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Dear Michelle

Review of Canberra Health Services Guide: Use of psychological interventions in Mental Health Justice Health and Alcohol and Drugs Services (MHJHADS)

This letter has been prepared by the ACT Mental Health Consumer Network (the Network) in response to the invitation from Canberra Health Services (CHS). It incorporates written and verbal feedback received from consumers in relation to the CHS Guideline: Use of psychological interventions in MHJHADS (the Guideline). The Network welcomes the invitation to provide feedback on the Guideline.

Consumer feedback focused on the following matters:

- The Definition of Terms section subsumes consumers under the “**generic term**” (p. 15) of ‘people’ and the Guideline uses the term ‘people’ where it should use the term ‘consumer’. Replacing ‘consumer’ with ‘people’ in this way obscures the rights and responsibilities that CHS staff must keep in mind when engaging with consumers. It also means that the Guideline is not consistent with other CHS and MHJHADS policies and procedures (e.g. CHS Policy Consumer Privacy, p. 11; CHS Procedure Sharing Information with Carers – Mental Health Adult In-patient Units, p. 22).

- Throughout the Guideline, families and Carers are collapsed together with a forward slash '/', e.g., "[families/carers](#)" (p. 4). Written as such, this suggests that families and Carers are synonymous or interchangeable with one another. This is not the case under ACT law. Furthermore, because a Carer is a recognised role under the *Carers Recognition Act (2021)* (ACT), 'Carer' should always be capitalised throughout the document.
- Table 1 on pages 5-6 would benefit from including examples of the staff roles that may be expected to have training in and undertake which levels of psychological intervention.
- In section 2.2 on page 7, the training and competency requirements to be a Level 1 Clinician should also include strengths-based consumer collaboration skills. These are important for ensuring that clinicians can recognise and enlist a consumer's expertise in their own lived experience in the process of devising and delivering care.
- In section 2.6.2 on page 10, the Guideline recommends that therapists take into account a consumer's "[preferences and past experiences with therapy](#)". This statement should be strengthened so that staff are recommended to "*recognise a consumer's lived experience and expertise in their own circumstances and enlist this knowledge in the therapeutic process*". This will encourage staff go beyond information included on the Digital Health Record (such as an Advanced Agreement or Advanced Consent Direction) to seek the consumer's insight into their own situation and treatment history.

If you have any questions or require further clarification regarding this feedback, please do not hesitate to contact us on (02) 6230 5796 or executive@actmhc.org.au.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Procedure. We look forward to providing further consumer feedback once the structural concerns have been resolved.

Yours sincerely



Dalane Drexler
Chief Executive Officer