



MENTAL HEALTH
**carers
voice**

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

ISSN 2201-8913 (Online)



May 23

E-Bulletin

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Mental Health Carers Voice

NDIS Focus Group for Mental Health Carers

In response to demand, Wendy Kipling from the ACT NDIS Taskforce has offered to run a focus group for mental health carers to consider:

- Eligibility criteria
- What does 'psychosocial disability' mean, and what does it mean for a person living with a mental illness
- What does person-centred care mean in the context of the NDIS
- Planning for the roll-out of the NDIS

The focus group will involve some possible scenarios that are relevant for mental health carers. This get-together is an opportunity for you to raise questions about what the NDIS may mean for you and your family. NDIS is now known as DisabilityCare Australia.

Date: Thursday 30 May

Time: 2.00pm – 4.00pm

Location: The Hub, Carers ACT, 80 Beaurepaire Crescent, Holt

RSVP: mhcarers@carersact.org.au; or phone Rosie on 6296 9900

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****WANTED** Mental Health Carer Representatives**

The Mental Health Carers Voice Program is funded by the ACT Government for mental health carers to have a greater voice. Carer representatives are remunerated for their time and their expertise and, in addition, receive a range of training and supports.

Currently, the Program has several vacancies for carer representative positions, and people with lived experience of being a mental health carer are invited to consider becoming a carer representative. If you are interested in participating, but would prefer to be a little less engaged, there are vacancies for alternate representatives for various committees. The alternate representative attends meetings when the carer representative cannot attend.

For more information about becoming a carer representative, phone Rosie Fisk on 6296 9900 or email mhcarers@carersact.org.au. More information is also available on the Mental Health Carers Voice website at www.carersvoice.com.au.

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Establishing a National MH Consumer Peak Body & ACT MH Community Policing Initiative

The Mental Health Community Coalition ACT, the ACT Mental Health Consumer Network, Carers ACT, and Mental Health, JH&ADS invite you to this forum.

Date: Monday 3 June

Time: 5.00pm – 7.30pm

Location: Room 6, level 1, Griffin Centre, 20 Genge Street, Canberra City

Establishing a National MH Consumer Peak Body – Keith Mahar, Michelle Banfield, Jodie Fisher, and Keah Woodgate: MH Consumer Organisation Project Consumer Reference Group and secretariat

The speakers will provide an update on the progress of the project and the recently held Consumer Reference Group meeting.

The aim of this two year project funded by Department of Health and Ageing is to establish a national mental health consumer organisation to bring together a diversity of mental health consumers and mental health consumer organisations and groups enabling them to work collaboratively towards achieving a shared national vision leading to improved quality of life, social justice and inclusion.

ACT MH Community Policing Initiative – *Sergeant Glenn Thomas and Nick Keeling, ACT Policing*

The MH Community Policing Initiative provides mental health training to all ACT Policing officers and sees mental health clinicians embedded in the ACT Policing Operations centre to provide

direct support to police on the road.

Responding to mental health jobs account for 10 per cent of all police incidents, and police spend around 80 minutes on each. The initiative supports officers with skills and advice to better respond to incidents and allow for more informed decision making and better outcomes for police and most importantly people with mental ill-health in the community.

Your active participation in discussion is welcome and appreciated. We hope you can join us for this forum. Consumers and carers are particularly welcome. For questions or to RSVP, please contact MHCC ACT on 6249 7756 or mhccact@mhccact.org.au

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National Carer Representative News

Janet Milford ACT National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum Representative has forwarded several documents to Mental Health Carers Voice that she believes may be useful resources for mental health carers. The documents cover issues such as carer recognition and rights, and guidance for involving families in care, assessment and treatment processes:

[Learning from Trieste](#)

[Involving Families: Guidance Notes](#)

[Privacy and Confidentiality Issues Paper](#)

[National Standards: Standard 7 Carers](#)

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Carers ACT News

On Course for Carers

June: Tobins Canberra Funerals

Wendy from Tobins will talk about prepaid funerals and how to plan a funeral.

Date: Tuesday 25 June

Time: 10.00am – 12.00pm

Location: Carers ACT, 80 Beaurepaire Crescent, Holt

July: Wellness Day – Special Session Including Lunch

Our Wellness Day this year will offer life-enhancing sessions including energising yoga, COTA's "Positive Outcomes Program", hand-on mini-sessions and demonstrations of alternative therapies, with a guided meditation to end the day.

Date: Wednesday 24 July

Time: 9.30am – 3.30pm (healthy lunch provided)

Location: Carers ACT, 80 Beaurepaire Crescent, Holt

RSVP: by Wednesday 17 July (please advise of any special dietary needs) to Eleanor on 6296 9908 or email rsvp@carersact.org.au

For suggestions on future topics, please email Marie at marie.falconer@carersact.org.au

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Alzheimer's & Dementia Workshop

Karen from Alzheimer's Australia (ACT) will present an interactive session focusing on changed behaviour and meaningful activities. It will include practical ideas and strategies to assist in these areas of dementia care.

Date: Tuesday 4 June

Time: 9.30am – 1.30pm (a light lunch will be provided)

Location: The Carers Hub, Carers ACT, 80 Beaurepaire Crescent, Holt

RSVP: To register please call Eleanor on 6296 9908 or email rsvp@carersact.org.au

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Winter Seasonal Lunch

Warm up in winter with an east meets west buffet style lunch with other carers.

Date: Thursday 6 June

Time: 12.00pm – 2.00pm

Location: Family Food Court Restaurant, upstairs 28 Woolley Street, Dickson

RSVP: To register please call Eleanor on 6296 9908 or email rsvp@carersact.org.au

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Private viewing at the National Gallery of Australia

Turner from the Tate: The making of a Master

A comprehensive overview of Turner's monumental landscapes and atmospheric, light-filled seascapes, while offering insights into his working life and practices.

Date: Wednesday 12 or Thursday 13 June

Time: 10.30am (meet at the main entrance at 10.15am)

Location: The National Gallery of Australia, Parkes

RSVP: By Wednesday 5 June, call Eleanor on 6296 9908 or email rsvp@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 22 May, 26 June, 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 & 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: 14 May, 11 June (dates for second half of 2013 coming soon)

Time: 5.00pm – 7.00pm

Location: The Carers Hub, Carers ACT, 80 Beaufort 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 supports 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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Carers ACT new disability ebulletin

Carers ACT have released a new ebulletin to keep carers informed and up to date with the latest news about DisabilityCare Australia. [Click here to download the second edition of the disability ebulletin](#) and to subscribe.

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ACT News

Carer Consultant located at the Adult Mental Health Unit 2 days per week

Did you know there is a carer consultant located at the Adult Mental Health Unit 2 days a week? If you would like to discuss your experience as a family member/friend/carer of someone who

has been admitted to the Adult Mental Health Unit, you can make an appointment or drop in to reception every Wednesday from 12.30pm to 1.30pm. [Click here to download the flyer](#). You can contact the Carer Consultant on 6174 5424 or send an email to: Carly.Vesela@act.gov.au.

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LivingWorks Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) presented by Lifeline Canberra

ASIST is a two-day interactive workshop which aims to improve participants suicide awareness and prevention skills. The course is presented by LivingWorks-accredited facilitators, who use internationally standardised resources and materials. Participants are trained to recognise when a person may be at risk and how to respond to improve the immediate and long-term safety of the person at risk.

Date: 20 – 21 June 2013

Time: 9.00am – 5.00pm each day

Enrol now, change your life, and the life of someone else. For further information on this course or to download the registration form, please visit the website at www.act.lifeline.org.au or contact us by phone on 6204 6402 or email training@act.lifeline.org.au.

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Lifeline Canberra Accidental Counsellor training

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

Participants learn the value of self-care, and strategies they can employ both at work and in their personal life to ensure their mental and physical wellbeing remains at an optimum level. Participants receive a workbook which they can refer to later to refresh the skills and knowledge gained from the course.

The course is flexible and interactive, encouraging participants to ask questions and share their knowledge and experiences. Participants have opportunities to practice their skills and engage in self-reflection.

Dates: 13 – 14 June or 25 – 26 July or 29 – 30 August

Cost: \$400 per participant or \$360 per participant for not-for-profit organisations and pension card holders

For further information on this course or to download the registration form, please visit the website at www.act.lifeline.org.au or by phone on 6204 6402 or email training@act.lifeline.org.au.

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COTA Transport Solutions for older Australians survey results

In early March 2013 COTA ACT launched a survey, *Transport Solutions for Older Canberrans*. The survey was designed to collect information on how older people get about in Canberra, the barriers they face, and the kind of changes which might make it easier to participate fully in civic, social and healthy lifestyle activities. [Click here to download the survey results report](#).

COTA ACT is inviting older Canberra residents to share their experiences with transport in Canberra, and to talk about how the system could be improved for older people. There will also be representatives from transport provider organisations at these meetings to hear what older Canberrans have to say. COTA plan to hold five focus group meetings. The groups will be organised by topic, and morning tea or a light lunch will be provided. Details are as follows:

Using Community Transport

Date: Wednesday 12 June
Time: 10.00am – 12.00pm
Location: Community Hall, Hughes Community Centre

Getting around with a mobility or health impairment

Date: Wednesday 12 June
Time: 1.00pm – 3.00pm
Location: Community Hall, Hughes Community Centre

Getting around by taxi

Date: Thursday 13 June
Time: 11.30am – 1.30pm
Location: Community Hall, Hughes Community Centre

Getting around by car

Date: Friday 14 June
Time: 1.00pm – 3.00pm
Location: Library, Hughes Community Centre

Using Buses

Date: Monday 17 June
Times: 10.00am – 12.00pm, 1.00pm – 3.00pm
Location: Library, Hughes Community Centre

If you would like to participate please phone Jane at COTA by phone 6282 3777 or email policy@cotaact.org.au (If you would like to come but have difficulty getting there: COTA may be able to work something out for you)

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Choosing My Accommodation Pathway – Presenting an information session

about accommodation and support options for people with disability

- An update on the National Disability Insurance Scheme and forthcoming Enhanced Service Offer Grant
- Value of Planning and Good Life Planning Grants. Planning for Possibilities
- Planning Tools and practical approaches to planning
- Family Leadership and Governance
- Presentation by Capital Community Housing

Q&A sessions after each Topic

Date: Wednesday 22 May

Time: 6.00pm – 8.30pm

Location: Child and Family Centre, 159 Anketell Street, Tuggeranong (opposite the Hyperdome). Accessible parking at rear of building – Please let them know if specific requirements.

Cost: FREE

RSVP: By 20 May, please call the Disability ACT Housing Options facilitator on 6207 6433 or email at DACThouseoptions@act.gov.au or go to www.dhcs.act.gov.au/disability_act

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Models of Dementia Care; Can we do it better?

International Guest Speaker – Professor Julian Hughes is a consultant in old age psychiatry based in the UK. He is Honorary Professor of Philosophy of Ageing at the Institute for Ageing and Health, Newcastle University, UK. He will discuss the following: What constitutes palliative care in people with dementia? How should pain and distress be managed in people with dementia? When should discussions take place about end of life with people with dementia? How are ethical issues at the end of life to be dealt with in dementia?

Date: Friday 28 June

Time: 2.00pm – 4.00pm Tea/coffee provided

Location: Canberra Southern Cross Club, Corinna Street, Woden

RSVP: By 21 June. Bookings essential, email act.admin@alzheimers.org.au or Phone 6255 0722

Cost: Free, donations welcome

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Community Information Sessions – Enhanced Service Offer

ACT Government is hosting Community Information Sessions about the Enhanced Service Offer. These are grants for people with disabilities, including those with psychosocial disabilities, who are ACT residents aged under 65 years.

There will be a session dedicated to psychosocial disability:

Date: Wednesday 17 July

Time: 12.30pm – 2.00pm

Location: The Rainbow, Phillip Avenue, Watson

RSVP: Email to ndis@act.gov.au or phone Canberra Connect 133 427 and ask to be registered for an Enhanced Service Offer information session. [Click here for more information, dates and times.](#)

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CatholicCare Suicide Prevention Program

CatholicCare ATAPS Suicide Prevention Program provides intensive short term support over one to two months for people experiencing suicidal ideation. The service offers a number of face to face sessions and some care coordination to assist the individual to build protective factors and decrease acute risk factors. Click [here for more information and to find out who is eligible.](#)

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MHJDAS Smoke free environment newsletter 32

Click here to [download the latest newsletter for the smoke free environment.](#)

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2013 Men's Suicide Prevention Conference

"What works in Men's Suicide Prevention?" Find out all the answers at the 2013 Men's Suicide Prevention Conference in Canberra on Wednesday June 12th. To find out more information, or to register, visit www.ozhelp.org.au.

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CIT Skills for Carers Program

Supporting someone with depression

CIT Skills for Carers Program is presenting 3 sessions designed to provide information about depression and available supports as well as an opportunity to better understand and deal with the issues and challenges that arise when someone you love is depressed. It is also a chance to meet other people in similar situations and explore ways to keep going. Facilitator Jenny Thompson has worked in the Canberra community for over 25 years as a psychologist, counsellor and trainer. She has a special interest in mental health, trauma and grief, and how families find resilience in the face of adversity.

Dates: 3 sessions (Thursdays) – 23, 30 May, 6 June

Time: 2.00pm – 5.00pm

Location: CIT Woden, Ainsworth Street, Phillip

Cost: free

Getting a good night's sleep

Poor sleep is an all too common problem for carers and can have a big impact on health, energy levels, concentration, mood and relationships. This CIT Skills for Carers seminar will explore the

factors that hinder and help achieve a good night's sleep, including the importance of "letting go" and relaxing the body and mind. Facilitator Suzie Williams is a registered nurse, teaches yoga, massage and aromatherapy, and is a consultant within the aged care and disability sectors.

Date: Thursday 23 May

Time: 6.00pm – 8.00pm

Location: CIT Woden, Ainsworth St Phillip

OR

Date: Thursday 27 June

Time: 12.30pm – 2.30pm

Location: DISH (Disability Information Support Hub) meeting room, Oatley Circuit, Belconnen

Cost: Free

To register for any of these courses please phone 6207 3628 or email CarerSkills@cit.edu.au
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LifeCircle ACT presents a 'Life Matters' Event

Final Gifts: understanding the special awareness and needs of the dying

A one day gathering of speakers, community organisations and business specialising in palliative care, advanced care planning and end of life care. MC is Clair Hochstetler, Head Chaplain, Pastoral Care, Canberra Hospital.

With the presence of 35 community and end of life care related organisations, including Carers ACT, Woden, Northside and Southside Community Services, Toscan Din, Palliative Care ACT, Tobin Brothers, Alzheimer's ACT, AIDS Action and many more.

LifeCircle is a not-for-profit small but potent organisation that offers comfort and guidance in the form of trained volunteer mentors with lived experience to carers of those at the end of life, at home, hospice and hospital.

LifeCircle is dedicated to changing community attitudes and experiences toward death and dying. LifeCircle's vision is a world in which family and community perform their traditional role of caring for terminally-ill loved ones, and to educate and empower carers, families and their personal communities to care for their dying to enable death at home.

LifeCircle offer a community-based program that provides a volunteer mentor who walks the journey with the carer and family, through to 13 months of post-bereavement. This extraordinary commitment exemplifies the concept of 'living our dying', whilst encouraging the carer to 'self-care'.

Date: Saturday 6 July

Time: 9.00am – 2.30pm

Location: Corinna Ballroom at the Canberra Southern Cross Club, 92-96 Corinna Street, Woden
Bookings essential. To reserve your place at Life Matters ACT register online [here](#) or email Lucy

Baker at lucy@lifecircle.org.au or phone 1300 364 673. Click here [to access the LifeCircle website](#).

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National & International News and Research

Commitment to Mental Health Reform continues

Building on the Government's five-year \$2.2 billion **National Mental Health Reform** package announced in the 2011-12 Budget, initiatives will be funded in this Budget to support Australians living with and recovering from mental illness, including expectant and new mothers experiencing depression. [Click here to read more](#).

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DisabilityCare Australia May 2013

The Australian Government will provide \$19.3 billion over seven years from 2012-13 to roll out DisabilityCare Australia across the country. This brings the Australian Government's total new investment in DisabilityCare Australia to \$14.3 billion over the period. The Australian Government will provide funding of \$11.7 billion to DisabilityCare Australia in 2019-20, the first year after full national rollout. This represents 53 per cent of the \$22.2 billion total cost of running DisabilityCare Australia, with the States and Territories providing the remaining funding.

[Read the report here](#).

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***beyondblue*: Federal Budget focus on the mental health of pregnant women and new mums is great news for families**

beyondblue welcomes the Australian Government's continued commitment to the mental health of Australians. CEO of *beyondblue* Kate Carnell AO says the \$37.4 million to improve prevention and early detection of antenatal and postnatal depression and anxiety is great news for women planning to have children, their partners and families. [Click here to read more](#).

For more information, contact the *beyondblue* support service on 1300 22 4636 or via [the website](#) where you can also find more information about [perinatal mental health](#).

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Young people go online for help during tough times

The ReachOut.com National Survey 2012 has found that young people in distress look for help online rather than seek help from a mental health professional.

The cross-sectional study of more than 3,600 young people under 25 found that 75 per cent of participants were experiencing high to very high levels of psychological distress at the time of visiting [ReachOut.com](#), yet the majority of them (60%) had never accessed professional help.

Click here to [read more and to download the report](#).

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The Mental Health Council of Australia – Budget 2013 Media Release

The Mental Health Council of Australia has described the federal budget as a missed opportunity to continue to build on much needed investment in mental health reform. [Click here to read more](#).

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Closing the gap for Indigenous people with disability

The Australian Government will set a new target aimed at increasing access to services for Indigenous people with disability. This will strengthen efforts to close the gap on Indigenous disadvantage by ensuring that the benefits of DisabilityCare Australia are realised for Indigenous people.

Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and Minister Disability Reform Jenny Macklin announced the proposed new target at the launch of the First Peoples Disability Network Australia's 10 point plan for the implementation of DisabilityCare Australia. [Click here to read more](#).

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The Commission invites you to continue to help us build the National Contributing Life Method

The National Mental Health Commission released an Update of the National Contributing Life Method Project along with Questions for Consultation. [You can view the release here](#).

The Commission invites you to continue to help us build the National Contributing Life Method by responding to the questions at the end of this paper. You can respond in a number of ways:

- Online by completing the project survey <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/F8CSJVX>
- By using the Word file provided on the Commission's and emailing it to Leanne.craze@bigpond.com
- By mailing your response to National Contributing Life Project team's office, Attention, Leanne Craze, 10 Gunyah Place Glen Alpine NSW 2560
- By speaking with Leanne or Ross by phone 02 4625 7777

We are particularly interested in hearing about the details of similar or relevant surveys or qualitative research that you think we should look at during this time.

Your response or thoughts are required by 31 May 2013.

After this consultation period closes, the team and the Project Advisory Group will proceed to

develop a National Contributing Life Method to submit to an Ethics Committee for approval. Once approval is obtained, we will be back in touch to let you know about the details of the pilot and about how you can be involved in the pilot once it commences.

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Outcomes from the Young People, Social Media and Suicide Prevention Round Table

What are the risks, challenges and opportunities presented by social media to promoting mental health and suicide in young people? Click here to [watch a video and read about the outcomes from the Roundtable on Young People, Social Media and Suicide Prevention](#) held on 27 February 2013.

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New mental health pilot to be trailed in South Australia

A new pilot aimed at assisting the state's criminal justice system to better manage people with complex forensic mental health issues will soon be trialled in South Australia's court system. Under the Forensic Mental Health Court Liaison Service pilot, two experienced forensic mental health staff will work with the Courts to provide advice on the appropriate assessment, treatment and management of people presenting with these complicated issues. Health Minister Jack Snelling said the overall goal of the pilot was to reduce the number of forensic mental health consumers who present to public hospital Emergency Departments unnecessarily. [Click here to read more.](#)

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Mindframe National Media Initiative Survey

The Mindframe National Media Initiative has released an online survey as part of its ongoing consultation with the mental health and suicide prevention sectors. Mindframe aims to support by providing guiding principles for working with the media to report suicide, mental health and mental illness. The aim of the survey is to elicit broad input into the preferred content, style and format that can be used to inform the redevelopment of the Mindframe resources specifically for the mental health and suicide prevention sectors, as well as future directions. The confidential survey will take approximately five minutes to complete and ends on Friday 24 May 2013. [Click here to fill in the survey.](#)

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In the media

- [Do we need a Mental Health Olympics?](#)
- [Why the "stunning lack of success" in mental health advocacy?](#)
- [Mental health disorders in Australian parents on the rise](#)
- [Aboriginal Groups chase action on suicides](#)
- [Too many mental illnesses untreated in bush](#)

- [Sydney Declaration confirms shared commitments and opportunities for international collaboration on mental health](#)
- [Merimbula teenager helps promote mental health](#)
- [How integrated are homelessness, mental health and drug and alcohol services in Australia?](#)
- [Life expectancy gap widens between those with mental illness and general population](#)
- [Thousands of new mums face mental illness](#)
- [Stroke risk doubles in depressed women](#)

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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