

# Carers Representation Program E Bulletin: 1 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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### **ACT Carers Charter**

To-date, 4 workshops have been held on the draft ACT Carers Charter. A final workshop will be held from 5:30 to 7:30pm on Monday 6 December at the Koomarri Centre located at 25 Launceston Street in Woden. Ample free parking is available. The workshop will be facilitated for the ACT Government, by Louise Gray Consulting Services, Please advise [louise.baldwin.gray@gmail.com](mailto:louise.baldwin.gray@gmail.com) if you plan to attend. If you are not able to attend the session, but wish to provide written feedback, you can access the document by clicking on the link: <http://www.carersact.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/ACT-Carers-Charter-Discussion-Paper1.pdf>. Please note that the closing date for submissions is 31 January 2011. If you feel you do not have the time to provide a written submission, you may wish to send a few dot points to Julia Paez at [juliap@carersact.asn.au](mailto:juliap@carersact.asn.au) as Carers ACT will be developing its own submission on the Charter.

### **Reminder about Strategic Priorities Workshop** **9 December**

Just a reminder that the Strategic Priorities Workshop will be held on Thursday 9 December,

from 5:00-7:30pm at The Carers ACT Building (80 Beaufort Crescent, Holt). Please RSVP to Julia Paez at [juliap@carersact.asn.au](mailto:juliap@carersact.asn.au) or on 6296 9952 by Friday 3 December. Even if you are not able to attend, you can be part of the selection of priorities for advocacy in 2011 by completing the survey by Friday 3 December. If you have not received a copy of the survey, please contact Julia Paez at [juliap@carersact.asn.au](mailto:juliap@carersact.asn.au) or on 6296 9952.

### **Survey - Election process and MHCRP**

Completion of another survey which was sent out via survey monkey early last week will provide the workshop facilitator, Sebastian Rosenberg, with important feedback on the recent election process and information on how to grow the Mental Health Carer Representation Program. Although the closing date for this survey is 13 December, earlier completion would be appreciated.

### **Just released** **Mental Health Carers Report 2010**

The Mental Health Council of Australia released the Mental Health Carers Report 2010 on Thursday 25 November. Senator Jan McLucas, Parliamentary

Secretary for Disabilities and Carers stated that “Mental health Carers across Australia are reporting better access to information and support according to a new report released today, however there are challenges to overcome with Carers continuing to face discrimination and isolation in their communities”.

Over 750 Carers from across Australia provided an insight into the challenges and obstacles they face as mental health Carers. Stigma, discrimination and isolation were raised as persistent challenges for mental health Carers, and the need for information sharing, support networks, accommodation and respite options, financial costs and flexible employment options were also highlighted.

“Stigma, discrimination and isolation were raised as persistent challenges for mental health Carers”

A copy of the report can be accessed at [www.mhca.org.au](http://www.mhca.org.au) or at <http://www.carersact.asn.au/publications/>.

### **Consumer and Carer Survey** **Behaviour of mental health professionals**

The Mental Health Council of Australia (MHCA) is undertaking a consumer and Carer survey focusing on the behaviour of health professionals towards people with mental illness.

Carers and consumers are being asked to complete a survey about their views of health professionals' attitudes and behaviours towards people with mental illness as well as their experience of care from mental health and other health service providers. The findings from the research study will enable the MHCA to provide government with recent and relevant information that will assist in directing future funding into mental health services.

To participate in the study, go to: <http://www.mhca.org.au/stigmasurvey/index.php> and you will be taken to an external secure website where you will be able to find a lot more information about the survey.

Any questions you may have about the survey can be directed to Rachele Irving, Acting Deputy CEO on 02 6285 3100 or via email at [rachele.irving@mhca.org.au](mailto:rachele.irving@mhca.org.au)

### **Updated Mental Health ACT Services Directory 2010**

A copy of the updated Mental Health ACT Services Directory 2010 can be found on our website at [www.carersact.asn.au](http://www.carersact.asn.au) or on the Mental Health ACT website at <http://www.mhf.org.au/mhf/Directory.aspx?a=9&s=44&c=101> Mental Health ACT advised that an earlier version had an omission; this has now been rectified.

### **Successful nominee**

#### **ACT Division of General Practitioners (ACTDGP) Mental Health Advisory Committee**

Judy Bentley has been selected as the Carer representative on the ACTDGP Mental Health Advisory Committee. Her proxy is Sue Telford. Congratulations to them both! The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 1 December.

### **Update on work of Publications Committee** **From Care Representative - Maureen Bell**

1. The committee is considering a draft of a Consumer Card for consumers to carry in their wallets.
2. Podcasting of ACTMH information should be ready to commence at the end of the year. It will be of particular help to people who have literacy or sight difficulties and should be accessible from home computers.
3. Several pamphlets are being considered: one on Forensic Services; one on managing parenting role (for parents while they are in a mental health unit) and one on supporting children while parent is in mental health unit. A poster, “Helping a friend or colleague with mental illness” is being worked on; it is suggested that a supplementary one-page flyer be produced as an adjunct to that, for people to have something to take home to refer to.

## Meetings with the Minister for Mental Health

The first of the 14 Forums being convened by the Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, Mark Butler, took place yesterday (30 November) in Adelaide.

“Prime Minister Gillard has made it clear that mental health will be an important second term agenda item for the Government”

Minister Butler has said that meeting with consumers and Carers and hearing their thoughts and ideas about issues closest to them is a critical part of developing better mental health policies and programs for all Australians.

“We are committed to ensuring Australia has a sustainable and effective mental health system and we are taking the time needed to get this right...Prime Minister Gillard has made it clear that mental health will be an important second term agenda item for the Government and has committed an additional \$274 million over four years for the Taking Action to tackle Suicide package.”