



22 February 2013

E-Bulletin

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Mental Health Carers Voice recent news and announcements

Report from the Mental Health Carers Voice Policy Officer

The closing date for submitting the **Mental Health Carers Voice Program Survey** has been extended to **Thursday 28 February**. The Survey includes sections for government and community organisations to complete as well as for carers and carer representatives. Your feedback will inform this program's ongoing quality improvements, so please take a few moments to complete the Survey. A copy of the Survey may be accessed [here](#).

A report on the Survey findings will be distributed via E-Bulletin during March 2013. Surveys may be emailed to mhcarers@carersact.org.au or posted to Carers ACT, Attention: Doris Kordes, 80 Beaurepaire Crescent, Holt ACT 2615. Please give Doris a call on 6296 9900, or email mhcarers@carersact.org.au if you have any questions about the Survey.

The role of a carer employed as a peer worker was discussed at a Peer Workforce Advisory Group meeting held at the Mental Health Community Coalition ACT yesterday. Members asked, what kind of role and responsibilities would mental health carers value in their peer worker? What would this role look like? All participants at this meeting agreed that it would be good to hear what mental health carers would like from a peer worker. You are invited to provide your feedback and comments to the Peer Workforce Advisory Group via Doris Kordes, email doris.kordes@carersact.org.au or phone Doris on 6296 9936 by **Wednesday 6 March**.

If you would like to be part of this Advisory Group, there is a vacancy for a carer representative. The Mental Health Community Coalition has developed a Workforce Development Strategy for the ACT community mental health sector, and this Group is aligned with this Strategy, currently looking at issues relating to a peer workforce in the MH sector. Please contact Doris for more information.

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Mental Health Carers Networking and Consulting Forums

Medicines and Mental Health Carers – 27 February

Were you aware that there are 190,000 medicine-related hospital admissions in Australia each year?¹ The first Mental Health Carers Voice Forum for 2013 is focusing on medicines and carers. [Click here for the Forum Agenda](#). The purpose of the forum is to provide mental health carers with information, resources, and strategies that support the safe use of medicines. A panel of engaging guest speakers will present on issues relating to the safety and use of medicines and carer issues:

- Simon Carroll, Pharmaceutical Society of Australia
- Carlo Malaco, Consumers Health Forum
- Len Kanowski, Mental Health First Aid instructor. Len is a Mental Health Nurse with four decades of experience in the mental health field. He has worked at the local, national and international levels as a clinician, manager and educator during his mental health career
- Christine Waller, Mental Health, Justice Health, Alcohol and Drug Service Division

Presentations will be followed by a Q&A with participants.

Janet Milford, the newly appointed ACT carer representative on the National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum, is looking forward to meeting you at this forum.

This forum will be facilitated by Sarah Cleaves, Koru Consulting.

Date: Wednesday 27 February
Time: 12.00pm – 2.00pm
Location: Riley Hall, Pilgrim House Conference Centre, 69 Northbourne Avenue, Civic
Cost: Free. Lunch will be provided
RSVP: By 10am, 25 February. Phone Rosie or Doris on 6296 9900; or email mhcarers@carersact.org.au.

Second Exposure Draft, Mental Health (Treatment & Care) Act - April

The Second Exposure Draft Amendment Bill of the Mental Health (Treatment & Care) Act will be available for comment from late March 2013, for a period of six weeks. Carers ACT will be hosting a consultation with mental health carers.

Date: Tuesday 9 April
Time: 12.00pm – 2.00pm
Location: Quality Hotel Woden, Corner Melrose Drive and Launceston Street, Phillip
Cost: Free. Lunch will be provided
RSVP: By COB, 1 April. Phone Rosie or Doris on 6296 9900 or email mhcarers@carersact.org.au.

Navigating the Mental Health System - May

Knowledge about how to navigate the mental health system is a huge issue for people who have just entered the 'system', but also for those people who may be unaware of the range of services and supports that are available for people living in Canberra. A panel of key organisations, and consumer and

¹ See www.nps.org.au for more information about the findings of a survey released by NPS *Medicinewise* in 2012.

carer representatives will share information and provide resources.

Date: Thursday 16 May

Time: 12.00pm – 2.00pm

Location: Riley Hall, Pilgrim House Conference Centre, 69 Northbourne Avenue, Civic

Cost: Free. Lunch will be provided

RSVP: By 10am, 14 May. Phone Rosie or Doris on 6296 9900; or email

mhcarers@carersact.org.au

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VACANCIES - Mental Health Carer Representative Positions

Mental health carers are invited to consider nominating for a carer representative position, through the Mental Health Carers Voice program, on the following committees and working groups:

Calvary Hospital Mental Health Management Committee

For more information about this Committee, click [here](#) for a copy of the Terms of Reference. Further questions about the role may also be directed to Chrissy English, Volunteer Services Manager, on 6201 6646 or 0467 790 863.

Health: Division of Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol & Drug Services (MHJHADS)

- Risk Management
- Smoke-Free Evaluation Working group *and* Smoke-Free Working Group (Community)
- MHAGIC (Mental Health Assessment Generation Information Collection) Advisory Committee

MHJHADS Redesign Projects

- Alexander Maconochie Centre Medication Management
- Steering Committee for the redesign projects

Community Sector

- Mental Health Community Coalition ACT: Peer Workforce Advisory Group.

If you wish to find out more information about the above committees/working groups, contact Rosie Fisk on 6299 9900 or email mhcarers@carersact.org.au. A Carer Representative Nomination Form, Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct for the Mental Health Carers Voice Program may be downloaded from the Mental Health Carers Voice website at www.carersvoice.com.au, or give Rosie a call.

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. If you would like to access the current list of committees please click [here](#).

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Carers Corner

Update on HOME in Canberra Project by John Tucker

As a result of concerns raised by many people in the mental health sector in Canberra a community group facilitated two supported accommodation workshops in Tuggeranong in December 2012 to look at the best ways of addressing the supported accommodation needs of people with chronic mental

illness. Analysis of the outcomes of the workshops has found that there is a strong case to build a supported accommodation facility in Canberra, based on the successful HOME in Queanbeyan.

Further information concerning this need can be found in Father Peter Day's article published in the Canberra Times of Monday 28 January 2013 on HOME in Queanbeyan- [please click here](#).

We have a vision to build a quality, safe and secure affordable supported accommodation facility in a central location in Canberra and are considering ideas on the best way forward to bring the vision to reality. We hope to have the facility built and operational by 2015-16 if possible. A suggested way forward requires us to confirm a clear vision, establish a strong Board, develop a business case and stakeholder engagement and communications strategies. We need people with qualifications and experience in areas such as business, law, communication and publicity, building construction, architecture, and project management to join or assist our group to help us with the way forward to transform our vision to reality.

If you are, or know someone who is a qualified and experienced business person, lawyer, builder, architect, journalist or public relations officer, chartered accountant, or have experience in working in one of these areas, or would like to assist in establishing a HOME in Canberra, please contact John Tucker by email ejohntucker@hotmail.com or phone John on 0262917869 or Mob 0411350547. [Click here to read more about the HOME in Queanbeyan](#).

Mental health carers are invited to respond to or submit articles for Carers' Corner. Please contact Rosie Fisk by phone, on 6296 9900, or email mhcarers@carersact.org.au.

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Carers ACT News

Education Session on Dementia and Alzheimer's

This session will be presented by Karen from Alzheimer's Australia. Topics will include: definitions; types and symptoms of dementia; effective communication; changed behaviour and strategies.

Date: Tuesday 26 February

Time: 9.30am – 1.30pm

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

Private Viewing at the National Gallery of Australia Stars in the River – The Prints of Jessie Traill

This exhibition celebrates the artistic career of one of Australia's most important printmakers of the twentieth century, Jessie Traill.

Date: Thursday 28 February

Time: 10.30am (Meet at the Main Entrance at 10.15am)

Location: The National Gallery of Australia, Parkes

The above two events are free for current carers who reside in the ACT. To RSVP call Eleanor on 6296 9908 or email rsvp@carersact.org.au.

On Course for Carers

March - Chinese Medicine with Dr Wang

Dr Wang's welcome return session will focus on seasonal care and individual "self help" strategies you can follow up at home as winter approaches.

Date: Wednesday 13 March 2013

Time: 10.00am – 12.00pm

Location: Carers Hub, Carers ACT, 80 Beaufort Crescent, Holt

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April – Care Inc Financial Counselling Service

"Who we are and what we do". Financial entitlements, budgeting and debt management for carers and families.

Date: Thursday 4 April 2013

Time: 10.00am – 12.00pm

Location: Carers Hub, Carers ACT, 80 Beaufort Crescent, Holt

Morning tea is provided at 11.00am during both courses. To RSVP call Eleanor on 6296 9908 or email rsvp@carersact.org.au. For suggestions on future topics please email Marie at marie.falconer@carersact.org.au.

An Opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Carers

Are you a carer of a loved one with mental health and perhaps drug and alcohol problems? A two day group session around caring for someone with some of these issues is being offered. This is a tremendous opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers to learn and share.

Dates: Wednesday 21 March

Thursday 22 March

Time: 10.00am – 4.00pm

Location: Carers ACT, 80 Beaufort Crescent, Holt

Cost: Free.

Please register your interest by phoning Donna (Carers ACT) on 6296 9900.

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Carers Gathering for 2013 - Murramarang Beach Front Resort - 9 April to 11 April

If you have never been to a Carers Gathering, please consider applying – it is a wonderful experience! The Gathering will be held from Tuesday 9 to Thursday 11 April at the Murramarang Beachfront Nature Resort, South Durras. [Click here to view the flyer](#) and [click here for an application form](#). If you have any questions please call Eleanor or Lucinda on 6296 9900 or email rsvp@carersact.org.au.

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Branch Out Café

The Branch Out Café is open at Carers ACT Holt every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 8.30am – 12.00pm. Why not drop by for a coffee and some delicious lunches and sweets? The Branch Out Café is an opportunity for up to six young adult school leavers with disability to gain confidence and learn new skills with a view to gaining job ready certificates and hospitality competencies to transition to open and supported employment in the hospitality industry. As well as our wonderful café with coffee and cakes

we also provide catering for meetings, functions and events. [Click here to read more about the Branch Out Café.](#)

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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 1800 242 636.

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ACT News

Mental Health Council welcomes new Chair of its Board

The Mental Health Council of Australia has announced the appointment of Jennifer Westacott as Chair of its Board. Ms Westacott has been Chief Executive Officer at the Business Council of Australia since 2011 and was previously a Senior Partner at KPMG. She has extensive policy experience in both the public and private sectors and has over 20 years' experience in leadership positions in the New South Wales and Victorian Governments, including as Director of Housing and Secretary of Education and Training in Victoria. Ms Westacott led a major review of the NSW Health system in 2000, entitled the Health Council Report. Jennifer was also a Commissioner on the Commonwealth Grants Commission. [Click here to read the full media release.](#)

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Speaking Up, Advocacy and Juggling – a course for family carers

Topics covered:

- Speaking Up and Advocacy: why is it an issue? What is it all about?
- Managing conflict, juggling people: deciding how to respond to conflict and which people you need on side
- Speaking up assertively: putting your words and yourself together
- Looking after yourself and trying out new approaches

Facilitator: Annette Matheson is a Community Educator with both professional and personal experience

in the disability sector. Annette has worked for many years with families in Future Planning and Family Governance and has a particular interest in Advocacy. She is currently a coordinator with CIT Skills for Carers and a teacher in Disability Studies courses at CIT.

Date: Wednesdays - 27 February, 6, 13 March

Time: 10.00am – 12.30pm

Location: The Bendigo Room, Autism Asperger ACT, Chifley Hub, MacLaurin Cres, Chifley

Cost: Free

To Register: 6207 3628 or CarerSkills@cit.edu.au

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Mental Illness Education ACT is NOW RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS for their school and community education programs

Have you, a relative or a friend, experienced a mental illness? Can you relate well to young people and work in a team? Would you feel comfortable talking about your experiences?

Mental Illness Education ACT (MIEACT) is recruiting volunteers to give presentations about mental illness to high school and college students as well as to the general community. All volunteers are fully trained, work in pairs and are reimbursed for expenses. [Click here to access a flyer](#). Information evenings are:

Date: Thursday 28 February

Tuesday 5 March

Time: 6.00pm – 9.00pm (light supper provided)

Call Ben for more information and to book into an information evening – phone 6257 1195 or email ben@mieact.org.au.

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SMART Recovery

SMART Recovery is a self-help group for people facing addiction focusing on Cognitive Behaviour Therapy. The four main principles of SMART Recovery are:

- Motivation to abstain
- Coping with urges
- Lifestyle balance
- Problem solving

Attendees are encouraged to share strategies and tools used around managing their addictive behaviours. All are welcome, whether in active addiction or recovery. All Directions SMART Recovery facilitators are trained by, and registered with SMART Recovery Australia. Sessions are:

Days & times: Tuesdays 10.30am – 12.00pm

Wednesday 5.30pm – 7.00pm

Location: 1 Bradley Street, Woden

No bookings required. For further information contact Directions on 6122 8000

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Mental Health Justice Health, Alcohol & Drug Service – Smoke-Free Newsletters

The Division's [8 February Newsletter](#) and [22 February Newsletter](#) on the Smoke-Free Environment.

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National Close the Gap Day - Thursday March 21, 2013

Join Australia's largest ever Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health campaign! Since 2006, the Close the Gap campaign has achieved an enormous amount. This has only happened with community support. In 2012 alone, more than 130,000 Australians joined National Close the Gap Day to show their support, to talk about, to spread the word, and to take action to improve, Indigenous health. To be a part of National Close the Gap Day, [click here for more information and to register](#).

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Cultural Conversations

Cultural Conversations (part of the Mental Health Community Coalition ACT) would like to invite you to take part in their on-going professional training and development program. The first session covers the whys and wherefores of stigma and other explanatory models of mental illness and the second session looks at how our own culture and that of others can affect our communication and either help or hinder relationships and service provision.

The training is designed to explore, through theory and interaction, the impact of both stigma and culture on our world view and particularly how that view colours our understanding of mental illness and the role of services. Details of the training are:

Stigma

Date: Wednesday 6 March

Time: 9.00am – 12.30pm

Location: Room 7, Level 1, Griffin Centre, 20 Genge Street, Canberra City

Dimensions of Culture

Date: Wednesday 20 March

Time: 9.00am – 12.30pm

Location: Room 7, Level 1, Griffin Centre, 20 Genge Street, Canberra City

Both courses are free and presented by Christine Bowman, Cultural Conversations Manager. Bookings essential, please phone 02 6249 7756 or email Christine.bowman@mhccact.org.au

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Free talks for people with a chronic conditions and their carers

The ACT Chronic Conditions Alliance (ACCA) is a network of Organisations concerned with improving the quality of life and access to services for people who have chronic health conditions. ACCA is holding a chronic conditions seminar series:

Topic: Health care options with ACT Health - Virginia Rasheed, ACT Health Directorate

Date: Thursday 21 February

Time: 7.00pm

Topic: Medicare and you – Health Literacy project

Date: Thursday 21 March

Time: 7.00pm

Topic: eHealth and you – Calvary eHealth

Date: Thursday 18 April

Time: 7.00pm

Topic: Move it or lose it – Lennon Wicks, Assistant Professor of Clinical Exercise Physiology, University of Canberra

Date: Thursday 16 May

Time: 7.00pm

Topic: Oral health and chronic illness – Dr Griffiths, ACT Dental Services

Date: Thursday 20 June

Time: 7.00pm THURSDAY 20 JUNE, 7.00 pm

All talks are held at SHOUT, Collett Place, Pearce. For more information www.actcca.org.au or phone SHOUT on 6290 1984

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Wesley LifeForce Suicide Prevention Networks – Community Meeting ACT Youth

All interested community members are invited to a community meeting to discuss a proposal to form a Youth Suicide Prevention Network.

Date: Tuesday 26 February

Time: 6.00pm – 8.00pm

Location: Seminar room 3 (ground floor), Hedley Bull Centre, Building 130, Garran Road, Australian National University, Barry Drive, Acton

RSVP: lifeforcenetworks@wesleymission.org.au

For further information, please phone 1800 100 024 or email lifeforcenetworks@wesleymission.org.au

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National & International News and Research

In the media

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- [“No farmers – no food”: Farmers and mental illness](#)
- [New mental health app for veterans and ADF members](#)
- [Effective programs aimed at closing the Gap](#)
- [Position statement: Psychiatry, online presence and social media](#)
- [Government warns of NDIS scams](#)
- [Art meets mental health](#)
- [More mental health nurses arrive](#)

- [Executives dismissing staff mental health issues](#)
- [Ethnic Australians miss out in NDIS](#)
- [New partnership to tackle mental health in the workplace](#)
- [Indonesia committed to ending cruel mental health treatment](#)
- [Can exercise help severe mental illness?](#)

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Submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs Inquiry: National Disability Insurance Scheme Bill 2012

Carers Australia made several recommendations on the NDIS Bill 2012, offering the perspectives of carers in order to fulfill the promise of a National Disability Insurance Scheme. [Click here to download the submission.](#)

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Beware of scammers asking for NDIS fees

People are being warned to beware of contact from anyone claiming to work for the Government who tries to make them pay an administration fee to access the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). These claims are false. There is no need for people to pay a fee to join the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The Gillard Government is investing \$1 billion to launch the first stage of the NDIS in five sites across the country from July this year.

The NDIS Launch Transition Agency will deliver the first stage of the NDIS and in the lead up to launch will communicate with many people with disability in the launch sites. However, the Agency will not be seeking fees from anyone to participate in the scheme. People should be very wary of anyone asking for payments for Government schemes, including the NDIS.

If people are concerned that their privacy has been breached or they have provided personal details as a result of one of these calls, they should report it to the police. People can also report a scam and get further information at the Government's Scamwatch website, www.scamwatch.gov.au, or call the hotline on 1300 795 995.

If you have any further enquiries about this scam email helpdesk.fraud@fahcsia.gov.au. If you want to know more about the facts of the NDIS please go to the Government's official web site at www.ndis.gov.au

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Whatworks4u.org - website for young people with mental illness

Whatworks4u.org aims to improve treatment for young people with mental health problems by gathering information about what works in the real world. If you have experience of mental health problems, you can help build knowledge about symptoms and treatments. The information you give will be combined with information from other young people and reported on whatworks4u.org.

Your information directly helps to build knowledge on what works for young people with mental health problems. You give information anonymously. Whatworks4u.org does not ask for your name, address or any other information that could be used to identify you. [Click here to go to Whatworks4u.org.](#)

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ASCA's Upcoming Workshops 2013

Adults Surviving Child Abuse is an Australian national peak body which advances the health and wellbeing of people and communities affected by childhood trauma, for this and future generations. [Click here to view calendar upcoming workshops](#) for survivors, community workers, mental health workers and health care professionals. You can contact ASCA by phone 02 8920 3611 or the support line 1300 657 380. You can access the website at www.asca.org.au

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Australians fail social inclusion test for people with disability

New research reveals that Australians living with a disability are still feeling excluded from society, with community attitude still one of the biggest problems they face. Research conducted by disability service provider Scope in partnership with Deakin University found that 94% of the respondents to the 'Scope 1 in 4 Poll' said they do not have enough meaningful participation in their community.

As well 39% of respondents said that if community attitudes towards disability changed, it would make a big difference to their lives. Almost 90% of people with a disability who completed the survey said their needs were not met for social contact with others, going to cafes, bars or pubs, being respected by other people and feeling valued. According to Chief Executive Officer of Scope, Jennifer Fitzgerald, the research suggests that the lives of people with a disability would improve if the community was more inclusive. "People with a disability are among the most marginalised of our population," Fitzgerald said. [Click here to read more](#) and [click here to access Poll information sheet – Social Inclusion](#).

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A Report - Mental Health in criminology research: Lessons from the drug use monitoring in Australia Program

This report is focused on describing and discussing the processes and challenges inherent in measuring mental health concerns among alleged offenders in police custody, as well as substance abuse, addiction and mental health. [Click here to download the report](#).

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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.

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