

22nd December 2011

CARERS ACT
MENTAL HEALTH CARERS VOICE
FEDERAL
ACT
WHAT'S ON IN THE ACT

NEWS

Carers

CARERS ACT BUDGET SUBMISSION

Carers ACT have forwarded their submission to the 2012 – 2013 ACT budget. For this submission Carers ACT have concentrated on two pressing issues for carers in the ACT, both of particular concern to mental health carers. They are the need for supported accommodation within the ACT, and what we have called “post-school options”. This means employment or other options for the people cared for after they finish school.

To read the Carers ACT budget submission, go to:
www.carersact.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/Carers-ACT-Budget-Submission-2012-2013.pdf

SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION SUMMIT

Carers ACT is hosting a Summit on Supported Accommodation on 14th March 2012. A lack of adequate supported accommodation options for people with disability and mental health issues is one of the most pressing issues facing caring families in the ACT. As the peak body for carers, including mental health carers, in the ACT, a major priority for Carers ACT is to help shape an equitable and sustainable supported accommodation system that genuinely meets the needs of caring families. The summit will bring together key stakeholders; including carers of people with a disability and/or mental health issues, politicians, key bureaucrats, service providers and community organisations, as well as business leaders. More information, including registration details, will be given through the e-

bulletin in early February, and will be available on the Carers ACT website www.carersact.asn.au in the new year.

Mental Health Carers Voice

ANNOUNCING YOUR CARER REPRESENTATIVES FOR 2012 – 2014

FROM THE RECENT SELECTION PROCESS

Executive Strategy and Business Planning Committee

John Tucker

Policy & Standard Operating Procedures Development and Review Committee

Murray Haines

Publications Advisory Committee

Maureen Bell

Information Management & Information Technology Committee

David Gapp

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Reference Committee

Stephanie Bassingthwaite

Seclusion & Restraint Review Meeting

Deanne Michaels

Suicide Prevention Implementation & Evaluation Working Group

Eunice Jolliffe

CURRENT WORKING & OTHER GROUPS

Consumer & Carer Research Unit Advisory Group

Jenny McGee

Diversity Health Network Board

Anndey Ho

Executive Reference Group – Acute Adult Mental Health Inpatient Unit

Kerry Allen

Housing and Accommodation Services Initiative (HASI) Committee

Ros Williams

Recovery Plan Implementation Advisory Group

Sue Toivonen

Transition to Recovery Advisory Group

Virginia Wilton

Women & Mental Health Working Group

Aine Tierney

SELECTION PANEL 2011 – 2013

Carer Member

Kerry Dietrich

Alternate Carer Member **Geoff Barr**

NATIONAL CARER REPRESENTATIVE

Judy Bentley

CURRENT VACANCIES

The next step in the mental health carer representative selection process, as consulted and advertised since May 2011, is for the Mental Health Carers Voice (MHCV) Officer to seek mental health carers who have appropriate skills and interests for these positions. If you are interested in any of these, please contact Lydia on mhcarers@carersact.org.au or 6296 9900.

- Collaborative Engagement Forum
- MHAGIC (Mental Health Assessment Generation Information Collection) Advisory Committee
- Risk Management Committee
- Safety & Quality Committee
- Promotion, Prevention, Early Intervention Implementation & Evaluation Working Group
- Smoke Free Workgroup

CARER ISSUES FORUM DECEMBER 2011

The MHCV final Carer Issues Forum for 2011 was held on Thursday 15th at the Belconnen Arts Centre. Tim Moore, president of Carers Australia, gave a very moving talk on his own experience of being a mental health carer, and his commitment to working for a

better mental health system in the ACT as well as at the national level; and so, his support and encouragement of MHCV.

Launch of Mental Health Carers Voice Website

Not only were the carer representatives for 2012 – 2014 announced, and the outgoing carer representatives thanked, but the MHCV Website and Online Discussion Forum were launched at the carer issues forum last week! This project has been in process for some time, and there is, of course, still some work to do to iron out the inevitable glitches. Don't expect much action in January but look forward to exciting information exchange from February onwards.

You will find the MHCV website on www.carersvoice.com.au. Please, if you find any glitches, let us know so we can make the website the best it can be for ACT mental health carers.

MENTAL HEALTH CARERS VOICE E-BULLETIN ON HOLIDAY

This will be the last e-bulletin until February 2012. MHCV would like to wish you all a happy, healthy and refilled Christmas and New Year. We look forward to working with and for you again in 2012. We will be available in business hours in January, although Julia will be away at the beginning of January, and Lydia will at the end of January. For any urgent enquiries during this time, please phone 6296 9900 and ask for Julia or Lydia. Reception will know who is available. Emails will still be received through mhcarers@carersact.org.au, but may not be answered quickly over Christmas.

Federal

APPOINTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH & AGEING MINISTER TO CABINET APPLAUDED

Mark Butler's appointment to Cabinet as Minister for Mental Health and Ageing and Minister for Social Inclusion has been applauded by many agencies in the sectors relating to his portfolios. As the minister for mental health, the Young & Well Cooperative



Research Centre sum up Mark Butler's appointment for all in the sector as a "landmark event for the mental health sector", which, as the College of Psychiatrist's says, "acknowledges the importance of mental health as an issue which is integral to the health of every Australian".

To read the College of Psychiatrist's media release, go to:

www.ranzcp.org/latest-news/recognition-of-importance-of-mental-health-applauded.html

To learn about Young & Well Cooperative Research Centre, go to: www.yawcrc.org.au

APPOINTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSIONERS

Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, Mark Butler, announced the appointment of the Mental Health Commissioners to Australia's first National Mental Health Commission on 11th December. The eight Commissioner's appointments represent the next major milestone in national mental health reform, Mr Butler said. The Commissioners bring together a wide range of skills and experience, including from consumer and carer groups, community and social services, mental health and suicide prevention, Indigenous social and emotional wellbeing and academia.

Of particular interest to e-bulletin readers will be the appointment of Jackie Crowe, who works as a Carer Consultant in Victoria. Her role on the Commission is to ensure that family/carer perspectives inform and enhance decision-making at local, state and national levels.

The Mental Health Council of Australia (MHCA) suggests that the mental health system will now be held to account for how it meets the needs of ordinary Australians according to Frank Quinlan, CEO of the MHCA.

To read the Minister's media release, go to: www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr11-mb-mb223.htm?OpenDocument&yr=2011&mth=12

To learn about the Mental Health Council of Australia, go to: www.mhca.org.au

3,500 MORE AUSTRALIANS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS TO GET DAY-TO-DAY SUPPORT

From 1st January 2012, an extra \$19.3 million will be provided to community organisations to deliver the *Support for Day to Day Living in the Community* (D2DL) program. More than 3,500 Australians living with severe and persistent mental illness will receive day-to-day support to stay connected to their community through arts and crafts workshops, cooking lessons, shopping trips and other social outings. "Australians with a severe mental illness can face significant challenges reconnecting to their community both during and after recovery," said Mark Butler, Minister for Mental Health and Ageing. "Meaningful activity and social connection are critical to people's recovery from mental illness and Day to Day Living is proven to work, already helping thousands of people to begin their recovery journey."

To read this media release, go to:

www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr11-mb-mb226.htm

NO TO BULLYING, YES TO ATTENDANCE - HIGH SCHOOLS IMPROVE THEIR MENTAL HEALTH

Seventeen schools have been commended after reporting an increase in attendance and a decrease in bullying as a result of taking part in MindMatters, the leading national mental health initiative for secondary schools. Woodville High School, one of these 17 schools, reported an almost 40 per cent increase in students reporting they feel safe at school and a 10 per cent reduction in suspensions, while all schools reported fewer incidences of bullying, improvements in overall attendance records and an increased number of students self referring and help seeking. Congratulating the schools at a recognition ceremony in Adelaide on 9th December, Minister for Mental Health and Ageing Mark Butler said the mental health of young people is a priority for the Australian Government, which provides more than \$4 million a year to support the MindMatters initiative. ACT's Melrose High School is one of the 17 schools to be commended.

To learn about MindMatters, go to:
www.mindmatters.edu.au/default.asp

YOUNG CARERS PROJECT SURVEY LAUNCHED ON FACEBOOK

The Mental Health Council of Australia (MHCA) has launched a survey targeting young mental health carers on Facebook. The Young Carers Project (YCP) survey app aims to collect information from young mental health carers about their caring role; what sort of caring activities they undertake; how caring impacts on their day-to-day lives; what supports are available to young mental health carers in their area; and the appropriateness of these supports. This survey app forms part of the broader MHCA Mental Health Carers Project 2011-12, and builds on the work of Adversity to Advocacy: the lives and hopes of mental health carers, and the Mental Health Carers Report 2010. All young mental health carers aged 13 to 18 in Australia are eligible to participate in the YCP survey app. The MHCA is also offering a \$20 pre-paid VISA gift card to survey participants in recognition of their time and contribution. The app will remain live on Facebook until the start of February 2012, or until 1,000 responses are collected.

The survey can be found at:
www.facebook.com/youngcarersproject. **Please pass this information on to any young mental health carers you know.**

ACT

ACT MEDICARE LOCAL AFTER HOURS PRIMARY CARE NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

ACT Medicare Local (ACTML) is seeking to build a complete picture of community requirements in primary health care so that they can plan appropriately for the ACT's future medical needs. In order to do this ACTML is working with the community to understand and help address the after hours primary health care needs of the ACT region. A 10 minute community member survey will provide ACTML with valuable information about your

experiences and requirements for after hours primary health care services. To participate, please visit: www.actml.com.au/programs/after-hours. At the right hand side of the page under related content you will see a link to the After Hours Primary Care Community Survey. The link immediately above it, After Hours Community Survey, will also take you to the survey. The survey will remain open until the end of February 2012.

GOVERNMENT SEEKING INPUT

The ACT Government is seeking input about ways the Government, community, market and individuals can respond to financial pressures on households, and by these responses an inclusive community that supports vulnerable people can be supported and encouraged. Information regarding that, specific questions to respond to, and terms of reference can be found at:

www.cmd.act.gov.au/open_government. Responses are due by the end of March, 2012.

WHAT'S ON IN THE ACT THAT MIGHT INTEREST YOU

What: Carer Representation Forum
Who: Mental Health Carers Voice
Where: Carers Hub, Holt
When: Thursday 2nd February
Time: 12 – 2 pm (includes light lunch)
RSVP: Lydia mhcarers@carersact.org.au or 6296 9900

What: Cool Kids Anxiety Program
Who: Children between 9 & 12 years old experiencing anxiety
Where: West Belconnen Child & Family Centre
cnr Luke & Starke St, Kippax
When: 8 weeks beginning Monday 13/2 – 2/4
Time: 3.30 – 5 pm
Extra: Two parent information sessions 13/2 and 5/3; 1 – 2.30 pm
Cost: Free
Contact: Brianna 6205 2904



What: Art Therapy Group for Women Survivors of Sexual Violence

Why: Evidence shows that there is a link between women who have experienced sexual violence and mental health issues

Who: Canberra Rape Crisis Centre

When: 8 weeks starting Tuesday 21st February

Time: 11.30 am – 2.45 pm

RSVP: 6247 2525

What: Carer Representation Workshop: **Committees & How to Survive Them**

Who: Mental Health Carers Voice

Where: Smith Family, Woden

When: Tuesday 28th February

Time: 6 – 9 pm (includes light meal)

RSVP: Lydia mhcarers@carersact.org.au or 6296 9900
