

E-Bulletin – 23 July 2012

Carers Voice

Mental Health Carers Networking & Consulting Forum Monday 30 July

Dr Len Lambeth from the Division of Mental Health, Justice Health, Alcohol & Drug Services will present on Clinical Handover, one of the six redesign projects currently underway in the Division. This project is focused on improving clinical transfer and discharge processes.

The Networking & Consulting Forum also provides participants with an opportunity to connect with carer representatives – to hear their reports, and to voice carer issues.

Date: 30 July 2012

Time: 12.00pm - 2.00pm

Location: Orion Room, Southern Cross Club, Woden

RSVP: By Thursday 26 July 2012

Rosie.fisk@carersact.org.au or
phone: 9296 9952.

A light lunch will be provided.

Mental Health Carer Representatives

Mental health carers are invited to nominate as a representative and to participate on the following groups:

- Smoke-Free Working Group, to oversee the implementation of the smoke-free environment policy in the Mental Health Assessment Unit and

the Adult Mental Health Unit, Canberra Hospital.

- Mental Health Week Coordinating Committee. Mental Health Week will be held 7 - 13 October.

Please contact Doris Kordes (6296 9936, doris.kordes@carersact.org.au) for more information.

The Mental Health Services Conference (TheMHS) – 21-24 August 2012, Cairns – Sponsorship

The Division of Mental Health, Justice Health, Alcohol & Drug Service is sponsoring two consumers and two carers to attend TheMHS 2012. The theme for this year's conference is *Recovering Citizenship*. More information about the conference program may be accessed [here](#). Please contact Doris Kordes (6296 9936, doris.kordes@carersact.org.au) if you are interested in attending the conference and would like to apply for sponsorship.

Carers ACT 2012 – ACT Election Campaign

Carers ACT is launching its election campaign at a morning tea 10.00am - 12.00pm on Thursday 2 August at Regatta Point. All political parties and candidates standing in the ACT election, as well as carers, other peak bodies and media will

be invited to the launch. If you would like to attend the morning tea to help launch the Carers ACT 2012 Election Campaign please phone our reception on 6296 9900 or email Alison Elliott alison.elliott@carersact.org.au by Thursday 26 July. There is no cost to attend the launch.

Counselling for Carers

The feelings you experience as you go through your caring journey can be some of the most confusing and overwhelming you will ever encounter. Counselling can help you make sense of your new or ongoing life as a Carer, whether in specific areas such as dealing with bereavement or separation from a loved one, or with the more general feelings of stress, anxiety and depression you may experience in your caring role.

Counsellors at Carers ACT are qualified professionals who specialise in caring issues. All Carers are welcome to access our confidential counselling service in a supportive environment. Counselling is on a short term basis and Carer's must be resident of ACT and providing an active caring role to be eligible. Counsellors offer appointments during business hours here at the Holt office and also each do one day a week at Woden. For appointments, please call the CAS line on 1800 242 636.

ACT NEWS

MHCC ACT – latest news

The Mental Health Community Coalition ACT, the ACT Mental Health Consumer Network, Carers ACT, and the Division of Mental Health, Justice Health, Alcohol & Drug Service invite you to attend the Quarterly Community Forum:

Date: 6 August 2012

Time: 5.00pm - 7.30pm

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

RSVP: 6249 7756 or email

admin@mhccact.org.au

A flyer promoting this event may be accessed [here](#). The evening's agenda includes the topic - Adult MH Unit – *Reflections on the first months*. Please contact Doris Kordes if you are unable to attend the Quarterly Forum but would like your reflections – as a mental health carer, to contribute to the discussion.

The Coalition has also released its latest newsletter, which may be accessed [here](#). The next meeting of the ACT Consumer Carer Caucus is this Friday. 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. [Here](#) is the latest draft of the new MHCC ACT Strategic Plan. As part of the strategic planning process MHCC ACT agreed to consult further with Caucus and other stakeholders on the draft Strategic Plan.

Meeting date: 27 July 2012

Time: 11.30am - 1.30pm

Location: MHCC meeting room, Level 1,
Griffin Centre, Canberra City

Lunch will be served, so RSVPs are appreciated. Please send Simon Viereck simon.viereck@mhccact.org.au any agenda items, comments and suggestions by Wednesday 25 July, or phone MHCC ACT on 6249 7756 to give feedback.

Mental Health, Justice Health, Alcohol and Drug Service Division Newsletter

The latest newsletter is now available from Mental Health Justice Health, Alcohol and Drug Services. Read about some of the work that is happening in the Division. Areas covered include Workplace safety goals and objectives, Division redesign projects, Alcohol and Drug service news, Justice health news, Consumer consultant news, Mental health news, Family services news by Social workers in the Adult Mental Health Unit. You can access the newsletter [here](#).

Belconnen Community Service and Directions ACT - AOD Drop In Counselling Service

Belconnen Community Service (BCS) and Directions ACT have recently created a joint service which provides a drop in and appointment based counselling service for people experiencing issues with alcohol or other drugs (AOD) ACT- wide. The service is located at BCS and is available every second Thursday from 9.00am - 12.30pm.

People can simply drop in or appointments can be made by contacting BCS reception on 6264 0200. Families and friends may also use the service for information on AOD issues that may be affecting someone close to them. This is a free service. For more information please contact Belconnen Community Service on 6264 0200.

Care Financial Counselling Service

Care Financial Counselling Service and the Consumer Law Centre is a free not for profit service that provides information, support and financial counselling in relation to credit and debt issues for people on low to moderate incomes. Care now provides an outreach service at the Central Access Point at Housing ACT in Belconnen on Mondays 9.00am - 5.00pm. This is a free and confidential service for Housing and non Housing clients. People wishing to access this service should contact Care Financial Counselling Service direct on 6257 1788 to arrange an appointment.

Care Financial Counselling Service is also running a series of workshops on money management related issues. These workshops are for anyone on a low to moderate income wishing to gain practical, everyday money management skills. For more information or to register phone 6257 1788 Care Financial Counselling Service.

Women and Mental Health

Consumer and Carer Consultation: Summary of Results

The Women and Mental Health Working Group (WMHWG) held a consultation forum for women living with mental health issues or caring for someone with a mental health issue, to gather information about women's views and experiences of mental health.

The WMHWG and Women's Centre for Health Matters will use the findings to influence the health system to better meet the needs of women, and guide future research, health promotion and advocacy initiatives. It is hoped that by publishing these findings, other organisations and community members can also better understand the issues that women mental health consumers and carers face in the ACT. You can read the report [here](#).

Older Women Living with Depression in the ACT: Scoping Study

ACT includes an ageing population and an increasing number of people living with mental health issues, particularly depression. Women experience mental health differently to men due to gendered life circumstances. It is for this reason that

Women's Centre for Health Matters commissioned a scoping study.

The scoping report provides a preliminary overview of the issues that older women living with depression in the ACT face. These include the unsuitability of diagnostic and treatment tools, co-morbidity with physical health issues, various risk factors for depression related to gender and the social determinants of health, and the influence of social support and family relationships in illness identification and recovery.

The report recommended that steps be taken to address the needs of older women living with depression the ACT through further research, advocacy and initiatives. You can read this report [here](#).

Meditate for MS at the National Convention Centre in August

Following on from the "Meditate for MS" event on World MS Day 2012, Lynnette Dickinson is leading another meditation event at the National Convention Centre.

Would you like to reduce stress, improve concentration and focus, improve workplace performance and relationships, and improve your overall wellbeing? If you answered yes, come and start your week with a relaxing meditation. Lynnette, author of "A Journey to Peace through Yoga" and Dru Yoga and Meditation teacher, will describe how

meditation has helped her to manage MS and stay out of her wheelchair, guide you through some gentle movements to help your body unwind and lead you into a relaxation so that the focus and spaciousness of meditation becomes easy. Cost: \$20; \$10 concession; discount for groups

Date: Monday 13 August 2012

Time: 12.00pm

Location: National Convention Centre, Civic

To RSVP please email:

rsvp@asparkofsplendour.com. For further information please contact Lynette: lynette@asparkofsplendour.com

All profits will be donated to the Quest for Life Residential Program subsidy fund (www.questforlife.com.au).

Livity Mini Workshops **making creativity part of your life**

Anna Coleman-Snow of Livity believes that our creativity is more than just using our hands to make something. She suggests it is actually a tool for us to manage our world. Livity's workshops reflect this belief and participants will be encouraged to explore their creativity through self awareness. There are no more than four participants per session.

Livity's Mini Workshop Program

Single Sessions

Cost: \$45 per person

Dates: 21 July 2012 Kewpie Doll

Workshop, 28 July Sewing Machine Basics, 4 August Collage, 5 August Crochet Basics, 11 August Knitting Basics

Times: 3.00pm - 5.00pm

For more information on bookings, where the classes are held and further class details please visit the website:

www.livity.com.au, ring Anna on 6230 0575 or 0415 304 302, or email anna@livity.com.au.

Canberra Homelessness Connect 2012

Canberra Homeless Connect 2012 – is a chance for people in Canberra who may be homeless or at risk of homelessness to access everything they need, for free. People can grab a lunch, have a health check, haircut and massage, pick-up clothing and footwear, enjoy entertainment and connect with housing, welfare, counselling, legal and youth advice and support. The One-Day Event is a chance for people who are homeless, or those at risk of homelessness, to access services, support and essentials. It's an initiative of individuals, community services, business, ACT government agencies, pitching in together to make a difference.

Date: Thursday 9 August 2012

Time: 11.00am - 3.00pm

Location: Pilgrim House, 69 Northbourne Avenue, City

Contact: Chris Stokman, Director
UnitingCare Canberra City

Ph: 6247 5041, Mob: 0450 137 664

Email:

unitingcare@canberracityuca.org.au

Got funny things to say and an experience of mental illness?

Are you living with mental illness issues? Do you care for someone who is? Are you aged 16 or older? Would you like to turn your story into comedy and make people laugh? You can learn the art of writing, rehearsing and performing stand-up comedy with help from experienced stand-up comedian and therapist Marie Helou.

The Mental Illness Fellowship is looking for a group of people to participate in a free 11 week series of workshops to be conducted at Belconnen Community Centre. Students will aim to perform at the Mindscapes stand-up comedy event in October during Mental Health Week.

Date: Beginning Thursday 2 August 2012
Time: 5.30pm - 7.30pm

Location: Belconnen Community Centre
Please submit your expression of interest to gavinb@mifellowship.org or contact Gavin Bussenschutt on 6246 7100.

NATIONAL NEWS

National Mental Health Recovery Framework

The second Consultation Draft of the National Mental Health Recovery - Oriented Practice and Service Delivery is now available for comment. You can access the document [here](#). The closing date for comments is 16 August 2012.

Lock in the NDIS so that every Australian Counts

This month will see the most important meeting between our leaders yet. On July 25, the Prime Minister as well as Premiers and Chief Ministers will meet in Canberra for the next COAG meeting.

This meeting is critical in securing the future of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

To help keep the pressure on our political leaders to lock in the NDIS, write in the message book or [sign the message book today](#). Your message can be as simple as a couple of sentences telling our political leaders why the NDIS is important to you.

Messages will be presented to the Prime Minister and every Premier and Chief Minister ahead of the meeting.

Thank you for your support.
The Every Australian Counts Team
www.everyaustraliancounts.com.au

Mental health boost for young people and their families

The Gillard Government is investing more than \$9.7 million for new family mental health services in 11 communities across Australia to help children and young people get a good start in life. You can access the Government media release [here](#).

The Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Jenny Macklin, visited the Benevolent Society in Campbelltown on Monday to announce

that they and other community organisations will share in the funding to deliver early intervention services in high-need areas. You can read the news article [here](#).

It's 3am and your GP is closed. We're open.

If you have an urgent health concern and don't know what to do, call the after hours GP helpline – for free health information and assistance from a registered nurse, or medical advice from a GP if you need it. The after hours GP helpline is open when your GP may not be - at nights, on weekends and on public holidays - 365 days a year. If you don't know what to do, the after hours GP helpline will give you the reassurance and practical advice you need.

after hours GP helpline
health direct
AUSTRALIA
1800 022 222

Greens launch rural mental health services online consultation

Australian Greens spokesperson for Mental Health Penny Wright, and Greens Leader Christine Milne launched the Greens' Rural Mental Health Services Online Consultation website in Port Augusta. The website will give Australians in rural areas a chance to have their say on mental health services in their

regions. Senator Wright said it was important that the people at the forefront of rural mental health services had a chance to have their voices heard. You can read more [here](#). You can access the online consultation [here](#).

E Mental Health Strategy

This Australian Government strategy sets out a long term vision for developing an accessible, high quality and integrated e-mental health care system. Read the publication [here](#). From 1 July you will be able to register to create your personal eHealth record (PCEHR). For more information and to learn more about how the eHealth record system will work for you, you can access the website [here](#).

New e-Mental Health Tool launched

Minister for Mental Health Mark Butler has launched a new online mental health tool designed to support people living with a mental health issue such as anxiety or depression. Developed by a team of health professionals at the Black Dog Institute, and funded by the Australian Government, myCompass is an online tool that assesses user symptoms, then provides a personalised support program. You can read more [here](#).

R U OK? Day - Thursday 13 September

The second Thursday of September is R U OK? Day. It's a national day that aims to

prevent suicide by encouraging Australians to connect with someone they care about and help stop little problems turning into big ones. Staying connected with others is crucial to our general health and wellbeing. Feeling isolated or hopeless can contribute to depression and other mental illnesses, which can ultimately result in suicide. Regular, meaningful conversations can protect those we know and love.

“On that day we want everyone across the country, from all backgrounds and walks of life, to ask family, friends and colleagues: “Are you OK?” You could start a conversation that could change, or even save a life. You can access the website [here](#).

R U OK? is conducting the Australian Workplace Relationships Survey

This survey is one of the most comprehensive pieces of research into how people feel and interact at work. Survey results will be published on August 14, a month before the fourth annual R U OK? Day on 13 September 2012. The survey should take around 10 minutes to complete. The results will be anonymous, but will help to understand key Australian trends and help to shape future communications. You can access and partake in the survey [here](#).

Headspace and NAIDOC Week

Headspace is the National Youth Mental Health Foundation. It helps young people who are going through a rough time. NAIDOC (National Aboriginal and Islanders Day Observance Committee) Week 1 - 8 July, is a celebration of the history, achievements and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. To mark the week Samantha Wild, Youth Advisor to Headspace Youth National Reference Group and a member of the headspace Indigenous Taskforce, has written a blog reflecting on the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. You can access the blog [here](#).

RESEARCH AND NEWS

Multiple tours of duty allowed despite mental health risks

Australian special forces are being allowed to deploy on back-to-back tours of duty, sometimes doing half-a-dozen tours in as many years, despite the military acknowledging that such deployments may have a detrimental effect on mental health. Read the “Sydney Morning Herald” article [here](#).

Childhood infections linked to schizophrenia

Gut and chest infections in early childhood appear to raise the risk of developing schizophrenia later in life, even if they do not spread to the brain,

Australian scientists have found. Their discovery radically expands links between the psychiatric disorder and physical illness. Boys who were admitted to hospital at least twice before age three with respiratory or intestinal infections were 80 per cent more likely than others to develop by the time they were in their mid- to late-20s. The study involved the birth and hospital records of more than 40,000 young adults in Western Australia. Read “The AGE” article [here](#).

Youth mental health team too free with drugs: audit

Australia’s largest youth mental health service prescribed medication to a majority of depressed 15 to 25-year-olds before they had received adequate counselling, despite international guidelines advising against the practice. An audit of Orygen Youth Health medical records found 75 per cent of those diagnosed with depression were given the drugs too early. Read the “Sydney Morning Herald” article [here](#). You can find out more about Orygen Youth Mental Health [here](#).

Asia-Australia Mental Health

Asia-Australia Mental Health (AAMH) is a consortium of St Vincent's Health and the University of Melbourne. Established in 2003, AAMH partners academic, government, health sector community

and peak bodies in Asia and Australia to improve mental health services and outcomes in the Asia Pacific region. Of the estimated 200 million people in Asia suffering from mental illness the vast proportion do not receive adequate, or in most cases any, treatment. To read more about AAMH you can access the website [here](#).

Elite athletes and mental health

When it comes to dealing with mental health issues such as depression and anxiety, elite athletes are ‘just like us’, and ‘just like us’ they need help, research from The Australian National University (ANU) reveals. Amelia Gulliver, a PhD candidate at the Centre for Mental Health Research, recruited young elite athletes in a collaborative project with the Australian Institute of Sport to study the effectiveness of three online interventions aimed at increasing knowledge about mental disorders and reducing stigma. She found that the more information the athletes had, the more likely they were to seek help. Read the ANU news article [here](#) and you can access the full report [here](#).

Online depression therapy programs have positive effect

Online depression therapy programs can have a positive impact on more than just depressive symptoms, a new study from the Australian National University reveals. Dr Lou Farrer, from the Centre for Mental Health Research, trialled the effectiveness of online programs MoodGYM and

BluePages with users of Lifeline's telephone crisis line. She found that the online programs had a positive influence across a range of problems – not just depression. Read the ANU news article [here](#) and you can access the full report [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.