Information Sheet June 2011

Mental Health Review Board

Membership of the Mental Health Review Board (MHRB) has been strengthened following the recommendations of the Minister for Mental Health, Hon Helen Morton MLC. Murray Allen has been re-appointed as President and former members who applied have also been re-appointed. There are also 22 new members, including a small number of country representatives.

On 7 and 8 June 2011, the Mental Health Commission hosted a visit from Prof Terry Carney from the University of Sydney to discuss best practice in the operations of Mental Health Review Boards or Tribunals. In addition to meeting many members of the MHRB, Prof Carney also met with representatives of the Council of Official Visitors, the Mental Health Law Centre and carers and consumers. A paper summarising the issues discussed will be on the Commission’s website shortly.

Quality Assurance

The Commission has engaged international mental health experts - Gregor Henderson, Kevin Lewis and Vidhya Alakeson - to prepare advice on options for a quality assurance framework in mental health, reflecting the need for some changes with the establishment of the Commission. Where necessary, those changes will be included in the draft Mental Health Bill to be introduced into Parliament in this term of Government.

Gregor led the acclaimed reform of the mental health system in Scotland and currently advises governments around the world. Kevin is a leader in personalisation in mental health.

Gregor and Kevin visited Perth in May and met key individuals. They have prepared a paper setting out high level principles and a framework based on international trends which can be accessed from the Commission’s website [www.mentalhealth.wa.gov.au](http://www.mentalhealth.wa.gov.au). They invite your comments. Gregor and Vidhya will be returning in the week of 4 to 12 July and there will an opportunity for people to attend a public forum in addition to specific meetings.


The Mental Health Commission has committed an additional $1.37 million to respond to recommendations of the Council of Official Visitors Annual Report.

The Commission has allocated $1 million to the Department of Health to undertake minor works on mental health facilities in WA that were identified in the COOV annual report as requiring repair or improvement. The repairs and refurbishments are linked to issues identified in the report and will improve the environment for people receiving mental health services in an inpatient setting.

In addition, the Commission will allocate $187,000 per annum for 2 years to the Mental Illness Fellowship WA (MIFWA) to encourage and help mental health hostel residents to quit smoking, thus leading to improved physical health.

The funding will enable eight 10-week programs to deliver targeted support for people trying to quit the habit. It will be delivered by people with a lived experience of mental illness who are also former smokers so they have a deep understanding of the challenge involved for each participant.
This innovative initiative is based on a successful model developed in South Australia.

Concerns raised about the jurisdiction of the Council and other legislative matters are being taken up in the Quality Assurance review and will be reflected in new drafting instructions for the mental health legislation.


**Consumer Association**

The Western Australian Association for Mental Health Consumers is a step closer. Applications for the Consumer Association have now closed. The successful application will be announced once the assessment process has been completed and negotiations have been finalised with the preferred provider.

The Association will focus on mental health law reform and the recognition of, and respect for, the rights of people living with a mental illness. It will also advocate for an expanded role for consumer consultants, peer support workers and consumer representatives, as well as working to deliver better information and referral services for people living with mental illness.

**Mental Health Advisory Council**

The Mental Health Advisory Council held its first meeting on 31 May. Chair Barry MacKinnon and Deputy Chair Dr Judy Edwards welcomed 10 new members. They are Joe Calleja, Geoff Diver, Margaret Doherty, Dr John Edwards, Pamela Gardner, Katherine Hams, Lindsay Smoker, Dr Alexandra Welborn, Dr Bernadette Wright and Professor Dianne Wynaden.

The meeting was extremely productive and the sub-committee on legislation has had its first meeting. Members of this sub-committee include Dr Judy Edwards, Katherine Hams, Margaret Doherty and Dr Alexandra Welborn.

I am confident the Council will provide valuable expert advice for the Mental Health Commission. You will be able to keep up to date with Council deliberations via the minutes of each meeting which will be posted on the Commission’s website once they have been accepted.

**Registration of Interest**

To help progress plans for Individualised Community Living in Western Australia, the Mental Health Commission is creating a register of interested organisations. We are inviting non government organisations to register their interest in receiving training and development relating to individualised support and services for people with a mental illness.

The Mental Health Commission is committed to increasing choices for people with a mental illness and giving them a greater say in what supports they receive. Funding for Individualised Community Living support packages for 100 people was announced in the recent State budget and will be available later in 2011/2012.

The training is designed to build the capacity of individual organisations and the sector as a whole. The Commission will begin a procurement process later in the year.

You can download the Registration of Interest information package from [www.mentalhealth.wa.gov.au](http://www.mentalhealth.wa.gov.au). Or for more information call Rob Erskine on 6272 1200.

Registrations close 5pm Friday 24 June 2011.
Crisis prevention planning initiative

I am pleased to announce an exciting initiative which aims to develop a Crisis Prevention Plan for individual consumers that is recognised across the sector.

A Collaboration and Service Integration Reference Group comprising representatives from carers, consumers, non government organizations, public mental health services and the Commission has been established. This group aims to improve services and supports so that they are more connected and consumers and carers don’t experience gaps in their support. One of the first areas being tackled is the problem created when consumers, who have multiple services, find themselves in crisis. The project is designed to give consumers more control over their lives by establishing a system where service providers support consumers to own their individual crisis prevention plan that is recognised and used by all the services.

It is based on the crisis prevention model developed by the Coordinated Care Planning Working Party 2010 led by Dr Sandy Tait. The Crisis Prevention Plan will cover areas such as: When I am well, I notice that; Signs of me becoming unwell are; What I can do to help myself; Supports; What others can do to help me; If I feel unsafe towards myself or others what I want to happen is; What is not helpful is.

The Mental Health Commission has agreed to fund a project officer who will be supervised by Dr Tait but accountable to the Reference Group. For more information about this work please contact Susan Nye at the Commission on susan.nye@mentalhealth.wa.gov.au

Eddie Bartnik

Mental Health Commissioner