Associations “Take Action! Mental Health Complaints and Feedback in the ACT” guide
- ◆ Office of Mental Health and Wellbeing workings towards “A Framework for Change: ACT Mental Health Workforce Strategy”.
- ◆ Chief Psychiatrist workings towards the review of the Charter of Rights for mental health consumers
- ◆ Mental Health Community Coalition of the ACT’s Outcomes Measurement Project
- ◆ Safe Haven Café Steering Committee
- ◆ Head to Health Steering Committee
- ◆ Southside Step Up/Step Down Governance Committee
- ◆ Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing Peaks/NGO Committee
- ◆ Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol & Drugs Division Governance Committee
- ◆ Mental Health Community Coalition of the ACT Leadership Group
- ◆ Canberra Health Services COVID-19 Plan Update meeting for Executive Officers and Managers of Peaks
- ◆ ACT Commissioning Process

On behalf of the Network, thank you to all the members and consumers who have contributed their invaluable consumer voice and lived experience to the Network’s systemic advocacy this financial year. We are a consumer-led peak body and share the voice of mental health consumers in the ACT, and without your participation we would not be able to carry out this important role.

**Jennifer Nixon**

Policy and Participation Coordinator | Program Manager



## CONSUMER REPRESENTATIVE PROGRAM REPORT

In the past year, the Consumer Representative Program has seen many changes such as Mental Health, Justice Health, Alcohol and Drugs Division (MHJHADS) committees disbanded, the introduction of an informal voluntary catch up for Consumer Representatives, and staff changes in the Consumer Representative Program (CRP) Officer role.

The 2021-2022 year saw several new consumer representative opportunities including the Your Experience of Service (YES) Survey Project Reference Group, Mental Health Supported Accommodation Model of Care Steering Committee, and the Mental Health Short Stay Unit Proof of Concept User Group.

The Network introduced an informal voluntary catch up on the alternate month to the Consumer Rep Forum. These meetings are designed for Consumer Representatives to support each other, talk about issues impacting their role, share experiences and seek advice from staff if they wish to do so in a confidential environment.

There were a number of staffing changes within the CRP role, with Jenny Adams stepping into this role in December 2021, then Eva Damarjati moving into this role in April 2022 when Jenny took her well earned retirement. Eva is grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the CRP, the Network and to learn more about the ACT Mental Health sector and looks forward to meeting members over the coming year.

Jane Grace retired from her position as the ACT Consumer Representative on the National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum on 05 April 2022. We all thank Jane for her commitment and hard work she dedicated to this important role. Paul Thompson was appointed to this role for four years commencing 20 June 2022.

During the past year, MHJHADS has been undertaking a governance review. This includes significant changes such as reducing the number of committees and reducing the number of attendees on remaining committees. Committees that disbanded include but are not limited to the Deteriorating Mental Health State Working Group, Partnering with Consumers Committee and the Policy, Procedure and Guidelines Development and Review Policy Group.

This has had significant impacts on the CRP and has the potential to severely reduce Consumer Representative opportunities. As the governance review continues, the Network made the difficult decision to suspend our two year committee appointment reviews unless absolutely necessary and recruitment unless guaranteed to remain after the review.

Consumer Representatives have been engaged in their committees and in the CRP Forum. In the Forums, Consumer Representatives robustly discussed issues including reimbursement, the absence and depletion of the consumer voice and the disbanding of committees. Petra facilitated CRP Masterclasses at CRP Forums, covering topics such as committee meetings and health literacy. Everyone has found these classes very informative.

Throughout the year, the importance of Consumer Representative voices being heard was highlighted. In particular, there is greater need to ensure Consumer Representatives are respected in their roles, and that their role is recognised and valued. A heartfelt thank you to



all active Consumer Representatives for their ongoing systemic efforts and their willingness to continue to engage and participate eagerly, with positivity and understanding.

There were 12 active Consumer Representatives in 2021-22:

Rose Beard	Julia Bocking
Elise Crouch	Ruth Dunnicliff-Hagan
Jane Grace	Patricia Green
Maree Pavloudis	Bianca Rossetti
Erin Stewart	Paul Thompson
Thi Nha Tran	Terri Warner

These Consumer Representatives represented the mental health consumer voice on 39 committees over the reporting period, covering a wide range of issues such as policy development and governance, major project development and management with the Canberra Hospital Expansion Project and ACT Safe Haven Cafes.

If this sounds like something you might be interested in, contact the Network and we will take you through the free training requirements and help get you started.

## **2021-22 COMMITTEES**

- ◆ Adult Acute Mental Health Services (AAMHS) Governance Committee Meeting
- ◆ ACT Consumer and Carer Research Unit Advisory Group (ACACIA)
- ◆ ACT Safe Haven Café Steering Group
- ◆ Canberra Hospital Expansion Project (CHEP)
- ◆ CHEP Consumer Reference Group
- ◆ CHEP Behavioural Management Unit Working Group
- ◆ Capital Health Network Community Advisory Council
- ◆ Centenary Hospital for Women and Children (CHWC) Expansion Project Control Group
- ◆ CHWC Expansion Project—Adolescent Mental Health Unit Working Group
- ◆ Consumer Handouts Committee
- ◆ Co-Creating Safe Spaces Committee
- ◆ Deteriorating Mental Health State Working Group
- ◆ Head to Health Sub-committee

- ◆ Health Care Consumers Association Accessibility & Design Consumer Reference Group
- ◆ Mental Health Act 2015 Implementation, Evaluation and Monitoring Committee
- ◆ Mental Health Act 2015 Oversight Committee
- ◆ Mental Health Consultation Liaison Committee
- ◆ Mental Health Month ACT Advisory Committee 2022
- ◆ Mental Health Services Plan Steering Committee
- ◆ Mental Health Short Stay Unit (MHSSU) Proof of Concept User Group
- ◆ Mental Health Supported Accommodation Model of Care Steering Committee
- ◆ MHJHADS Digital Health Record Consumer Experience Committee
- ◆ MHJHADS Digital Health Record Program Advisory Committee
- ◆ MHJHADS Governance Committee
- ◆ MHJHADS Mortality and Morbidity Committee
- ◆ MHJHADS Physical Health Committee
- ◆ MHJHADS Policy, Procedure and Guideline Development and Review Committee
- ◆ MHJHADS Restraint, Seclusion, Restrictive Practices Review Committee
- ◆ National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum
- ◆ Occupational Violence Prevention and Management Committee
- ◆ Organisation Wide Mental Health Working Group
- ◆ Police, Ambulance, and Clinician Early Response (PACER) Community Working Group
- ◆ Partnering with Consumers Committee
- ◆ Recognising and Responding to Acute Deterioration Working Group
- ◆ Southside Community Step-Up Step-Down Governance Committee
- ◆ Territory Wide Mental Health Services Governance Committee
- ◆ The Way Back Support Services Governance Group
- ◆ University of Canberra Hospital Facility Wide Operational Working Group
- ◆ Wellways and ACT Health Governance Committee

**Eva Damarjati**  
CRP Officer

## NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMER AND CARER FORUM REPORT

The activities of the National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum (NMHCCF) for the 2021-2022 financial year were conducted via zoom due to the COVID - 19 Pandemic. Early in the year the NMHCCF engaged in working groups in which discussion occurred to formulate the best plans moving forward to support members with communicating with each other. This year also saw consultation and updating to the NMHCCF Workplan.

There were several Working Groups on which members of the Forum participated. These included:-

- ◆ Marketing and Communications—This group focuses on communications and marketing functions of the Forum.
- ◆ Forum Member Engagement and Operating Guidelines—This group is focused on member engagement and reviewing/updating the Operating Guidelines.
- ◆ Consumer and Carer Inclusion—This group is responsible for the creation of publications.
- ◆ Publications Review Group—This group is responsible for the review and updating of current publications.
- ◆ Co-Design Working Group—This group is responsible for planning the consultation process and developing a lead combined national lived experience voice.

I participated in the Marketing and Communications (MARCOMMS) group. The main aim of the group over the period was to develop and launch a new NMHCCF website.

The NMHCCF lodged some significant submissions over the year, including:

- ◆ Submission to Attorney-General's Department regarding the review of confidentiality protections in the *Royal Commissions Act 1902*, 24 January 2022;
- ◆ Submission to the Department of Social Services regarding the NDIS Act Review, 07 October 2021;
- ◆ Submission to the National Disability Insurance Agency Draft Consultation Paper: Support for Decision Making Consultation, 30 September 2021;
- ◆ Submission To ACIL Allen on the Draft National Mental Health Workforce Strategy, 30 September 2021.

I resigned as a Consumer Representative on 5 April 2022.

**Jane Grace**

Consumer Representative

## **DROP-IN REPORT**

The overall objective of the Drop-In program is to reduce social isolation, which has been particularly important during COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions.

As reported in the 2020-21 Annual Report, the Drop-In service migrated to an online platform using Zoom at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and was used primarily for social contact purposes during lockdowns and when health restrictions were in place. The use of Zoom continued to be included at Drop-In events as we opened up to in-person attendance which saw a greater attendance rate from members. It was unfortunate timing that as in-person attendance to Drop-In events was becoming more available, the ACT went into a two-month lockdown period.

Our grant under the National Disability Insurance Scheme Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) program continued to enhance the Drop-In service. This funding enabled the Network to have a dedicated staff member to operate Drop-In to assist consumers who attended to access information and support their self-advocacy needs. Additionally, they organised events for consumers where they could and provided information that is useful and interesting to them. Paul Thompson continued to fill this position as Allegra Senior who was originally employed as the Drop-In Officer was unable to continue in the role due to ongoing illness. The Network wishes to thank Allegra for her dedication to the role.

The Drop-in program always welcomes participants' and Network members' feedback to contribute ideas for future events, including training type activities, which are the focus of the funding agreement.

Special Drop-In events that were held to the end of June included:

- ◆ Yvette Berry MLA (Minister for Housing and Suburban Development and Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) - held online
- ◆ Rebecca Vassarotti (Minister for Homelessness and Housing Services and Sustainable Building and Construction) - held online
- ◆ Kate Snars and Ben Martin from Stride Safe Haven Café Belconnen - online
- ◆ Sally Holliday, Landcare ACT Wellbeing through Nature - hybrid
- ◆ Manon Keir and Jim Jacob from Wellways – Adult Step Up Step Down (both centre and home based) - hybrid
- ◆ Wellbeing Priorities-Tea - online

### **Paul Thompson**

Drop-In Officer (Temporary)



## ADMINISTRATION AND INFORMATION REPORT

While the pandemic continued to play a role in how the Network office operated, the impact was significantly less felt by staff due to the improvements made to remote work systems in the previous financial year and less technology savvy people adapting to an online environment.

As with other organisations and businesses, we started to transition to 'COVID normal' with office operations switching to a hybrid (a mixture of online and in-person) work environment. Staff began returning to the office for a few days per week and in-person attendance to our forums, consultations and other functions resumed. As was demonstrated when we first began running forums etc. online, more members were able to participate and we continued to offer this hybrid method at our events where available.

As everything seemed to be going so well at the start of the financial year, the ACT saw a major outbreak of the COVID-19 Delta variant in August 2021, which resulted in a lockdown being initiated and a return to remote work operations. This lockdown saw the office closed throughout the entire duration, with staff beginning to return to the office in mid-October 2021. During this period Val took the opportunity to complete the 3000 piece jigsaw puzzle the Network purchased as a Drop-In activity.



With the strong community response to the COVID-19 vaccination program due to the Delta variant outbreak and subsequent lifting of restrictions, the Network resumed holding meetings and events in Hybrid form from December 2021.

Upon our reopening in 2022, we continued with our return to COVID normality, despite the emergence of a new variant. Activities continued to be organised in a hybrid manner, with restrictions to online only participation in certain cases such as staff shortages within the office.

## **Website**

Carrying over from the previous year, work continued on our website to clarify the information we have available. This was done in response to increasing contact from the community who assumed incorrectly that the Network was the old ACT Mental Health community service provider, or that we provided services (such as individual advocacy) that we are not funded, or skilled, to provide.

In the first quarter of 2022, we engaged Josie Brown to begin designing a new website for the Network. This was to give us a greater opportunity to clarify who we are, what we do and how consumers can be a part of the Network's work, while also updating the methods of interaction with our members. Another component to the new website was making it interact with our database, which would streamline the workload of staff. Andrew Hore from Funnyworks Oz was contracted to provide illustrations for our new site. Work continues on this project and will be reported on in the next Annual Report.

## **Workplace Health and Safety**

The Network maintained a sense of caution when resuming in-person attendance at events within the office, with events reverting to online/remote only and essentially closing the office space. The cautions we undertook was in response to emerging outbreaks of COVID in surrounding areas of NSW – areas that one could reasonably assume could have an impact on the Canberra community. While we received some criticism about our actions at the time, once the ACT outbreak occurred in August 2021, the decisions and actions we took prior were justified.

In returning to COVID normal operations, staff and visitors to the office were encouraged to continue the practice of wearing a mask, but it was not a mandatory requirement of entry. New COVID safe measures that were introduced including the provision of disposable facemasks for instances where attendees began to feel unwell and the provision of Rapid Antigen Test kits for staff, should they become symptomatic of COVID when on duty. Provision of hand cleaning/sanitising and regular cleaning of the office continued.

Some staff members have continued to experience occasions of aggressive and/or distressing incidents whilst on duty. These incidents have required changes to work practices such as call screening and delegation of tasks/responses, while raising issues and concerns officially in external work-related events.

## **Information Technology**

Following the successful switchover to SharePoint as our file management system, we have experienced minimal IT problems, but are identifying where improvements can be made. Our old server was decommissioned in August 2021.



In October 2021, in order to begin freeing up space within the office, we disposed of our old PC desktops, laptops and other related equipment by donating to the Tech Shed for refurbishment and re-use if able.

Other new equipment that was purchased to enable more efficient online and in-person operations was a 360 degree conferencing camera and a new electronic whiteboard.

## **Events**

### ***Mental Health Month***

Another 'Beary Lovely Morning' was held again for Mental Health Month.

Originally scheduled to be held during October, the sudden outbreak of COVID-19 in August forced event organisers to begin considering and pivoting events to an alternative method of delivery. In this the Network began exploring how to run this event online.

Due to numerous enquiries, the Mental Health Month Committee offered event organisers an opportunity to reschedule their event to be held by Christmas 2021. The Network took the opportunity to hold this event on Thursday 7 December, and was also used as an end of year celebration.

COVID-19 Safety Plans were still a requirement for events and we had to navigate developing a Plan for this event in an uncertain environment, with restrictions on participation being unclear whether they'd be introduced or not.

As it turns out we had another successful Beary Lovely Morning with nearly 25 participants attending. Some of these participants were not members of the Network, but community members whose mental health had been greatly impacted by the pandemic.

### **Other**

Due to the number of misdirected contact the Network receives, some staff began statistic record keeping of incoming calls and emails. The purpose of keeping such statistics was to identify where emerging or trending issues/topics were occurring and the number and agencies referrals are made to. These statistics are non-identifiable and have been provided in funding reporting but is not a requirement.

Near the end of the financial year, Val had to withdraw from overseeing the Drop-In service to be able to focus on larger projects and tasks that became a priority for the Network.









**Valan Phoenix**  
Administration Coordinator

**ACT MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMER  
NETWORK INCORPORATED**

*Financial Statements  
For The Year Ended 30 June 2022*

# A.C.T MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMER NETWORK INCORPORATED

## Statement by the Committee

Your committee members submit the financial accounts of the A.C.T Mental Health Consumer Network Incorporated for the financial year ended 30 June 2022.

### Committee Members

The names of committee members at the date of this report are:

Bianca Rossetti	Chair
Lachlan Atyeo	Deputy Chair
Kathryn Dwan	Secretary
Paul Thompson	Treasurer
Thi Nha Tran	Ordinary Member
Maree Pavloudis	Ordinary Member
Phillip Green	Ordinary Member
Rose Beard	Ordinary Member
Lucas Spensberger	Ordinary Member
Pema Choden	Ordinary Member Resigned 6/5/22

### Principal Activities

The principal activities of the Association during the year under review were to facilitate equitable access to, promote the expansion of, and to empower consumers to utilise all means to achieve and maintain better mental health. There has been no significant change in those activities during the year.

### Operating Result

The operating surplus/(deficit) for the year ended 30 June 2022 was: \$ 3,045

### Opinion

In the opinion of the members of the committee, the accompanying financial statements present fairly the financial position of the A.C.T Mental Health Consumer Network Incorporated as at 30 June 2022, and the results and cashflows of the Association for the year ended on that date in accordance with applicable Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.

It is also the opinion of the committee that, at this date, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Association will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

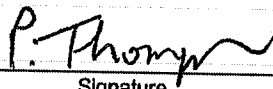
This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the committee and is signed for and on behalf of the committee by:



Signature

Kathryn Dwan

Name



Signature

Paul R Thompson

Name

Dated this 15<sup>th</sup> day of August 2022.



**A.C.T MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMER NETWORK INCORPORATED**

**STATEMENT of COMPREHENSIVE INCOME**  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2022

<u>2021</u>	Income	<u>2022</u>
505,490	ACT Health - Operational & ERO Grants	526,844
14,848	Sundry/Training	2,995
70	Interest	60
9,968	Gov't Stimulus Funds	-
<u>530,376</u>	<b>Total Income</b>	<u>529,899</u>
	<b>Expenses</b>	
	Salaries & Related Costs	
332,313	Wages	338,844
31,367	Superannuation Expense	33,784
4,663	Workers Comp. Insurance	4,534
2,004	Staff Recruitment/Health & Wellbeing	3,716
3,047	Staff Development & Courses	10,424
4,311	Staff Clinical Supervision	3,796
2,322	Travel costs	319
3,978	Long Service Provision & LSL Paid	5,216
10,663	Annual Leave Provision Expense	(1,173)
<u>394,667</u>	<b>Total Salaries &amp; Related Costs</b>	<u>399,460</u>
	Office Support	
8,829	Rent	18,733
2,278	Electricity & Security	2,128
5,228	Telecommunication Support	3,948
13,679	Computer Systems Support	12,953
2,548	Insurances	2,574
9,984	Miscellaneous Office Support	12,257
<u>42,545</u>	<b>Total Office Support</b>	<u>52,593</u>
	Administration	
1,330	Audit	800
282	Bank Fees & Charges	264
2,098	Postage	2,404
	Meeting Expenses	
1,034	Venue Hire for Meetings	166
6,087	Catering for Meetings	837
6,336	Honorarium/Rewards	3,498
9,467	Photocopying/Printing	6,336
2,120	Publicity, Resources & Website Costs	32,118
1,631	Stationery & Other Resources	954
<u>30,385</u>	Membership Subscriptions/ donations	2,741
	<b>Total Administration</b>	<u>50,118</u>
	Program/Consumer Support	
110	Taxi /Parking	578
10,163	Consumer Reimbursement & Projects	15,784
2,759	Conference Attendance	4,278
871	Accreditation/Activities Assistance	3,101
2,732	Mental Health Month	941
<u>16,635</u>	<b>Total Program/Consumer Support</b>	<u>24,682</u>
<u>484,233</u>	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<u>526,853</u>
<u>46,144</u>	<b>Operating Surplus (Deficit) for the Year</b>	<u>3,045</u>

These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the attached notes.

**A.C.T MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMER NETWORK INCORPORATED**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**  
As at 30 June 2022

<u>2021</u>		<u>2022</u>
	<b>Current Assets</b>	<b>\$</b>
216,628	Cash at Bank & on Hand	208,102
200	Sundry debtors & Accrued Income	230
<u>216,828</u>	<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<u>208,332</u>
	<b>Non-Current Assets</b>	
-	Office Equipment - WDV	7,272
-	<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>	<u>7,272</u>
<u>216,828</u>	<b>Total Assets</b>	<u>215,604</u>
	<b>Current Liabilities</b>	
20,102	Trade Creditors	18,055
6,217	Sundry Creditors & Accrued Expenses	7,331
30,844	Leave Entitlements	29,621
4,241	Unexpended Grants	2,128
<u>61,404</u>	<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<u>57,134</u>
	<b>Total Liabilities</b>	
<u>155,425</u>	<b>Net Assets</b>	<u>158,470</u>
	<b>Represented By:</b>	
109,281	Member's Funds at Beginning of Year	155,425
46,144	<b>Add Surplus( Loss) for the Year</b>	3,045
<u>155,425</u>	<b>Member's Funds at End the Year</b>	<u>158,470</u>

These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the attached notes.

**A.C.T MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMER NETWORK INCORPORATED**

**STATEMENT OF CASHFLOWS**  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2022

<u>2021</u>		<u>2022</u>
	<b>Cashflows from Operating Activities</b>	<b>\$</b>
534,617	Receipts from Grants	526,844
70	Interest Received	60
24,816	Other Receipts	2,995
(467,853)	Payments to Suppliers & Employees	(531,153)
<u>91,650</u>	<b>Total Cashflows from Operating Activities</b>	<u>( 1,254)</u>
	<b>Cashflows Used in Investing Activities</b>	
-	Capital Purchases	(7,272)
<u>124,978</u>	<b>Total Cashflows from Operating &amp; Investing Activities</b>	<u>(7,272)</u>
	<b>Add: Cash at Beginning of Period</b>	<b>216,628</b>
<u>216,628</u>	<b>Cash at End of Period</b>	<u>208,102</u>
	<b>Represented By:</b>	
216,588	Cash at Bank	208,062
40	Cash on Hand	40
<u>216,628</u>	<b>Total Cash</b>	<u>208,102</u>
	<b>Reconciliation of Operating Surplus with Net Cashflows from Operating Activities for the Period.</b>	
46,144	<b>Operating Surplus (Loss)</b>	3,045
-	Depreciation	-
	<b>Operating Surplus Adjusted for Non-Cash Items</b>	
9,173	(Increase)/Decrease in Sundry Debtors & Accrued Income	(30)
19,892	Increase/(Decrease) in Trade Creditors	(2,047)
1,538	Increase/(Decrease) in Sundry Creditors & Accrued Expenses	1,113
4,241	Increase/decrease in Unexpended Grants	(2,113)
10,663	Increase/(Decrease) in Provision for Employee Entitlements	(1,223)
<u>91,650</u>	<b>Net Cashflows from Operating Activities</b>	<u>(1,254)</u>

**THE ACCOMPANYING NOTES FORM PART OF THESE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

# A.C.T. MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMER NETWORK INCORPORATED

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2022

### **NOTE 1: Statement of Significant Accounting Policies**

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1991. The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity.

The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1991.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following material accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

#### **a. Income tax**

No provision has been made for income tax as the Company is exempt from taxation under Section 50-5 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

#### **b. Fixed assets**

Leasehold improvements and office equipment are carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation.

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets are depreciated over the useful lives of the assets to the association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Leasehold improvements are amortised over the shorter of either the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful lives of the improvements.

#### **c. Employee Benefits**

Provision is made for the Company's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to balance date. Employee benefits that are expected to be settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled, plus related on-costs. Employee benefits payable later than one year have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits.

#### **d. Cash and Cash Equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents includes cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities on the balance sheet.

# A.C.T. MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMER NETWORK INCORPORATED

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2022

### e. Revenue

#### *Government Grants*

Government grants are recognised as income on a systematic and rational basis over the periods necessary to match them with the related costs.

#### *Donations*

Donation revenues are recognised when they are received.

#### *Sale of Goods and Disposal of Assets*

Revenue from the sale of goods and disposal of other assets is recognised when the association has passed control of the goods or other assets to the buyer.

#### *Interest revenue*

Interest is recognised on an accrual basis.

### f. Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Tax Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables in the balance sheet are shown inclusive of GST.

Cash flows are presented in the cash flow statement on a gross basis, except for the GST component of investing and financing activities, which are disclosed as operating cash flows.

**HOUSTON & HANNA**  
**PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT AND AUDITOR**

**K D Hanna FIPA (Principal)**

**Telephone: (02) 6248 0352  
0414 526 136**

**GPO Box 810, Canberra ACT 2601**  
Suite 15, George Turner Offices  
11 McKay Gardens, Turner ACT

**email: [kim@khanna.com.au](mailto:kim@khanna.com.au)**

**INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE  
ACT MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMER NETWORK INCORPORATED  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2022**

**Scope.**

I have audited the attached financial statements of the ACT Mental Health Consumer Network Incorporated (The Association) for the year ended 30 June 2022. The Committee is responsible for the preparation and presentation of the financial statements and the information they contain. I have conducted an independent audit of these financial statements in order to express an opinion on them to the members of the Association.

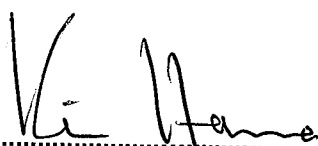
My audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. The procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial statements, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether, in all material respects, the financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and Statutory requirements so as to present a view which is consistent with our understanding of the Association's position and the results of its operations.

The audit opinion in this report has been formed on the above basis.

**Audit Opinion.**

In my opinion,

- (a) the financial statements of the Association are properly drawn up:
  - (i) so as to give a true and fair view of matters required by subsection 72(2) of the Associations Incorporation Act 1991 to be dealt with in the financial statements and
  - (ii) in accordance with the provisions of the Associations Incorporation Act 1991;
- (b) I have obtained all the information and explanations required;
- (c) Proper accounting records have been kept by the Association as required by the Act; and
- (d) The audit was conducted in accordance with the rules of the Association.

  
.....  
Kim Hanna FIPA

Date..... 16/8/2022 .....