The May State Budget delivered an additional $39.4 million over four years to mental health services in Western Australia. The announcement of increased funding reaffirms the Government’s ongoing commitment to mental health in our State.

The funding provided in the 2012/13 State Budget will focus on the following priority areas:

- **Mental Health Diversion Assistance and the Justice System:**
  - $5 million over two years to trial a new adult mental health court diversion and support program in Perth metropolitan magistrates’ courts.
  - $1.7 million over two years to place specialised mental health expertise within the Perth’s Children Court.

- **The Individualised Community Living Initiative:**
  - $8.7 million over three years to provide 16 homes to assist people with mental health problems and complex needs to live a good life in the community.
  - $4.6 million over four years to deliver 18 individualised support packages to ensure these people are well supported.

- **Mental Health Legislation and Reforms:** $16.5 million over four years.

The Government’s ongoing support of the mental health sector means more Western Australians with mental illness will receive the care and support they need, when they need it. Details on the funding provided to the Mental Health Commission are available in the [State Budget Bulletin 2012/13](#).

### $26 million Boost for Mental Health in Western Australia

Two Mental Health Commission initiatives, the Individualised Community Living (ICL) and the Assertive Community Intervention (ACI) will be expanded thanks to top-up funding from the Federal Government.

The funding provided to WA, as part of the $200 million National Partnership Agreement: Supporting National Mental Health Reform, will provide housing and help fund a 24-hour emergency support service for children with mental illness and their families.

- **$13.5 million over five years** will go to WA’s existing Assertive Community Intervention (ACI) initiative to increase its emergency response team to help children aged 0-18 years and their families experiencing mental health crisis to reduce the number of unnecessary emergency presentations, while a further $12.6 million will provide an additional 30 individualised support packages and six houses for people with severe mental illness.

Both initiatives are aimed at reducing unnecessary inpatient admissions and presentations to emergency departments. The ACI service will support 700 children and their families over 4 years, while the housing project and support packages will help people with mental illness to live a good life in the community.

L-R: Philip Aylward, CEO Child and Adolescent Health Services, Mark Butler, Federal Minister for Mental Health, Helen Morton, WA Minister for Mental Health, Eddie Bartnik, Commissioner for Mental Health and Rod Astbury, Executive Director WA Association for Mental Health at Princess Margaret Hospital launching the Mental Health Reform NPA initiatives.
2012 Good Outcomes Awards – Nominations Open

The Awards, now in their tenth year, honour and recognise the exceptional achievements of our State's mental health sector and celebrate inspiring role models whose activities and contributions have impacted positively on their community.

We are calling on individuals, groups and organisations across the government, private and community sectors that have made an outstanding contribution to mental health in Western Australia to nominate anyone they think deserves public recognition.

The award winners will be announced at the Good Outcomes Awards presentation event, held at the University Club of Western Australia on Tuesday, 9 October as part of the State's National Mental Health Week celebrations.

For further information including the criteria, nomination and judging process visit the Good Outcomes Awards page on the Commission's website.

Asia Pacific Conference 2012

The 2012 Asia Pacific (ASPAC) Conference was held in Perth this June, with an estimated 600 international, national and local delegates and 35 guest speakers. This year’s theme was ‘Exploring the relationships in mental health, recovery and wellbeing.’ The Conference was presented by Richmond Fellowship of Western Australia, with the Mental Health Commission as a major sponsor.

The Mental Health Minister Helen Morton opened the conference on Tuesday, 12 June.

Conference participants took part in several plenary and workshop sessions addressing various topics in mental health, including ‘Youth mental health in the real world’, ‘Psychosis: Crisis, Chronicity and Recovery’, ‘Why wellbeing matters to our mental health’ and ‘Mental health and the criminal justice’, among other topics.

There were also several community-managed organisations with information tables where conference participants were able to learn about those organisations and the services and programs they provide.

We know that mental illness will affect many of us in some way during our life, but selling that message is a constant challenge. Events like this are very important as they aim to raise awareness about mental health issues, promote and inform the public about services available and help reduce stigma in the community.

I would like to congratulate everyone who has worked hard to organise this international event and thank the Richmond Fellowship of WA for hosting the 2012 ASPEC Conference in Perth.

Homelessness Conference 2012 – Leading the Road Home

Another important conference, Western Australia’s first, was a Specialist Homelessness Services Conference, which was held on 28-29 May. The conference was hosted by the WA Council on Homelessness and the Department for Child Protection and I had the pleasure of facilitating a plenary morning session during day two and talking about mental health issues in WA.

About 400 homelessness service providers and peak bodies from across Western Australia came together to share experiences, examine the progress made to reduce homelessness across the State and to discuss future opportunities. Speakers included the Prime Minister’s Council on Homelessness Deputy Chairwoman Christine Edwards, WA’s Department of Housing’s Acting Director of Social and
Affordable Housing Genevieve Errey and a collection of academics and community services in the sector.

While progress is being made, more needs to be done to reduce and prevent homelessness in our community. I believe that in WA, we have made a good start in developing strategies to reduce the number of people who are homeless and this conference was proof of the sector wide commitment to tackle the causes and effects of homelessness. It was wonderful to see so many people that share a deep interest in the social and emotional wellbeing of our community.

**Review of discharge planning**

A review into the admission, discharge and transfer policies and practices of WA’s public mental health services is well underway and is being led by Professor Bryant Stokes.

The independent review, commissioned jointly by the Mental Health Commission and the Department of Health, will address system-wide compliance with admission and discharge policies and guide improvements that may be required to ensure they are effective.

The scope of the review will include public hospital emergency departments, inpatient mental health services and community mental health services. The review will also include interviews with individuals with mental illness, families, carers, the Council of Official Visitors, Mental Health Advisory Council, WA Association of Mental Health Consumers, as well as a broad range of clinicians, service providers and other groups.

The final report is due within the next month and it will also be available for public comment.

**Appointment of new WAAMH and CoMHWA Executive Directors**

I would like to welcome two new Executive Directors, Rod Astbury and Julian Gimple, to the WA mental health sector.

The Western Australian Association for Mental Health (WAAMH) has appointed Rod Astbury as the new Executive Director, and he comes with experience of mental health issues at both local and national level.

Julian Gimple has been appointed as the inaugural Executive Director for Consumers of Mental Health WA Inc (CoMHWA) and has extensive experience in both community and clinical mental health systems.

Their appointments will drive both organisations forward, as well as assist with the implementation of mental health reform across the sector.

**Broome Mental Health Unit opened**

At the beginning of May, mental health services in the Kimberley and the Pilbara got a significant boost with the official opening of the $9.4 million Broome Mental Health Inpatient Unit, Mabu Liyan, meaning “good spirit and healing”.

Premier Colin Barnett and Mental Health Minister Helen Morton jointly opened the unit which will provide acute psychiatric inpatient care to people in the Kimberley and Pilbara. People who have had to previously travel thousands of kilometres for treatment will now receive care locally with the support of their loved ones.

At the event, Minister Morton said the unit would open with 10 beds - eight open and two secure - and would be fully operational within 12 months with 14 beds. Local people will be cared for in this unit with six Aboriginal people employed in the mental health treatment team.
The Mabu Liyan unit will be fully integrated with Broome Hospital and managed by the Kimberley Mental Health and Drug Service.

**The National Mental Health Service Planning Framework (NMHSPF)**

Both in Australia and internationally, there have been calls for the development of more strategic and coordinated approaches to mental health planning and service delivery. In response, the Commonwealth has contracted NSW Health (partnered with Qld Health) to work with all jurisdictions to deliver a NMHSPF. I am the WA representative on the NMHSPF Executive Group for the project.

The NMHSPF model will be adapted for use within each Australian jurisdiction and is intended to provide transparency and consistency across all jurisdictions for estimating the need and demand for mental health services. The services will address the whole continuum of care from prevention and early intervention to the most intensive treatment.

To advance the work in Western Australia, the MHC recently held a one day workshop on the NSW Mental Health clinical care and Prevention model (MH-CCP), delivered by Gavin Stewart who has been contracted by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing to contribute his expertise to the development of the National Mental Health Services Planning Framework. The MH-CCP tool will guide the developmental work of the NMHSPF.

Brian Woods who is the Project Director for the NMHSPF also travelled to Perth to present the project to the Minister for Mental Health, Department of Health staff and the community managed sector. His information sessions were highly informative and very well received.

Eddie Bartnik  
Mental Health Commissioner