



MENTAL HEALTH
**carers
voice**

Leading change and action with, and for, mental health Carers

ISSN 2201-8913 (Online)



Sept 19

E-Bulletin

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Mental Health Carers Voice

Consent form for sharing personal information

At our recent Suicide Prevention Forum held on 11 September, Bruno Aloisi, Acting Operational Director, Adult Community & Older Person's Mental Health Services, Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol & Drug Services asked carers if they were aware of the ACT Health Directorate standard consent form for disclosure of personal information. Forum participants were not aware of this form. Bruno has subsequently sent a copy of the form to the Mental Health Carers Voice program. He requested that we ask carers to be aware that some mental health services may use a different local form dependent on where the consumer is receiving treatment (e.g Community MH Team), and that they should contact the relevant service for a copy of the consent form in use. This form authorises the sharing of personal information to carers, family members and friends, subject to the consent of the person with mental health issues. Click [here](#) for more information.

Report of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Carers Forum

A forum for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and friends was hosted by Carers ACT

on 7 August. A Report of this lively forum held in the Mabo Room, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies has been prepared, and a copy may be accessed [here](#).

Mental Health Carer Networking & Consulting Forums

Secure Mental Health Unit Focus Group

The ACT Government is embarking on a new health infrastructure project to build a Secure Mental Health Unit (SMHU). This facility will respond to the needs of mental health consumers who are or have become involved with the criminal justice system (forensic) and for those civil consumers who cannot be treated in a less restrictive environment. This facility will provide a safe clinical and therapeutic environment for people who may be characterised as complex, often difficult to treat and are of significant risk to others. The unit will accommodate 25 beds and care for people with low to medium secure needs.

Carers ACT and Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol & Drug Services would like to invite carers and families to a facilitated focus group regarding the SMHU Model of Care and the facility planning. A copy of the draft Model of Care (including an Executive Summary) will be available at the focus group meeting.

Date: Tuesday 24 September
Time: 5.00 – 6.30pm
Location: The Hub, Carers ACT, 2/80 Beaurepaire Crescent, Holt
Cost: Free. Refreshments will be provided
RSVP: 5.00pm Friday, 19 September. Phone Emma on 6296 9952 or email mhcarers@carersact.org.au.

More information about the Secure Mental Health Unit and other new mental health facilities may be accessed [here](#). If you would like to be involved in the development of the SMHU Model of Care, and in the planning, design, and construction of the Unit, ACT Health is looking for carer representation on an Expert Reference Group. Please contact Doris Kordes (6296 9936; doris.kordes@carersact.org.au) for more information.

Understanding Carers Rights Forum, Mental Health Week — 9 October

In response to carers' requests, Carers ACT is hosting a forum to raise carer awareness of their rights in the mental health system. An exciting line-up of guest speakers from diverse backgrounds will present and engage in Q&A with forum participants.

Date: Wednesday 9 October
Time: 12.00pm – 3.00pm
Location: Quality Inn, Woden
Cost: Free. Lunch will be provided
RSVP: 5.00pm Thursday, 3 October. Phone Emma on 6296 9952 or email mhcarers@carersact.org.au.

Understanding the Impact of Mental health Sector Changes Forum — 19 November

Carers are invited to participate in a conversation with:

- Ms Katrina Bracher, Executive Director, Mental Health, Justice Health, Alcohol & Drugs Service Division
- Mr Richard Bromhead, Manager, Mental Health Policy Unit, ACT Health
- Ms Wendy Kipling, ACT NDIS Taskforce.

This forum will provide carers with an opportunity to find out the latest news on changes impacting on mental health carers and their families, and to engage in a Q&A with our guest speakers about health infrastructure projects, mental health developments, and DisabilityCare Australia.

Date: Tuesday 19 November

Time: 5.00pm – 8.00pm

Location: TBA

Cost: Free. Refreshments will be provided

RSVP: 5.00pm Friday, 15 November. Phone Emma on 6296 9952 or email

mhcarers@carersact.org.au.

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****Exciting new carer representative positions****

Mental health carers are invited to consider nominating for a representative role on a range of committees. In this E-Bulletin, we wish to highlight two important committee vacancies with ACT Health, Division of Mental Health Justice Health Alcohol & Drugs:

- Consumer and Carer Feedback Committee, Adult Mental Health Unit
- Clinical Effectiveness Committee, Adult Mental Health Unit

Please do not hesitate to contact Emma or Doris for more information about these committees and other vacant representative positions; or just to chat about what's involved in taking on a carer representative role. Emma may be phoned on 6296 9952 or email emma.judges@carersact.org.au; and Doris may be contacted on 6296 9936 or email doris.kordes@carersact.org.au.

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'Invisible Care' — research study on mental health carers' access to Carers Payment and Carer Allowance **author to present to ACT Carers**

In the previous E-Bulletin, we featured the findings of a research study with mental health carers - *Invisible care. Access to Carer Payment and Carer Allowance by Victorian carers of a person with mental illness*. This report was launched by Carers Victoria. Carers ACT is delighted to announce that Ben Ilsley, Policy Adviser, Carers Victoria will be presenting at the October Mental Health Week forum on 'Understanding Carers Rights' (see above for more details).

The full report may be downloaded at:

http://www.carersaustralia.com.au/storage/To%20link%20to%2020130802_Misunderstood%20and%20under%20supported_%20the%20plight%20of%20the%20mentally%20ill%20and%20the%20carers.pdf.

Sharing stories to draw carers and clinicians together

Janet Milford has provided the Mental Health Carers Voice program with a report on her participation at the recent TheMHS Conference in Melbourne (see below). A standout paper I attended at the conference was the joint presentation by representatives from the Intangible Storytelling and the Caring Together Art Journal projects. The aims of these projects are to 'enable carer voices to be heard, use them to educate and inform services, support other carers so they feel less alone, and allow these experiences to be seen and discussed in a wider context.' For more information, visit: <http://caringtogetherproject.com/> and <http://www.arafmi.org/content/intangible>.

Doris Kordes

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Report from Janet Milford, ACT representative on the National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum

This was my first TheMHS conference and I found it very interesting, informative, educational, and beneficial from a carer's perspective. It also provided a good opportunity to network with other carers, consumers and service providers in the mental health area.

Doris Kordes, Sue Telford and I presented a paper exploring the idea of carers' recovery. We received good feedback on our presentation and have submitted the paper for publication.

The Comorbidity Workshop gave an update on what was new in the treatment of comorbidity between mental health and substance use.

Click [here](#) to read Janet's full report.

Carers Corner

Information for Carers, Family and Friends Card

Our carer representative on the MHJHADS Publications Advisory Committee has sent us this useful tidbit:

The *Information for Carers, Family and Friends Card* is included in the Discharge Pack given to consumers upon leaving hospital. It is a wallet-sized card which lists programs and phone

numbers.

For a full list of MHJHADS Publications use the following link <http://health.act.gov.au/health-services/mental-health-justice-health-alcohol-drug-services/publications>. The Information for Carers, Family and Friends Card PDF file can be found under the Information Cards section.

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Suicide Prevention, Implementation and Evaluation Working Group

Karen Wilson, our carer representative on ACT Health's Suicide Prevention, Implementation and Evaluation Working Group has sent the following update to us. If you can help Karen, please email mhcarers@carersact.org.au and we will forward your advice.

The ACT government's Suicide Prevention, Implementation and Evaluation Working Group (SPIEWG) met on 28 August 2013. The group is currently looking to identify how suicide prevention and support services make referrals. The aim of this work is to identify any gaps in referral pathways, clarify which services are responsible for assisting people who are or are not at imminent risk, and ensuring that referrals between services are effective. This work involves mapping how referrals work is for people at risk of suicide and also for those people bereaved by suicide. If you have any experiences or views about the service pathways and referral processes, please email the Mental Health Carers address mentioned above.

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Carers ACT

Dementia Awareness Week — Open day at The Cottage in Deakin

As part of Dementia Awareness Week 2013 Alzheimer's Australia ACT, in partnership with Carers ACT, is holding an Open Day at The Cottage in Deakin.

The Cottage is Canberra's premier short-term respite option for carers of people with dementia. The Open Day is an opportunity for people to visit The Cottage and take part in an informative and enjoyable morning of activities.

Date: Thursday 26 September
Time: 10.00am – 1.30pm
Location: The Cottage, 117 Denison Street, Deakin
Cost: Free (morning tea or lunch provided)
RSVP: By Thursday 19 September
Alzheimer's Australia ACT
Phone: 6255 0722

[Click here](#) to see the flyer.

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Disability Australia — Enhanced Service Offer Planners at Carers ACT

The Enhanced Service Offer grants are designed to assist people who have a disability, due to a physical, cognitive, intellectual, psychosocial or sensory impairment and their families to be ready for the commencement of Disability Care, which will commence in July 2014 in the ACT, and to provide support for them in the interim. There are three types of Grants available, Aids, Equipment and Minor Modifications, Quality of Life and Flexible Support and Services Grants.

The first round of the Enhanced Service Offer grants closed on 5.00pm Friday 9 August 2013 with over 1300 applications received. Applicants will begin to be advised of the outcome of their application from early October 2013.

The second round of the Enhanced Service Offer grants will open on 9.00am Monday 30 September 2013 and will close on 5.00pm Friday 8 November 2013.

Planners from the Enhanced Services Offer will be spending every Tuesday between 1 October – 5 November 2013 at Carers ACT Holt office to assist carers to fill in and lodge their applications for the grants. Appointments will be essential.

The Planners would appreciate it if carers, recipients and their families can consider the supports, services or items that they would like to apply for, and the difference it will make in their lives, prior to coming to the appointment.

Date: Every Tuesday on 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 October, and 5 November

Time: By appointment

Venue: Carers ACT, 80 Beaurepaire Crescent, Holt

RSVP: Bookings are essential. Phone Elaine on 6296 9924 or Carers ACT Reception on 6296 9900 to make an appointment.

Please see below for more information on the Enhanced Service Offer Grants.

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Disability Australia — Enhanced Service Offer Grants

The ACT Government is hosting community information sessions about round two of the Enhanced Service Offer for people with disabilities, including those with psychosocial disabilities, who are ACT residents aged under 65 years on 1 July 2013.

You only need to attend one session as all sessions will cover the same information:

- What you can apply for under the Enhanced Service Offer.
- What eligibility criteria will be used and what assessment process will be used to consider.
- General information about how to complete your application and where and how to get further assistance if needed.

Dates, times and venues for Community Information sessions

- Thursday 12 September, 12.30pm – 2.00pm
Apollo Room, Hellenic Club, Woden (AUSLAN interpreter will be available)
- Saturday 21 September, 10.30pm – 12.00pm
Ballarn Room, Nature Conservation House, corner Emu Bank and Benjamin Way, Belconnen
- Wednesday 25 September, 5.30pm – 7.00pm
Towncentre Vikings Club, Cnr Athllon Drive and Rowland Rees Crescent, Greenway
- Thursday 26 September, 12.30pm – 2.00pm
The Rainbow, Phillip Avenue, Watson (This is a dedicated forum for people with psychosocial disability)
- Wednesday 2 October, 12.30pm – 2.00pm
Burns Club, Kett Street, Kambah
- Wednesday 16 October, 5.30pm – 7.00pm
Apollo Room, Hellenic Club, Woden (an AUSLAN interpreter will be available)

If you would like to attend an Information Session on the Enhanced Service Offer please register by providing your details and the session you wish to attend by emailing ndis@act.gov.au or phone Canberra Connect 133 427 and ask to be registered for an Enhanced Service Offer information session.

The second round of the Enhanced Service Offer will open **9.00am Monday 30 September 2013** until **5.00pm Friday 8 November 2013**.

This Enhanced Service Offer is funded by the Commonwealth and ACT Governments.

For more information visit

http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/disability_act/national_disability_insurance_scheme/enhanced-service-offer

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Ngunnawal Service Centre Open Day

Carers ACT has launched its new Mental Health Carers Connection Program and a new service centre in Gungahlin (Ngunnawal Neighbourhood Centre). The new program provides respite, information and referral, carer mingle evenings, social support, peer support, educational opportunities, counselling, advocacy and Young Carer case management for carers and families residing in North Canberra. The Ngunnawal Service Centre will enable carers to access a holistic range of service supports.

The new centre will be holding an open day on 12 October that will have entertainment for the whole family.

Date: Saturday 12 October
Time: 10.00am – 1.00pm
Venue: Ngunnawal Neighbourhood Centre (at the Ngunnawal shops)

No need to RSVP, come along and join in the fun.

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Carers Week NGA Morning Tea

Join us in celebrating Carers Week 2013 at the National Gallery of Australia.

The day will include a lovely morning tea, lucky door prizes, presentations, music and an optional tour of the William Kentridge: Drawn from Africa exhibition with the curator.

Date: Tuesday 15 October
Time: 10.30am – 12.30pm
Venue: Gandel Hall, National Gallery of Australia, Parkes

This event is free for family carers residing in the ACT and Southern Highlands. To register please call 6296 9908 or email rsvp@carersact.org.au

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On Course for Carers “A User’s Manual”

All you ever wanted to know about Carers ACT — information on services and supports for unpaid family carers, Q&A, discussions, handouts, etc. Morning tea will be provided.

Date: Thursday 24 October
Time: 10.00am – 12.00pm
Venue: YWCA Lanyon Youth and Community Centre, Sidney Nolan Street, Conder

This event is free for family carers residing in the ACT. To register please call 6296 9908 or email rsvp@carersact.org.au

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The Branch Out Café

Now open 5 days per week 8.30am to 1.00pm at 80 Beaurepaire Crescent, Holt.
The heating is perfect. So come in for morning tea or lunch. Consider the café for catering events.

For more information call 6296 9900 or email Branchoutcafe@carersact.org.au

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Mental Health Carers — Southside Support Group

This is a support group for family members and friends caring for someone living with mental health issues. The group meets on one Wednesday evening most months.

Date: Wednesdays 28 August, 25 September, 30 October, 27 November,
18 December (no groups in January or July)

Time: 6.00pm – 8.00pm

Location: Woden Smith Family, Corner of Launceston and Easty Streets, Woden

For further information please call 1800 242 636 or email rsvp@carersact.org.au

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Mental Health Carers — Northside Support Group

This is a support group for family members and friends caring for someone living with mental health issues. The group meets on the second Tuesday of each month.

Date: Tuesdays 10 September, 8 October,
12 November, 10 December (no groups in January or July)

Time: 5.00pm – 7.00pm

Location: Carers ACT, 80 Beaurepaire Crescent, Holt

For further information please call 1800 242 636 or email rsvp@carersact.org.au

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Mental Health Carers Respite — 1800 052 222

The Mental Health Respite Program provides flexible respite and other supports to meet the individual needs of carers of people with severe mental illness, autism or intellectual disabilities and their families. Services include respite options based on needs assessments, information and referral, links to education programs, counselling, peer support, advocacy services and social and recreational activities. Please call 1800 052 222 or email

mentalhealth.respite@carersact.org.au. The Mental Health Respite program is funded by the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services, and Indigenous Affairs. For more information about support available under this Program, visit the Carers ACT [website](#).

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Counselling at Carers ACT — Supporting Family Carers — 1800 242 636

Did you know that Carers ACT can provide short-term counselling for family carers? Our counselling service can help you manage difficult situations and balance caring in your life. Qualified counsellors are located on site in Holt and Woden to provide carers with confidential and professional face-to-face and telephone counselling. Call the Carer Advisory Service to make an appointment on 1800 242 636. Click here for more information on [support that Carers ACT](#)

[counsellors can offer mental health carers.](#)

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ACT News

CIT – Skills for Carers

CIT term 4 courses for carers include Speaking up, advocacy and juggling, Living a healthy life with long-term conditions and Emotional mastery, plus more.

[Click here](#) for information on term 4 courses for carers.

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ACT Government Budget Consultation Paper 2014–2015

The 2014–15 ACT Budget Consultation Paper provides an overview of the Budget and valuable background information to assist the community in providing quick and easy input into the 2014-15 Budget development.

The Government is seeking the views of the community on how the ACT's resources are allocated, where services could be enhanced and where possible efficiencies could be made.

The closing date for feedback is **24 October 2013**.

For further enquiries, please call the Chief Minister and Treasury Directorate on 6207 1375.

[Click here](#) for more information and a link to the ACT Government Budget Consultation Paper.

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ACT Consumer Carer Caucus

The ACT Consumer Carer Caucus is a forum for mental health consumers and carers in the ACT to meet, share information, form partnerships and be involved in the development and implementation of mental health reform.

Our Aims

- To utilise our lived experience and unique expertise in mental health to identify ways to bring about positive change within the mental health sector
- To be a respected, combined voice for mental health consumers and carers in the ACT speaking to government and community organisations
- To shape and influence the work of Mental Health Community Coalition ACT to ensure it reflects the views and needs of consumers and carers

Date: Friday 27 September
Time: 12.00pm – 2.00pm
Location: Griffin Centre, Canberra City, MHCC meeting room, level 1
RSVP: To RSVP, please email caucus@mhccact.org.au

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LifeCircle — Three day training

LifeCircle is a charity that offers a free support service to carers of terminally ill loved ones, by providing volunteer mentors with lived experience to be there anytime from diagnosis to an extraordinary 13 months' post-bereavement. LifeCircle is holding 3 day training on Sept 28-29 and Oct 5.

To find out more please contact LifeCircle ACT Coordinator on Lucy Baker on 0410 930 726.

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Let's Talk — For Suicide Prevention

You can help someone who is feeling suicidal. It is distressing to realise that someone close to you may be considering taking their own life. It is often difficult to know what to say or what to do. People need to know that it is OK to Talk.

Below are some suggestions of how you might support someone you know who may be at risk:

- Stay calm and ask the person if they are thinking of suicide. People are often fearful that asking may introduce the thought to the person. This is a myth.
- Spend time with the person, encourage them to talk about how they are feeling and to get further professional advice.
- Don't agree to keep it a secret. The person's safety is your main concern. You may need to talk to someone else to make sure that the person is safe.
- Remember, most people who consider taking their own life get through the crisis.
- What to do if someone has attempted suicide.
- Get medical help immediately. Call 000.
- Make sure that the person receives ongoing support. People who have attempted suicide have a much higher risk of attempting suicide again in the days, weeks and months following.
- Be aware of your own reactions. Supporting someone at risk of suicide is stressful. Take care of yourself by taking time out to relax and do things you enjoy.

Check out the new Let's Talk website for more information

www.health.act.gov.au/suicideprevention

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Save the Date — Launch of Mental Health Week

The ACT Mental Health Week Committee would like to announce the Launch of ACT Mental Health Week:

ACT Mental Health and Wellbeing Services Expo

Date: Tuesday 8 October

Time: 10.00am – 1.00pm

Location: Ann Harding Conference Centre, University Drive South, Building 24 NATSEM Building, University of Canberra

More information and stall holder registration forms available next week! For more information contact Rachel on 6249 7756 or email Rachel.muller@mhccact.org.au

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Mental Health Week Awards 2013

The ACT Mental Health Week Awards are back for 2013! The ACT Mental Health Week Awards were established to recognise the achievements of individuals and organisations who have worked to improve understanding, awareness, service provision and the general mental health and wellbeing of the Canberra community over the past 12 months. Organisations and/or individuals may be nominated under the following nine award categories:

Organisations, Partnerships and Strategic Alliances:

1. Service Delivery and Innovation Award
2. Cross Sector Collaboration Award
3. Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention Award

Individual Employees:

4. Service Delivery and Innovation Award
5. Cross Sector Collaboration Award
6. Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention Award

Consumer and Carer Involvement and Engagement:

7. Consumer Contribution to Sector Award
8. Carer Contribution to Sector Award

Volunteer Award:

9. Mental Health Volunteer Award

Nominations close on 1 October 2013. More information about the Mental Health Week Awards is available in the [Guidelines and Nomination Form](#) or visit MHCC ACT's website www.mhccact.org.au. Enquiries about the Awards may be directed to Rachel Muller, Mental

Health Community Coalition ACT on 6249 7756 or email Rachel.muller@mhccact.org.au

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Mindscapes Art and Photography Competition for 2013

After the huge success of the competition over the last few years we are pleased to announce its return for 2013!

It's time to get creative with your cameras, paint brushes, canvas or whatever your favourite medium may be for the Mindscapes Art and Photography exhibition!

This year's theme is "Connectivity".

Guidelines for Entries

- Exhibition open to photography and art work of any medium
- Entries can be submitted to Belconnen Community Centre, Swanson Court, Belconnen.

Closing date for entries is Thursday 26 September 2013.

Categories will include:

- Open – anyone is able to enter into this category
- Consumer and Carers – Mental Health Consumers and their Carers can enter
- Student – High School, College or Tertiary Students can enter this category if they choose (student number and name of school is required to enter this category).

The art and photography will be shortlisted by the Mindscapes committee. From the shortlisted art and photography a panel of judges will choose a winner for each category. Prizes will be awarded in each category.

The art works will be exhibited at "gallery@belconnen" Belconnen Community Centre from Wednesday 2 October until Friday 18 October to coincide with Mental Health Week.

The Special opening will be held on Thursday 3 October at 4.30pm in the Belconnen Community Centre Gallery.

Download an entry form from www.mhccact.org.

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Mindscapes Mish Mash Variety Night

The Mindscapes Mish Mash Variety Night wants YOU!

This year we're mixing it up at the Mindscapes Festival with the debut of the Mindscapes Mish Mash Variety Night: an evening of arts and entertainment by a cross section of consumers, carers, amateurs, and professionals. Whether you're a juggler, a joker, an actor, performance artist, a dancer, muso, magician or any other type of performer... We'd love to have you at the Mindscapes Mish Mash. Performance will be held during Mental Health Week on Thursday

October 10 from 7.00 – 11.00pm at the White Eagle Polish Club, Turner.

This Variety Night is open to everyone!!

For more info please contact Ben Drysdale on 6264 0252 or ben.drysdale@bcsact.com.au

Closing date for entries is Monday 9 September 2013! Visit www.mhccact.org.au to download and EOI!

Keep an eye on www.mhccact.org.au for all upcoming Mindscapes Festival information! Follow us @ #mindscapes and www.facebook.com/mindscapesfestival

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Mindscapes Festival Save the Date

Mindscapes Short Film Festival

Date: Wednesday 9 October

Time: 6.00pm – 9.30pm

Location: National Film and Sound Archive, McCoy Circuit, Acton

For more information email Rachel.Muller@mhccact.org.au

Mish Mash Variety Night

Date: Thursday 10 October

Time: 7.00pm – 11.00pm

Location: Polish White Eagle Club Canberra, 38 David Street, Turner

For more information email ben.drysdale@bcsact.com.au

Poetry night

Date: Thursday 17 October

Time: 6.30pm – 8.00pm

Location: Smiths Alternative, 76 Alinga Street, Canberra City

For more information email jacqui@mieact.org.au

Art and Photography Competition

Date: Thursday 3 October – Friday 18 October

Location: Belconnen Community Centre, 26 Chandler Street, Belconnen

For more information email Kate.Wells@bcsact.com.au

Keep an eye on www.mhccact.org.au for all upcoming Mindscapes Festival information! Follow us @ #mindscapes and www.facebook.com/mindscapesfestival

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Mental Health Community Coalition ACT E-Bulletin

It is only two weeks until ACT Mental Health Week! The calendar of events will be available on the Mental Health Community Coalition website www.mhccact.org.au from next week! [Click here](#) for the latest Mental Health Community Coalition E-Bulletin.

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The Rainbow Cooking Group

Would you like to discover cheap and healthy meal ideas? Or how to save money, while still buying healthy food, at the supermarket? The Rainbow will be running 2 cooking groups.

The Rosy Apron all women's group

Date: Every Wednesday beginning 9 October

Time: 10.30am – 11.30am

Location: Block H, Canberra Technology Park, Philip Avenue, Watson

The Rainbow Cooking Group (open for all)

Date: Every Thursday beginning 10 October

Time: 10.30am – 11.30am

Location: Block H, Canberra Technology Park, Philip Avenue, Watson

For more information and to register please phone 62426575 or email rainbow@mhf.org.au. [Click here](#) to view the flyer.

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ACT Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing call for nominations

The Minister for Ageing, Mr Shane Rattenbury MLA, is seeking nominations for membership of the 2014–15 ACT Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing.

The Council provides strategic advice to the Minister for Ageing on issues affecting older Canberrans.

Further information, including Terms of Reference, is available at:

http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/wac/ageing/advisory_council_on_ageing/recruitment.

Applications can be made online at: <https://dhcs.smartygrants.com.au/>.

For further assistance phone the ACT Office for Ageing, Community Services Directorate, on 6207 6138 or email communitypolicy@act.gov.au

The closing date for nominations is 13 September 2013.

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Mental Health in Multicultural Australia (MHIMA) Consumer and Carer Working Groups: Vacancies

The MHiMA project is funded by the Australian Government, Department of Health & Ageing to provide a national focus for advice and support to providers and governments on mental health and suicide prevention for people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. [Click here](#) for the August edition of the Mental Health in Multicultural Australia newsletter.

In February 2013, MHiMA established a Consumer Working Group and a Carer Working Group. Four vacancies exist across both groups. We are seeking:

- Consumer representatives from Tasmania and the Northern Territory
- Carer representatives from Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory

Further information about how to apply, including the application form, can be found at the following link:

<http://www.mhima.org.au/mhima-latest-news/mhima-seeking-more-consumer-and-carer-representatives-in-some-states-and-territories>

Applications close on **September 27 2013**. For further information about the Working Groups, please contact Amy Baker on (08) 8302 2643 or amy@mhima.org.au.

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Mental health Carers Coffee & Chat

An informal monthly get together for anyone who has a family member or friend experiencing mental health problems. No agenda, just coffee and conversation.

Date: 19 August (3rd Monday each month)

Time: 12.30 – 2.00pm

Venue: CIT Woden café canteen area, C Block, Ainsworth Street, Phillip

Buy good coffee from the café, BYO or buy your lunch.

For more information, contact CIT Skills for Carers on 6207 3628 or CarerSkills@cit.edu.au

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9th National Seclusion and Restraint Forum

One of the core functions of the Safety and Quality Partnership Standing Committee (SQPSC) is the allocation of and support to jurisdictions to hold an annual national seclusion and restraint reduction forum. National seclusion and restraint reduction forums provide a networking opportunity for mental health staff with an interest in reducing seclusion and restraint across Australia and maintain momentum in the changing of culture and practice. National seclusion and restraint reduction forums additionally identify ongoing areas of continuous improvement and innovation in this arena.

The ACT was asked in November 2012 by the Safety and Quality Partnership Standing Committee to host the 2013 Forum. The theme of this year's Forum is ***'Reducing the trauma***

with least restrictive practice: Why it matters to walk the talk'.

The desired outcomes of the Forum are:

- A continued reduction in the number of seclusion episodes
- The reduction of aggressive behaviour by any person in mental health settings and minimisation of the use of seclusion and restraint
- Best practices for the reduction and where possible the elimination of seclusion and restraint, and
- An increased focus on understanding and reducing areas of restraint in Health Services beyond mental health.

Date: Thursday 28 – Friday 29 November

Venue: Shine Dome, Australian Academy of Science, Canberra

[Click here](#) to view the flyer. [Click here](#) to access the registration form. [Click here](#) for a list of nearby accommodation.

If you have any further queries email Elizabeth.medley@act.gov.au or phone 6205 2154.

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Free Training Course: Engaging People to Talk About Problem Gambling Issues

Many people with gambling problems seek help for other problems such as financial difficulties, relationship, housing, mental health or drug and alcohol problems before seeking help for their gambling problems. It is likely that community sector workers in these non gambling specific areas will encounter people with gambling problems. This training will increase awareness and skills for these workers equipping them to help their clients begin the process of change.

The workshop will cover the following topics:

- Recognising problem gambling
- Raising the issue of gambling
- Assessment of gambling and related concerns
- Measuring readiness for change in relation to gambling
- Working with reluctance and resistance to changing gambling
- Overview of best practice in the gambling context
- Gambling specific referral options.

Date: Thursday 28 November

Time: 9.00am – 4.30pm

Venue: CIT, Ainsworth Street, Phillip

Tea/Coffee, morning tea and lunch are provided.

For more information or to book a place at the course for please contact Alex Ingham at the ACT

Gambling and Racing Commission on 6207 0305 or email alexander.ingham@act.gov.au

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National & International News and Research

Online Survey of the National Contributing Life Project

The **Pilot Online Survey of the National Contributing Life Project** is now live. The National Mental Health Commission is encouraging people with a lived experience of mental health issues, their families and support people to complete the survey.

The survey seeks information about:

- What helps people to experience a good life;
- What hinders this; and
- Importantly what would make a difference to their lives.

The Pilot Survey also asks people about their experience of services, support and treatment they have received. The Pilot Contributing Life Online Survey will run from 4 September 2013 to 3 October 2013. People are able to complete the survey over as many sittings as they wish or require but it is estimated to take 30–50 minutes.

A link to the survey is available [here](#)

Information about the project can be obtained

from: <http://www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/our-work/national-contributing-life-project.aspx>

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FECCA 2013 Conference

Breaking down the barriers: A strength-based approach for a just society

Join the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) in partnership with the Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland (ECCQ) and the Multicultural Communities Council Gold Coast (MCCGC) at the FECCA 2013 Conference.

Date: Thursday 7 – Friday 8 November

Venue: Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre

[Click here](#) for the application form. For more information on the program and invited speakers, or to register please visit www.fecca2013.com

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In the media

Making sense of stress and its affect on your health

Your stress response plays a vital role in how you respond to the dynamic world around you.

This network of hormonal pullies and brain-based levers helped your forebears roaming the African savannah evade predators and stave off infection. But these days your stress response can be more enemy than ally.

Much of our stress response machinery is designed to respond to short-term, or acute stress. So swerving your bike away from a careering car, or knuckling down to meet a work deadline are the modern equivalents of leaping away from a lion's swipe. Once the danger has been averted, your body sets about calming things down again.

But when an event or situation – otherwise called a stressor – lasts for months or even years, chronic stress is the result. Caring for a loved one with cancer, being under financial pressure, or not having significant social contact with others can all lead to chronic psychological stress...

[Click here](#) for the full article.

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Secret childhoods

Australia has an army of young carers giving up their childhood to look after relatives with disabilities or those who are ill. They don't want pity or medals but they deserve recognition.

[Click here](#) for the full article.

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Links to current media that may be of interest to carers

- [Suicide becoming a cultural epidemic](#)
- [Cairns Hospital staff rally over mental health beds shortage](#)
- [Why hasn't the mental health of Australians improved?](#)
- [Women opt to take a different sort of health pledge](#)
- [Improving the wellbeing of family carers](#)
- [Apps can help relieve stress, anxiety](#)
- [Bega mental health nurses' mentoring awards](#)
- [Australian Rotary Health launches new campaign for 'Hat Day' on Oct 11 via The Holla Agency](#)
- [Urgent call to save struggling families](#)
- [Targeting isolation and restraint in mental health facilities](#)
- [Scheme set to ease minds of ageing carers](#)

- [A generation caught in the middle](#)
- [Concerns Tasmania's mental health system is in breakdown](#)
- [Plan to halve Australian suicide rate](#)
- [Social media becoming 'barometer' for self-harm as rates rise](#)
- [Leading groups join push for LGBTI suicide prevention strategy](#)
- [Doctor renowned for mental health research](#)
- [Deadly Awards Recognise Community Contributions](#)
- [R U OK? What should you do to protect the mental health of your employees?](#)
- [Mobile barriers uncovered in telephone polls](#)
- [Depressed workers suffer in silence](#)
- [Lift for mental health as Headspace arrives in Rockhampton](#)

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If you or someone you know may be at risk of suicide contact Lifeline 131 114, beyondblue 1300 224 636, or Salvo Care Line 1300 363 622.

The opinions expressed in this E-Bulletin do not necessarily reflect the opinions and views of Carers ACT.

Mental Health Carers Voice E-Bulletin is funded by the ACT Government.

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www.carersvoice.com.au