Hello carers, volunteers, students and staff,

This week at Mental Health Carers NSW (MHCN), we finalised our submission to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme, (NDIS), after discussions with our Carer Peak Advisory Committee’s, (to which we invited an NCOSS representative), our partners Being, the Peak Body for consumers of mental health services in NSW, as well as Mental Health Carers Australia and One Door (formerly the Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW). We warmly endorse the substance of their submissions and note that many organisations have advised that ending the funding for some services considered to be ‘in scope’ for the NDIS, (that is, these funded services seem to target the same population and therefore could be wound up and their funding re-purposed for the NDIS), could result in people currently receiving support losing it. This is because the criteria for people to access support under the NDIS is often stricter than for some of these other programs, particularly around the requirements for permanency of the disability which would seem to raise questions about the issue of recovery oriented practise and how the NDIS supports this (if it is only meant to be available for people with no prospect of reducing their level of disability).

In our submission MHCN pointed out that the permanency requirement alone would seem to preclude NDIS from delivering early intervention for psycho-social disability (as it is very hard to predict the ultimate level of disability resulting from an experience of mental illness at the outset), and so we recommended (as others have) that the NDA work very closely with the state funded public mental health services which can provide such early intervention and ensure that there are robust referral pathways and joint care planning processes to allow NDIS to receive people being discharged into the community. This will ensure that people do not ‘fall through the gaps’ and cease receiving support on discharge. Only this will ensure that the full promise of the NDIS in meeting the need for supported accommodation for people with experience of disabling mental health issues. However, such cooperation is also important to ensure that ongoing treatment (when required) is fitted into the support plan for that person in a seamless way. We also concurred with the sentiments expressed by other submissions that the NDIS can fill a vital gap in mental health services, but only if the investment of funding appropriately matches the scheme’s aspirations. There is a risk of perpetuating the underfunding of medical and disability support for the most vulnerable in our community by robbing one program to pay for the other. Another inquiry by the Productivity Commission into the costs of this scheme is ongoing and MHCN will also be making a submission on this subject to that.

Other than this, we have had some meetings with our partners at the Australian College of Applied Psychology and hope to bring some considerable expertise to bear on developing some resources to assist people with lived experience; as well as with MH Worx on the possibilities on supporting the development of some consumer and carer directed services for NSW. We will have further discussions on Monday with leading peer advocates from Kansas at the ‘So You Want to Change the World’ conference we are co-hosting on Monday on this as well as on their excellent suite of training and tools on trauma informed care.

For those going to Mardi Gras, (and those who aren’t), have a fun, safe and inclusive weekend!

Jonathan Harms, CEO, MHCN
1. MHCN will be completing the City2Surf to fundraise for our organisation. City2Surf will run on the 13 August 2017. Our volunteer Oscar will be holding informal training sessions on Fridays starting from the 17 March 2017 at 5pm. If wishing to join this group please contact oscar.perez.concha@gmail.com. Click here for more details.

2. As you all know we have been having IT issues with some of our computers. One of the issues is due to staff checking the box to ‘save credentials’ when logging into desktops or the RDS. Please do not check this box as it causes the phones to malfunction. We are still resolving an issue with the phone not working on one last computer, however the RDS otherwise is useable. If you encounter any computer issues please report them to Caitlin immediately as they may already be in the process of being investigated. Thank you for your patience while we work to resolve these issues.

3. The folders where we store completed helpline stat forms have been moved to the space next to Jonathan’s desk. There are now two folders: one for stat forms that require a call back, and one for completed forms that do not require any further action and are ready to be input into survey monkey.

4. Yoga runs on Tuesdays from 12.30pm—1.30pm in the Namatjira Room and costs $10. Bring your mat and comfortable clothing. To attend please contact Sharon Leadbetter as they need a minimum of 3-4 to run the class, otherwise the class is cancelled.

5. Zumba runs on Tuesdays from 5.15pm—5.45pm in the Namatjira Room. This class is free. Please contact Sharon Leadbetter to attend as they need a minimum 3-4 to run the class, otherwise the class is cancelled.

6. Meditation is Wednesdays from 1.00pm—1.30pm in the Mabo Room.

7. On Tuesday 7 March, Collective Purpose are having a Mardi Gras office party from 4.30pm—6pm. There will rainbows, cupcakes, RuPaul & Lady Gaga. All staff and volunteers are welcome to attend.
CENTRAL COAST PEER CHAMPIONS FORUM

It’s time the Central Coast truly harness AND support the expertise of workers and volunteers who have a lived experience of mental illness (consumers and carers)!

Join us to learn more about:
- NSW Peer Workforce Development
- The varied roles and responsibilities of the modern peer worker
- How workplaces and managers can best support peer workers

Click here to learn more.

GUARDIANSHIP REVIEW: FINAL QUESTION PAPERS RELEASED 4, 5 & 6

The NSW Law Reform Commission have released their third and final consultation package for the Review of the Guardianship Act 1987 (NSW). It contains:
- Question Paper 4: Safeguards and procedures
- Question Paper 5: Medical and dental treatment and restrictive practices
- Question Paper 6: Remaining Issues

We seek your views, ideas, and opinions about the issues our latest Question Papers raise. A submission may be as short or as long as you like. You can use the Question Papers to guide your submissions. You can also complete our easy-to-answer survey to share your views, instead of or in addition to making a formal submission.

Submissions close on Friday 12 May 2017 and can be emailed to nsw-lrc@justice.nsw.gov.au or posted to GPO Box 31, Sydney NSW 2001.

Click here to access the question papers.

SEEKING VOLUNTEERS FOR MH EXPO

WayAhead are looking for volunteer event assistants to help out at their Mental Health Expo at Chatswood Mall on 5th April 2017. Applications close 14th March so get yours in quick and help raise awareness of mental health in the community!

Click here for details on how to get involved.

Carer’s Corner

Carer’s Corner is a section in MHCN’s e-newsletter & website where we promote carer’s creative outlet! You can submit stories, poems and artwork about mental health for publish on our website & e-news. Email caitlin.bambridge@arafmi.org to submit!

Click here to view the latest entry!

NEW RESOURCES

All new resources can be found at J:/General/Research Reports Resources and Studies/AAA New Resources
- Family & Carer Mental Health Program Monitoring October—December 2016 Report
- National LGBTI Mental Health & Suicide Prevention Strategy, March 2017

NdIs Service Provider Rating Site Expands to NSW

Clickability, which has been described as a TripAdvisor for the NDIS, will launch in NSW on 1 March with the aim of helping people with disability choose and purchase the services they need.

The social enterprise was founded by two social workers, Aviva Beecher Kelk and Jenna Moffat, concerned about the lack of information on NDIS services.

“A big part of my role was to help people link into the services that they needed,” Beecher Kelk said.

“Essentially, I was gatekeeping a lot of information, which didn’t sit well with me.

Click here to continue reading.
CONSUMERS & CARERS ORGANISING OURSELVES WORKSHOP 3 APRIL 2017

Mental health services are changing. The Australian Government announced in 2015 its intention to move towards a person-centred whole-of-care approach to mental health based on localised decision-making. It has re-directed $365m in 2016/2017 away from the hospital sector and $200m from the drug and alcohol sector to pilot personalized models of care in regions, to be commissioned through, but not delivered by, 31 Primary Health Networks (PHNs).

Click here to continue reading & for workshop details.

ESSENTIAL LIVING IS OFFICIALLY CLOSING

This is a formal notice to advise you that the community program, Essential Living will be officially closing down on Saturday 11th March 2017. Click here to continue reading.

CONSUMER & CARER POLL

People who identify as a mental health consumer or carer, are warmly invited to respond to this 5-10 minute poll.

The Mental Health Drug and Alcohol Principal Committee (MHDAPC) of the Australian Health Ministers’ Advisory Council has requested an evaluation of the progress and achievements of the National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum (referred to in this poll as the Forum). The evaluation is occurring in the lead up to the next funding round. Key to successfully fulfilling this role, is mental health consumers and carers across Australia knowing about the Forum, knowing what it does, knowing how it can be contacted and knowing how to both contribute and use the resources developed by the Forum.

Click here to take the survey.

Arafmi Illawarra - Consumer & Carer Rights & the NDIS

This presentation will help consumers understand their rights under the Australian Consumer Law, particularly when selecting disability related goods or services through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). It makes no difference whether consumers pay for the goods themselves, as an NDIS participant, or through a disability support system – their consumer rights still apply. For further information, please contact ARAFMI Illawarra on 02 4220 5458 or email arafmi_i@bigpond.net.au

Click here to find out more about the workshop.
UPCOMING TRAINING & WORKSHOPS

Mental Health First Aid for the Suicidal Person
31st March 2017
10.00am—2.00pm
MHCN, Suite 501, Level 5, 80 William St, Woolloomooloo, NSW, 2011
$65 General, $20 Carers/Consumers
Click here for details and to register

Youth Mental Health First Aid 2 Day Course
4th & 5th May 2017
9.00am—5.00pm
MHCN, Suite 501, Level 5, 80 William St, Woolloomooloo, NSW, 2011
$220 General
Click here for details and to register

Motivational Interviewing Course
21 April 2017
9.00am—4.00pm
MHCN, Suite 501, Level 5, 80 William St, Woolloomooloo, NSW, 2011
$250 (Light lunch included)
Click here for details and to register

NDIS Education Session
24 March 2017
12.30pm—1.30pm
MHCN, Suite 501, Level 5, 80 William St, Woolloomooloo, NSW, 2011
This session is free for carers and consumers
Click here for details and to register

CONTACT US
PHONE: 02 9332 0777
1300 554 660

EMAIL: ARAFMI.ADMIN@ARAFMI.ORG

ADDRESS: SUITE 501, LEVEL 5, 80 WILLIAM ST, WOOLLOOMOOLOO, NSW, 2011

OFFICE HOURS: 9.00AM—5.00PM, MONDAY—FRIDAY

WEBSITE: WWW.ARAFMI.ORG