



MENTAL HEALTH
**carers
voice**

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

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June 20

E-Bulletin

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Mental Health Carers Voice

Report on the forum, Navigating the Mental Health System

Carers ACT held a forum for mental health carers on 16 May. Presenters from a range of agencies as well as a carer and a consumer provided participants with information, strategies and resources. A Report of the forum, with links to the presentations, has been prepared and may be accessed [here](#).

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Forum for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Carers – 25 June

Carers ACT is holding a networking and consulting forum for mental health carers and families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The aims of this forum are to:

- provide an opportunity for CALD carers to talk about issues relating to accessing mental health services and supports; and
- meet mental health carer representatives who, through their participation on committees, are working towards systemic change for carers.

We look forward to seeing you at this forum that is specifically for CALD carers and their families. [Click here to see flyer.](#)

Date: Tuesday 25 June

Time: 12.00pm – 2.00pm

Location: Quality Inn Woden, corner Melrose Drive and Launceston Street
Cost: Free. Lunch will be provided
RSVP: Phone Doris on 6296 9936 or email mhcarers@carersact.org.au.
Enquiries may be addressed to Doris Kordes (6296 9936) or Anndey Ho (6296 9948).

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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.

Current vacancies:

ACT Health

- Adult Mental Health Services Model of Care Steering Committee (new Committee)
- Mental Health Assessment Generation Information Collection Advisory Committee
- Risk Management Committee
- Smoke Free Evaluation Working Group
- Partnering with Consumers Committee (new Committee)
- Adult Mental Health Unit (AMHU) Clinical Effectiveness Committee
- Mental Health Services Plan – Executive Strategic Oversight Group

Mental Health Community Coalition ACT

- Peer Workforce Steering Committee

For more information about becoming a carer representative or for further information about any of the above committees, phone Doris Kordes on 6296 9936 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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Carers ACT

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 Reception on 6296 9900 or email rsvp@carersact.org.au

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

August: Advance Care Planning (ACP) and Enduring Power of Attorney (EPA)

Joy from the Respecting Patient Choices Unit at the Canberra Hospital will present information and assistance to carers to create their own ACP.

Date: Wednesday 14 August

Time: 10.00am – 12.00pm

Location: Carers ACT, 80 Beaurepaire Crescent, Holt

RSVP: Reception 6296 9900 or email rsvp@carersact.org.au

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

[Click here for the flyer](#)

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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 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 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 9 July, 6 August (5:30pm start), 10 September, 8 October,

12 November, 10 December

Time: 5.00pm – 7.00pm

Location: The Carers Hub, 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 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 has released a new ebulletin to keep carers informed and up to date with the latest news about DisabilityCare Australia. [Click here to download the latest edition of the disability ebulletin](#) and to subscribe.

ACT News

COTA – Beyond Maturity Blues

Three million Australians are living with depression or anxiety. Beyondblue is working to reduce the impact of depression and anxiety in the community by raising awareness and understanding,

empowering people to seek help and supporting recovery, management and resilience.
Bookings essential, email act.admin@alzheimers.org.au or phone 6255 0722.

Date: Tuesday 2 July
Time: 10.00am – 12.00pm Tea/coffee provided
Cost: Free – Donations are welcome
Location: Alzheimer's Australia ACT
159 Maribyrnong Avenue, Kaleen

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Consumer Carer Caucus ACT

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. At their next meeting in July, the draft “Steering Committee Commissioning” draft document, prepared by facilitator Sarah Cleaves, will be discussed. [Please click here to see the draft.](#) Further documents currently agreed on for your perusal are: [Caucus Selection Criteria](#); [Code of Conduct](#) and [New Project Proposal](#). Please contact Kat Bathena, Policy and Development Officer, Mental Health Community Coalition ACT, with any other matters you may wish to add to the agenda. Phone 6249 7756 or email kat.bathena@mhccact.org.au

Date: Tuesday 2 July
Time: 11.00am – 1.00pm Lunch will be provided, so RSVPs are appreciated
Location: Griffin Centre, Canberra City, MHCC meeting room, level 1
RSVP: Kat Bathena, email kat.bathena@mhccact.org.au

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ACT Mental Health Consumer and Carer Research Centre established

The ACT Government committed funding in a previous budget to establish a mental health consumer and carer research in the ACT. Following a tender process, the new centre is being established at the Centre for Mental Health at the Australian National University. The centre has two part-time research positions – one for a researcher (consumer) and one for a research assistant (carer) with lived experiences, which were advertised in an earlier Carers Voice E-Bulletin. These positions have now been filled, with one of our carer representatives selected for the research assistant (carer) position. Carers ACT was involved in the centre’s establishment process, and it looks forward to working with the new centre and the Centre for Mental Health to improve outcomes for people with mental illness and carers who support them.

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ACT Partners in Recovery (PIR)

Partners in Recovery (PIR) is a national capacity building project and established in Medicare

Local regions around Australia, and funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing. The ACT Medicare Local (ACTML) initiated a collaborative tender with various agencies for an ACT PIR, and the collaboration was successful in being awarded a contract to deliver the program in the ACT.

The ACT PIR is a coordinated service model designed to engage people with severe and persistent mental illness who require a multi-agency response to their complex needs. It is also designed to support continuous improvement across the mental health service system.

This program will work in partnership with the community, all primary health care providers and partner organisations to provide high quality, person-centred, equitable and accessible healthcare to our local community. More information about the national PIR project is available [here](#).

ACTML is recruiting for a PIR Program Manager to oversee the program, and there are 12 support facilitator positions in PIR's first development stage. The PIR Program Manager information and position description is [here](#), and applications close on Monday 1 July. More information is available from Marie Bennett by phone on 6287 8099 or email m.bennett@actml.com.au

Two information sessions about the support facilitator positions are being held this Thursday 20 June at 1.00 pm and 5.30 pm. To register, and for more information if you can't make the information sessions contact Rosemary Agnew by phone on 6287 8099. Rosemary can also provide venue information.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and people with lived experience of mental illness are strongly encouraged to attend an information session.

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Reminder – Information Session Enhanced Service Offer (ESO)

Carers ACT has previously promoted information about the ACT Government's ESO for eligible people with a disability, or a psychosocial disability in this E-Bulletin. An information session for people with psychosocial disability will be held on Wednesday 17 July 12.30 – 2.00pm at the Rainbow, Phillip Avenue, Watson. Further information about ESO eligibility, types of grants and funding, and other information sessions is available [here](#).

National and International News & Research

New research on 'hidden carers'

The Autumn edition of the *New Paradigm Journal* includes an article about 'hidden' carers. 'Hidden' carers are more likely to be:

- Indigenous carers

- Carers from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds
- Young carers
- Male carers

Yonas Mihtsuntu, Family Services Coordinator, Mental Illness Fellowship of Victoria, writes about reaching 'hidden' carers through an integrated and collaborative service delivery model. [Click here](#) to access the *New Paradigm Journal*.

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New Study Aimed at Empowering Carers

The “Caregiving in Dementia: Finding Positive Meaning” study is being conducted by the University of Sunshine Coast. The research team is led by Dr Prue Millear (Lecturer in Psychology). Recent dementia care studies have focused on the positives that are gained through caring for someone that you love. The team wishes to further build on this approach and will explore both the positive and negative side to caregiving. They are looking for current and past carers to fill in their survey. [Contact details and the survey can be found here.](#)

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Mental Health First Aid Australia

It is estimated that one in four people at some time in their life experience a mental health illness, and only one third are likely to seek professional help. The Mental Health First Aid project is about early sign intervention in relation to mental health issues. Training friends, family and colleagues to detect the “warning signs” is a priority for the project. The project also aims to destigmatise mental health issues and encourage society as a whole to promote awareness. Call for Mental Health Consumers, Carers and Professionals for expert panel, [click here](#). Click here to read an article on [Mental Health First Aid](#) projects in America.

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Second Mental Health Survey of Australian Children Underway

The second national survey to look at the mental health and wellbeing of Australian children and adolescents is underway, with data collectors out and about across the country. It has been 15 years since Australia's only previous survey covering the mental health of children and adolescents. More than 6000 Australian families will be selected randomly and interviewed over the next six months as part of the Young Minds Matter survey, looking at the emotional and behavioral development of children and young people aged between 4 and 17 years. Young Minds Matter is being funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Health and Ageing and is being conducted by the University of Western Australia and the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, in collaboration with Roy Morgan Research.

[Click here to see the media release and contact numbers.](#)

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Updating to the AIHW's Mental Health Services in Australia website

The following sections of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's Mental Health Services in Australia website were updated earlier this month.

1. Psychiatric disability support services
2. Workforce
3. Personal Helpers and Mentors (PHaMs)

[Click here to see updated sections.](#)

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In the media

- [Cold outside for ACT's Indigenous](#)
- [Australia to deliver fund for new dementia research](#)
- [Swingin' The Blues Away, A Charity Gala For SANE Australia](#)
- [New anti-racism resource for young people](#)
- [We must get in early to help troubled youth](#)
- [States demand asylum cost help](#)
- [LETTERS: Introducing Dr Brian Ironwood to Australian men](#)
- [The Australian Social Inclusion Board Five Years On](#)
- [Suicide is a sensitive issue that shouldn't be trivialised](#)
- [SuicidePreventionAUS tweets](#)
- [Call to Young Aussie Philanthropists](#)
- [Getting mobile mental health into Indigenous communities](#)

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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