

Mental Health Carers Participation and Representation Program E Bulletin – 11 June 2012

CARERS VOICE ACT NEWS NATIONAL NEWS

CARERS VOICE

Training for current and new representatives

Based on the feedback received from representatives (current and new), training will be held at Holt premises, in the Hub, on **Thursday 28 June, 6:30-9:30pm**. As mentioned in previous communications, you will be reimbursed \$120 for your time; and taxi vouchers will be provided (or if you find your own way by car/bus, travel costs up to \$20 will be reimbursed). A meal will be provided.

We encourage all representatives to attend this event as it will also provide an opportunity to get together and meet the new representatives, and to contribute to discussion on the role of the carer representative (see request for volunteers below). The 'training' will be delivered in a relaxed and informal environment.

Please RSVP to Alison Elliott, alison.elliott@carersact.org.au, or phone 6296 9900/9933. If you have any dietary requirements, please let Alison know. In the meantime, please contact Doris Kordes (doris.kordes@carersact.org.au) if you have any questions about the training.

Information Sessions for Carers at the Adult Mental Health Unit (AMHU), The Canberra Hospital, Woden

Carers ACT will be recommending monthly information sessions for family carers at AMHU. The first session will be held at AMHU on **Friday 15 June, 11:30am-12:30pm**. These sessions are aimed at family carers who are supporting someone in the Unit. For more information, please phone the Carer Advisory Service on 1800 242 636.

ACT NEWS

Parties split on mental health

ACT's political parties are divided on whether or not a community-wide review of mental health services in the ACT is required. Read more [here](#).

2012 Post School Options Expo

The aim of the PSO Expo is to provide students with disability, their families, carers and teachers with appropriate and timely information and advice on services and pathways available post school, including but not limited to planning of career pathways; employability skills;

further education and training; volunteering; recreation; community participation; life skills and information.

There will be hands on activities for attendants including Try 'A' Trade, stall holder exhibits and information opportunities. All high school/college students with disability from government and non-government schools will be invited to attend the Expo as well as an open invitation to the general public through multiple media avenues closer to the Expo date.

Date: 19 June

Time: 10:30am – 6:30pm

Location: Stirling College, Fremantle Drive Stirling

Grants for Community Groups

The ACT Attorney-General has now announced [Grants for community groups to combat property crime](#). Go to the Justice and Community Safety [website](#) for further information and guidance on how to apply. We are keen to ensure that community organisations in the housing, mental health, women's, disability and alcohol and other drug sectors have an opportunity to consider making applications.

The grants will be for security infrastructure upgrades such as: sensor lighting and external lighting; alarm systems; security doors; and window grills and fencing. Community organisations can apply for one-off grants of up to \$10,000 for security projects and eligible community groups are encouraged to submit applications by the closing date 27 July 2012.

Potential applicants can email jacscommunitygrants@act.gov.au or telephone 6205 4631 for further information.

Mental Health First Aid Training

An internationally awarded and acclaimed training now in 18 countries across the World.

Dates: Tuesday 19 and 26 June (closing date for bookings is 12 June)

Time: 9:00am – 5:00pm each day

Location: Om Shanti Training Rooms, 2a Barker St Griffith (Griffith Shops, above Macka's newsagency and the IGA supermarket)

Approximately 40 % of Australians will experience or develop one of the common mental illnesses in their lifetime. We accept the need to have members of the community trained in regular first aid, but we are more likely to come across a situation where someone needs Mental Health First Aid (MHFA). MHFA is the help given to someone developing a mental health problem or in a mental health crisis. First aid is given until appropriate professional treatment is received or until the crisis resolves.

Facilitator: Gloria Claessen (Principal Master Instructor, National Trainer and Assessor of Instructors)

Cost: \$330.00 (GST inc) Includes morning and afternoon tea and all manuals and certificates - mention this email in your booking to receive a 10% discount.

Bookings: Email your name, contact details and the training you wish to attend to training@rico.com.au

**Mental Health, Justice Health,
Alcohol & Drug Services
Organisational Development Unit
Education & Training Calendar –
July to December 2012**

To view this training calendar please click [here](#).

Psychological Counseling Services

CatholicCare Better Access is for any members of the wider community, who are seeking support or assistance with mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, grief and loss, alcohol and other drug misuse and whose financial circumstances would otherwise prevent them from accessing support. For more information on how you can access this service please contact 6163 7600.

After Suicide Support Group

For information about this support group please access their online information [here](#).

Our Tragic Hidden Toll

Thirty seven people have committed suicide over the past six years during or after treatment by the territory's mental health system and another 18 deaths are being investigated by the Coroner. Read more [here](#).

**National Mental Health Recovery
Framework Consultations**

Craze Lateral Solutions is conducting consultations on the draft National Mental Health Recovery Framework. Consultations are happening nationally, and ACT consultations held late May 2012. You can still provide your comments

on what you think the Recovery Framework should look like, or your experiences as a carer of a person with a mental illness supporting their recovery. Email comments to Leanne.Craze@bigpond.com or Ross.Craze@bigpond.com or phone 02 4625 7777. More information about the draft Recovery Framework is available [here](#).

**2012-2013 ACT Budget Mental
Health Initiatives**

The MHCC ACT has prepared a summary of the mental health initiatives in the ACT Budget announcements, and noted the allocation of \$1 million in growth funding for mental health, in addition to some other initiatives. Read the summary [here](#), and MHCC ACT's media release [here](#).

NATIONAL NEWS

**After hours GP helpline 1800 022
222***

Expert after hours medical advice is now available for carers from the convenience of their own home. The after hours GP helpline began in July last year, and is an Australian Government initiative to make it easier for families to reach a doctor when and where they need one. Already over 130,000 callers have called the after hours GP helpline. Two of three callers received the advice they needed over the phone without having to wait for a face-to-face consultation. The remaining one third of callers were referred to local after hours services or emergency services if they required urgent face-to-face attention.

You can call the after hours GP helpline from 6:00pm to 8:00am Monday to Friday, 6:00pm Friday to 8:00am Saturday, from 12 noon Saturday to 8:00am Monday, and all day on public holidays on **1800 022 222*** for medical assistance. *Calls from landlines are free. Mobile charges may apply.

Patient mental health overlooked by physician when a family member is present

While existing research shows that it is beneficial to have a loved one present when visiting the doctor, a new study led by researchers at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health suggests the opposite may be true for older adults suffering from poor mental health. Read more [here](#).

President Obama's stance on same-sex marriage boosts mental health

A US psychiatrist identified the potential mental health benefits to gay and lesbian identifying people after the US President came out in support of same-sex marriage. The article also examines some of the current data on mental health in the gay and lesbian community, particularly amongst adolescents. Read the full article [here](#).

Mental Illness App

A new App has been launched that indicates whether a person may at risk of depression, anxiety disorder, bipolar disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder. The app uses a 27 item

questionnaire, generating a score to indicate whether a person is at a significant risk of mood or anxiety disorders. There is also an App for physicians. Read the full item [here](#).

Psychosis Risk Disorder not listed in new 'Psychiatrist's Bible'

Mental health advocates have welcomed the decision not to include psychosis risk disorder in the American Psychiatric Association manual, DSM-5. Critics have warned that its inclusion may have resulted in teenagers being medicated unnecessarily. Read a transcript, or listen to the audio file on the ABC News website [here](#).

Helping farming families

This audio file discusses a program designed to assist farming families who may be experiencing mental illness and distress. The discussion highlights that despite the end of the drought, many farming families and rural communities are still 'doing it tough'. The file is available [here](#). The file name is: *Helping farming families - Anna Langley, General Practice Alliance, South Gippsland*.

Poor physical and mental health among trafficked women

A UK study has found that trafficked women and girls experience high levels of physical, mental and sexual health problems. Higher levels of distress were also found to be associated with a longer duration of exploitation. Read more [here](#).

Depression, Vascular Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease

Research from the University of California has found that depressive symptoms that occur in both middle age and later life are associated with an increased risk of

developing vascular dementia, while symptoms that occur in later life only are more likely to be early signs of Alzheimer's disease. Read more [here](#).

Research: University of Western Australia

WA researchers has developed a new approach to preventing and treating anxiety and depression, which may be used to improve the emotional health of fly-in fly-out workers and people living in bushfire-prone areas. The new approach is known as cognitive bias modification (CBM). Read more [here](#).

Mental illness and men with cancer

Men suffering from psychiatric problems when diagnosed with cancer are more likely to die from the disease, according to a new study published in the British Journal of Cancer. Read more [here](#).

Intensive mobile phone use affects young people's sleep

Young people who are heavy users of mobile phones and computers have been found to have a higher risk of sleep disturbances, stress and mental health issues. Read more [here](#).

Internet porn bad for young adult health

A report published in the *Medical Journal of Australia* by the UNSW Kirby Institute has found that there is a strong link between internet exposure to pornography and risky sexual behaviour amongst young people that can result in adverse sexual and mental health outcomes. Read more [here](#).

Study shows mental health risk for Pacific youths

A study released in March shows that Pacific Island youths who were born outside the Pacific or who migrated to countries such as New Zealand, Australia or the US, are much more likely to suffer from depression and anxiety. Read more [here](#).

Mental Health in Early Childhood

The Centre for Community Child Health at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne released a report in April addressing the lack of resources targeted towards the mental health of children aged 0-12 years. Read more [here](#).

Counting the Cost

Ernst & Young and the Inspire Foundation have just launched an extremely comprehensive study into the economic costs of poor mental health amongst young men. The report finds that mental illness in young men costs the Australian economy \$387,000 per hour (\$3 billion per annum) and over 9 million working days lost per annum. Access report [here](#).

Vulnerable Pay the Price for a Budget Surplus

Please click [here](#) to view this article related to mental health nursing funding.

Australia: Empowering Indigenous Communities to Tackle Suicide

The Menzies School of Health Research has been appointed to help the Gillard Government develop the nation's first Indigenous Suicide Prevention Strategy. Read more [here](#).

Research – Participants sought for research around recovery approach supporting loved ones

Little is known about how aware Carers and Mental Health Service Providers are about the Recovery approach to supporting someone living with a mental illness. Read more [here](#).

Suicide Toll Demands Unified and Frank Response

“Overseas prevention strategies point the way ahead”. Sebastian Rosenberg writes this article in *The Canberra Times*. Read more [here](#).

UK Study on Whether Physical Activity Reduces Depression Symptoms

While numerous studies have reported the positive effects of physical activity for people suffering with depression, the UK TREAD study published in the *British Medical Journal*, of a large-scale, randomised controlled trial did not indicate improvement in depression through physical activity. Read more [here](#).

Telephone Therapy Retains More Patients than Face-to-Face Sessions

A study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* found that phone therapy is a rapidly growing trend among American therapists. About 85% of psychologists deliver some services over the phone because competing demands, transportation time and other problems

make it difficult for many patients to get to their office. Read more [here](#).

Australia Succeeds in Developing Mental Health Services

This is an article from the United Arab Emirates. The report has found that the Australian Government had announced the award of the largest package of \$2.2 billion last year for conducting new Mental Health initiatives. The goal has almost been achieved with the rapid steps of the Medicare Locals and support of the state and territory governments. 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 necessarily reflect the opinions and views of Carers ACT.