

# Carers Representation Program E Bulletin: 16 December 2010

**Welcome to the fortnightly Carer Representation Program E-Bulletin**  
Informing you of Mental Health committee updates, news, events and more. This issue:

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## **Report from Sebastian Rosenberg on Strategic Priorities Workshop**

**9 December saw Carers ACT hold a workshop to consider two key aspects of its Mental Health Carer Representation Program:**

1. How to make the Program even more effective in representing the views of mental health carers. Important points to consider here were the processes by which Program reps are elected and supported in their roles, as well as the crucial feedback loops between the reps and ACT mental health carers. A lot of useful suggestions were made here for Carers ACT to consider;
2. The determination of the strategic priorities for systemic mental health carer advocacy in the ACT for 2011. The workshop acknowledged how much work there was to do before people in the ACT and their carers could have confidence in the mental health system. As a consequence, the list of potential areas for advocacy is not short.

This list has been distributed today to E-Bulletin subscribers. Send your top three priorities to [juliap@carersact.asn.au](mailto:juliap@carersact.asn.au) by 14 January 2011.

My role as a consultant to Carers ACT is to bring this information together, as a list of recommendations to improve the operation of the **Representation** Program and to generate a list of agreed strategic priorities. This report will be featured in the E-Bulletin on the 20 January 2011.

I will also be providing a report to Carers ACT which will include suggestions about how the Program could be reformed. This information will also be posted onto the website in the New Year.

Sebastian Rosenberg - December 2010

## **ACT 2011-2012 Budget Submission**

The priorities provided by mental health Carers have been used to inform development of the Carers ACT Submission to the ACT Government for consideration in the development of the ACT Budget. Carers highlighted a range of issues of importance to them; the need for additional supported accommodation options is the issue

that appears to be of highest need. The Carers ACT Budget Submission will be posted on the website after Christmas.

### Release of National Mental Health Report 2010

The report, which was released on 6 December focuses on progress of the National Mental Health Strategy across the period 1993-2008 (covered by the First, Second and Third National Mental Health Plans). It also provides a snapshot of jurisdictional spending on mental health services in the 2007-08 financial year. ACT Minister for Health, Katy Gallagher MLA welcomed the release of the report, which she said showed that the ACT spends more on community mental health services than any other jurisdiction in the country.

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She noted that the per capita spending on mental health services has increased from \$123.39 in 2002-03 to \$167.98 in 2007-08.

#### Other ACT highlights are that:

- 100% of mental health service organisations achieved Level 1 implementation of the National Standards for Mental Health Services in June 2008.
- The ACT ranked third in Australia for community residential facility beds with 22.5 beds per 100,000 people during the reporting period. Since that time, additional residential accommodation initiatives include:
  - Five bed step-up, step down facility for adolescents
  - The Housing and Supported Accommodation Initiative (HASI) commenced and provides 10 beds
- Increased funding for a community provider to address the issues of high needs clients
- A tender process for step-up, step down outreach program that will cater for fifteen adults at any one time for a period of up to three months; and
- Funding for St Vincent De Paul for the Samaritan House Program that provides supported accommodation and outreach, targeting adult males, in particular forensic mental health.

See: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/mental-pubs-n-report10> to access the report.

### Representative required for the Mental Health ACT Information Management Advisory Committee (Mental Health IMAC)

Mental Health ACT is seeking a Carer Representative for its Information Management Advisory Committee. The Committee’s role is to provide relevant and timely advice to the Strategic Executive of MHACT regarding information management within MHACT, ensuring that information and advice is made available to the Strategic Executive to inform decision making about the IM/IT needs of MHACT now and into the future.

#### The functions of the Committee are:

1. To review and advise on IM and IT issues relevant for MHACT
2. Review proposed data collection and dissemination methods and advise the MHACT Strategic Executive;
3. Oversee and advise on any changes to the MHAGIC Database
4. Oversight quality improvement initiatives related to information management generally;

5. Oversight business support functions in respect to accreditation, IM/IT management, use of IM/IT, MHAGIC and ACTPAS, Security issues and education and training.
6. Monitor IM/IT projects that relate to Mental Health

Please note that this is a specialist position.

If you are interested in nominating for the position, please contact Julia Paez by 14 January 2011 and she will send you a copy of the nomination form.

Her contact details are: email - [juliap@carersact.asn.au](mailto:juliap@carersact.asn.au) or telephone number 6296 9952. If there is more than one nominee, a vote of mental health Carers will be held to select the successful candidate.

### Season's Greetings

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Please note that the Carers ACT main office in Holt will be open every day (from 9am - 5pm) through the Christmas break, except for public holidays and weekends the contact phone number is 6296 9935. The Smith Family site, Woden, will be closed from 5:00pm Friday 24 December, and will re-open on 4 January 2011. If you need urgent assistance you can call the Lifeline Crisis Support Service on 131 114 or the Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centres on 1800 052 222.

Our next edition of the E-Bulletin will be the 20 January 2011

