

## E Bulletin – 31 October 2012

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### Mental Health Carers Voice

#### Mental Health Carers Forum 20 November

Liz Dawson, Project Coordinator of Common Ground Canberra and Simon Rosenberg, Chief Executive of Northside Community Service will present on *Ending Homelessness* based on the Common Ground Model. The Common Ground Model is a partnership between community groups, the private sector and the government, in order to offer a supported and inclusive community for homeless individuals and families, as well as low income earners. Common Ground will have a mix of around 50 percent income earning households. It aims to create a community with good role models for all residents, rather than a concentrated pocket of disadvantage.

The development will have housing of a very high quality, and it will be a secure facility with a 24hr caretaker and security access to the building. It will also include support services on site for people who have need for these services.

This Forum gives you the opportunity to have discussions about supported housing needs and homelessness in Canberra. The Forum also provides carers with an opportunity to connect with MH Carer Representatives, find out information about current policy developments and to raise issues of concern with representatives

Date: Tuesday 20 November 2012

Time: 12.00pm – 2.00pm

Location: Riley Hall, Pilgrim House, 69 Northbourne Avenue (on the corner of Rudd Street), Canberra City

RSVP: Friday 16 November 2012 by email [Rosie.fisk@carersact.org.au](mailto:Rosie.fisk@carersact.org.au) or phone 9296 9952.

Light canapés will be provided.

### CARERS ACT

#### Carers ACT 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner

Carers ACT is roaring into its 20's! Please join us to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner. Drinks on arrival, 3 course meal and live

entertainment. An invitation is available [here](#).

Date: Friday 9 November

Time: 7.00pm

Location: The Realm Hotel, 18 National Circuit, Barton

Dress: Lounge suit/Cocktail dress - Roaring 20's style if you like, though not required

To register contact 6296 9933 or email [Alison.elliott@carersact.org.au](mailto:Alison.elliott@carersact.org.au) by 26 October 2012. A wait-list has been established for complimentary tickets.

### Southside Carer Support Group

A support group for carers on the Southside meets on the second Tuesday of each month.

Date: Next meeting 13 November

Time: 10.00am – 12.00pm

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](mailto:rsvp@carersact.org.au)

### Cottage Open Day – Dementia Respite

The Dementia Respite Cottage is having an open day, there will be lunch and a sing-a-long with Peter Ceran.

Date: Saturday 17 November

Time: 10.00am – 2.00pm

Location: 17 Denison Street, Deakin

RSVP: Pam Siljak by phone 6285 2082 or by email [pam.siljak@carersact.org.au](mailto:pam.siljak@carersact.org.au)

## ACT NEWS

### The Belconnen Hearing Voices Group

The Belconnen Hearing Voices group runs every second Wednesday from 1.00pm-3.00pm at the Belconnen Library. The next meeting is

Wednesday 31 October. This meeting is open to anyone who hears voices and would like a place where they can share their experiences and meet others who may experience similar things. No referral or RSVP is necessary. If you require further information please contact Emma on 6249 7912 or email [emma@rfact.org.au](mailto:emma@rfact.org.au)

### Supporting someone with mental illness – A course for family carers

These three sessions are designed to provide information about mental health conditions and available supports as well as an opportunity to better understand and deal with the issues and challenges that arise when someone you know is unwell.

Date: 3 sessions on Mondays 12, 19, 26 November

Time: 1.00 – 4.00pm

Location: The Calvary Hospital, Haydon Drive, Bruce

To register or for further information call 6207 3628 or email [CarerSkills@cit.edu.au](mailto:CarerSkills@cit.edu.au)

This course is facilitated by Jenny Thompson and is conducted by CIT CarerSkills in partnership with the Carer Peer Support Program at the mental health ward at Calvary Public Hospital.

### Lifeline Canberra's Accidental Counsellor training

The Accidental Counsellor training is a two day workshop that provides participants with fundamental skills in crisis support counselling and dealing with difficult clients and situations. The course also covers topics such as dealing with people who are angry, highly distressed or experiencing effects of a mental illness.

Dates: Thursday 15 and Friday 16 November  
Thursday 6 and Friday 7 December

Cost: The standard rate for the Accidental Counsellor course is \$400 per person or \$360 per person for not-for-profit organisations and pension card holders.

For further information on these courses or to download a registration form contact the Lifeline Training team by phone on 6247 0655 or email [training@act.lifeline.org.au](mailto:training@act.lifeline.org.au).

### Services in Canberra for people under 18 years of age with mental health issues

There are a range of organisations in Canberra that offer services and facilities for young people suffering mental health issues. The Youth Coalition has produced a book "[Big Red Book](#)" that contains detailed profiles of 96 programs and services that work with young people in the ACT. You can download the book [here](#). The Mental Health Foundation has a directory of Mental Health Services in Canberra, you can access the directory [here](#). Other organisations that provide mental health services for people under 18 years of age are [Headspace ACT](#); [Catholic Care ACT \(STEPS program\)](#); Richmond Fellowship, Mental Health Foundation and Woden Community Service ([Personal Helpers & Mentors](#) program for people 16 years and up, referrals from family/carers and self-referrals accepted); and [Barnardos Canberra](#).

### Applications for the Mental Health Consumer Scholarship Scheme Open

The ACT Mental Health Consumer Scholarship Scheme is an ACT Health Directorate initiative with the Canberra Institute of Technology, Woden campus. It creates an opportunity for people who are 17 years or older, have a

mental illness or mental disorder, and would like the opportunity to undertake Certificate IV in the Human Services at the Centre of Health, Community and Wellbeing, CIT.

Applications close 30 November 2012.

The scholarship covers the course fees only. There is extra tutorial and pastoral support if needed and flexibility in the course. You can download an application pack [here](#).

For further information telephone Therese Foster or Jane Pepper on 6205 1178 or email [therese.Foster@act.gov.au](mailto:therese.Foster@act.gov.au)

## NATIONAL NEWS

### Mental Health Respite: Carer Consultation Report

During July 2012, the Mental Health Council of Australia (MHCA) and the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) hosted two workshops with key mental health carer stakeholder representatives to seek input into the expansion of FaHCSIA's Mental Health Respite: Carer Support Program (MHR:CS), following the Australian Government's \$54.3 million allocation over five years to expand mental health respite and carer support services. More than 90 mental health carers and respite services (including MHCA) from across Australia attended workshops in Canberra on 2 July (mental health carers) and 9 July (MHR:CS services) to inform decisions about how the key strengths of the current carer support program can be implemented into new and expanded services. The combined summary report of both workshops is available [here](#).

### Research: Consumer participation in the health system

The following 2012-13 Victorian General Audit report provides details on consumer participation within the Victorian health care system. Read more [here](#).

### Research: Private lives 2: the second national survey on the health and wellbeing of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) Australians

*Private Lives 2* (PL2) is a report on the second national survey of the health and wellbeing of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) Australians. The first *Private Lives* (PL1) was released in 2006 and was, at that time, the largest survey of its kind conducted anywhere in the world. In 2011, 3,835 GLBT respondents successfully completed PL2. The Report discusses the mental health and wellbeing of GLBT Australians. Read more [here](#).

### Research: Supporting older people who are experiencing mental distress or illness

The Benevolent Society has released the seventh in its series of community aged care Research to Practice Briefings. Briefing 7, *Supporting older people who are experiencing mental distress or illness*, reviews Australian and international evidence on the symptoms and treatments of mental illness in older people to provide guidance for community care practitioners in their day-to-day work of supporting older people. Read more [here](#).

### Research: 'I wish I'd known sooner!' The impact of financial counselling on debt resolution and client wellbeing

This is a research report on recent national research commissioned by The Salvation Army and undertaken by Dr Nicola Brackertz of Swinburne Institute at Swinburne University, Melbourne. The research is part of The Salvation Army's *Doorways* Project (an initiative supported by Westpac). *Doorways* provides a holistic, integrated and capacity building approach to delivery of emergency relief services. Read more [here](#).

### Research: Half of Australia's carers are depressed – making a hard job even harder

Research suggests that more than half of Australia's carers (56%) have at least moderate depression and a fifth of them have severe depression. Research also shows that due to the constant and sometimes overwhelming nature of their roles, these people are often at greater risk of developing depression. With one in eight Australians supporting a family member or friend who is unwell, that amounts to thousands of people at risk of depression. CEO of beyondblue, Kate Carnell AO, said when a person has depression or anxiety, it's like the ripple effect of a stone being thrown into a pond. It's not just the person with depression or anxiety who is affected, it's their partners, parents, children, extended family members, friends and colleagues who are likely to be affected as well. Read more [here](#).

### Research: Half of Australia's 10-year-olds are already dieting – and boys are watching their weight more than girls.

Doctors warned that kids on crash diets risk stunting their growth. New findings from the nation's longest-running study of Australian

families reveals that 75% of "tweenagers" – kids aged 10 and 11 – have tried to lose weight in the past year. Read [more](#). You can access the report [here](#).

### Research: Anglicare Reveals Aussie 'Food Shock'

New research estimates that 45,000 households using Anglicare Emergency Relief services don't have enough money to adequately feed their families. Anglicare Australia's State of the Family report – *When there's not enough to eat* – is based on a national study into food insecurity among people seeking Emergency Relief. Read more [here](#). The report is available [here](#).

### Scottish Mental Health Film Festival

Readers might be interested to hear about some of the films that won at the Scottish Mental Health Film Festival awards. The Festival accepts entries from around the world and included almost 100 entries from Scottish, British and European filmmakers, as well as entries from Canada, Australia and India. Read more [here](#).

### Research: AIA Healthy Living Index

According to this report, Australian adults view having a better quality of life (67%), better mental health (40%) and not getting sick (38%) as the main motivators for living a healthy lifestyle. Australians believe the two most important drivers of healthy living are sufficient sleep (64%) and eating healthily (61%). Access the report [here](#).

### Research: Creativity closely linked to mental illness

People who are deemed creative, or work in creative professions are more likely to suffer from psychiatric disorders and mental illness than any other person. A study of more than a million people found writers had a higher risk of anxiety and bipolar disorders, schizophrenia, unipolar depression, and substance abuse, while dancers and photographers were more likely to have bipolar disorder. Read more [here](#).

### Research: New treatment stops nightmares

Australian doctors believe they've found a way to erase horrific nightmares from people's minds. Dr Andrea Phelps, from the Australian Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health, said a technique called imagery rehearsal treatment was allowing people with post-traumatic stress disorder to literally rewrite the script of distressing nightmares to change their dreams or get rid of them. Read [more](#).

### New moves to tackle mental health at work

Breaking new corporate ground, WA-based earthmoving equipment supplier Emeco is among an emerging group of companies encouraging employees to feel comfortable opening up about suicide and mental health, even at work. Read more [here](#).

### Phone Connections peer support service "warm line" – 1300 135 846

Community Connections provides a national non-crisis, peer support telephone line. CAN – Community Connections is managed by Consumer Activity Network (Mental Health) Inc (CAN Mental Health). Phone Connections is a national service available to mental health consumers. It is a national non-crisis, peer

support telephone 'warm line' that accepts self-referrals by mental health consumers. The uniqueness of Phone Connections is that it does not rely on callers ringing in to receive support. Rather, the peer support workers call consumers after consent is given to provide peer support. The service is currently operating four evenings per week: Monday and Thursday 7.00pm – 11.00pm; and Friday and Saturday 6.00pm – 1.30am. Phone 1300 135 846.

### **News: \$68.2 Million Research Funding Boost for Mental Health**

New Federal funding has been announced for research into anxiety, eating disorders, depression and other mental health conditions. To read Minister Butler's press release, follow this [link](#).

### **Research: NSW workers are too scared to call in sick**

Fear of unemployment and loss of wages has led to a sizeable reduction in the number of sick days taken by NSW workers this year. Latest figures show that NSW, with an annual decrease of 11.6% in sick days- which represents eight days off per person – is almost 5% above the statewide average of 7%. The national survey of employers also reveals days off for mental health and stress has jumped by a whopping 36% across the nation. Read more [here](#).

### **Research: Siblings Need Help Too**

A youth mental health worker now lecturing in occupational therapy at La Trobe University says the impact on siblings of young people experiencing mental illness has gone under the

radar. Siann Bowman says it's crucial that families of people with mental illness are supported. 'With an increasing number of adolescents and young adults still living at home, support for the family, including siblings, is vital. Sibling relationships tend to have longer durations than most other relationships. However little research attention has been given to the sibling experience of early psychosis,' says Ms Bowman. Read more [here](#).

### **Virtual Clinic to Offer Free Mental Health Counselling**

Australians needing help with mental health issues will soon have access to free online and phone counselling when a new national 'virtual clinic' opens later this year. Minister for Mental Health and Ageing Mark Butler said the virtual clinic has taken a big step towards full operation after the Government signed a three year, \$16.4 million funding agreement with Access Macquarie. "This portal will allow people to access information and treatment as an alternative to traditional face-to-face services, in their own time, in an environment in which they're comfortable," Mr Butler said. Read more [here](#).

### **The Shed Online opens the door to Men's Sheds across Australia**

The Men's Shed movement in Australia is booming, with the number of Sheds more than doubling in the last two years as thousands of men seek to connect with each other. The success of the country's biggest shed, the Shed Online [www.theshedonline.org.au](http://www.theshedonline.org.au), which over 6500 men have joined since beyondblue launched it in December 2010, highlights its growth. In 2010, there were 400 Men's Sheds in Australia, and that number has grown to 860. Each Shed size ranges from three to 100

members, and limited funding means few sheds can afford to create websites. Read more [here](#).

#### **Media Release: Progress with the NDIS**

The Every Australian Counts campaign has released a media statement  
Read more [here](#).

#### **New i-Phone app to help manage anxiety**

The national mental health charity, SANE Australia, has launched an app to help people to manage their anxiety. SANE says the *Talking Anxiety* app aims to give people knowledge and confidence to manage the day-to-day challenges of living with an anxiety disorder, by providing access to the experiences of others. Read more [here](#).

#### **The End Hunger Report**

For the first time, Foodbank has produced a report on hunger in Australia. It presents the results of a survey of welfare agencies sourcing food from Foodbank undertaken in 2011, and highlights the food needs of those agencies in addressing food insecurity among individuals and families in Australia. Analysis for the report was undertaken by Deloitte Access Economics. Read more [here](#).

#### **Schools to get help dealing with suicide**

The Australian Government will pay for specialists to be sent to high schools when a student has committed suicide. The program will be run by Headspace, Australia's national youth mental health foundation. Read more [here](#).

#### **Research: Cost of homelessness is up to \$5.5 million per person**

The chronically homeless are costing taxpayers a "staggering" \$900,000 to \$5.5 million per person in economic costs, a ground-breaking study has revealed. The Lifecourse Institutional Costs of Homelessness for Vulnerable Groups study, led by Professor Eileen Baldry and researchers from the University of NSW, followed the lives of 11 people and found that between them they had cost State and Australian Governments almost \$22 million. It also revealed that intervening early to stop children and young people becoming homeless could save taxpayers millions of dollars in health, legal and custodial services. Read more [here](#).

*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 reflect the opinions and views of Carers ACT.*

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