


ANNUAL REVIEW 2014 /15



Mental
Health
Council
OF TASMANIA

CONNECT
ENGAGE
STRENGTHEN



The Mental Health Council of Tasmania [MHCT] is the Peak Body representing and promoting the interests of community mental health and has a strong commitment to improving the mental health of all Tasmanians.

Connect

MHCT connects stakeholders in the mental health sector with decision makers at a state and federal level and the broader Tasmanian community.

Engage

MHCT engages with all areas of government and mental health services to advocate for improvement in the care for people living with mental health issues in our community and their carers.

Strengthen

MHCT strengthens and supports the Tasmanian community by promoting initiatives that aim to improve mental health and wellbeing for all Tasmanians.

Hi, my name is:
Cheryl
Organisation:
Eureka Clubhouse



CEO | Connie Digolis

The Mental Health Council of Tasmania is a small organisation with big goals. I have only been the CEO at MHCT for a short time; however, I can see that the Mental Health sector is diverse, complex and provides an important role and responsibility in the Tasmanian community.

As the peak body for the sector, MHCT sees that our role is to connect with key stakeholders, engage with services and governments and strengthen the community through supporting mental health promotion.

With the mental health sector in a current state of reform we have made a conscious decision that until the outcomes of the reform process are clear we will postpone the development of a new strategic plan for MHCT. In saying that, this annual review includes the newly developed 'Guiding Principles' for the Mental Health Council that were a result of consultations with our members on what the priorities are for our sector. It is these guiding principles that will inform our strategic direction moving forward and form the basis for a new strategic plan.

In order to achieve those goals and be accountable to the mental health sector we have a dedicated team of people that work hard each day. I would like to acknowledge the previous CEO of MHCT, Darren Carr for his efforts to pave the way to make MHCT strong, sustainable and goal oriented. I look forward to working closely with our members to ensure that we achieve those goals and thank the team at MHCT for your diligence, support and above all, enthusiasm for contributing to the work of the MHCT and the mental health sector.

Connie Digolis
CEO



CHAIR | Patrick Carlisle

The past 12 months have been extremely busy and productive at the Mental Health Council of Tasmania. At a board level we have had a transition period to recruit our new CEO, Connie Digolis. The Board would like to take this opportunity to thank Elida Meadows for doing such a fantastic job taking on the additional role of Acting CEO during the interim.

The Board wish to acknowledge the dedicated work of the team on the Rethink Mental Health Project, who performed a leading role during the consultation process. The whole mental health sector at both a state and national level is now at the precipice for real reform. As a result, the Rethink project has consolidated MHCT's role in ensuring that governments and the sector are held accountable for improving the system to better assist those living with mental illness and their carers.

The MHCT board have performed their governance role with professionalism and compassion. I believe the future is bright for MHCT and its members and I am proud to be a part of that team.

Patrick Carlisle
Chair

Board

Deputy Chair
Jane BowerSecretary
Sarah SealyTreasurer
Jade BarkerBoard Member
Nevenka
AlempijevicBoard Member
Debbie
Evans

Staff

Connie Digolis – CEO

Elida Meadows – Policy and Sector Development Manager

Catherine Delpero – Communications Officer

Sallie Neilson – Finance and Office Manager

Guiding Principles

As the peak body for mental health in Tasmania, MHCT is accountable to its members and the Tasmanian community to ensure its focus is on creating a...

Mentally healthy Tasmania

We want to encourage the benefits of mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention and ensure every opportunity is provided to all Tasmanians to nurture their mental health and wellbeing.

Community free of stigma and discrimination

We strive toward a society where mental illness is free from stigma and prejudice. We believe diversity should be celebrated and supported in our community and mental health services should acknowledge the needs of vulnerable groups.

Coordinated and integrated mental health system

MHCT is focused on working with all stakeholders to reform the mental health system so it is coordinated, integrated and person-centred at every stage of life.

Mental health sector where services and supports are shaped by the individual

Individuals should be empowered to work alongside service providers to build their capacity. We want to see a Tasmania where consumer and carer participation is integral to ensuring all services are meeting the needs of the community.

Strong and sustainable workforce in the community

Community mental health services who work with those living with mental health issues should be well-supported, well-trained and adequately resourced to do their work.



Key Highlights 2014/15

Long-term Supported Housing Forum, September 2014

MHCT has been advocating for long-term supported accommodation over a number of years. Work had been completed on an advocacy paper in partnership with Advocacy Tasmania and Shelter Tasmania in the previous financial year. Tasmanian Government subsequently flagged this issue as one that needed to be addressed in its Rethink Mental Health Project outline.

Rethink Mental Health consultations and development of a 10 year plan for mental health in Tasmania December 2014 – June 2015

The Mental Health Council of Tasmania partnered with the Mental Health, Alcohol and Drug Directorate to deliver consultations for the Rethink Mental Health Project. MHCT also negotiated with the Government on the development of the project and subsequently, the initial proposal of 3 regional consultations grew to more than 20. By expanding a regional approach for this consultation, MHCT was able to ensure effective representation from (and engagement with) consumers, carers and other minority groups in this process, including people from LGBTI, CALD, Aboriginal, rural and regional, aged and youth communities. Many of the consultations with these groups were facilitated by us.

We have continued to be part of the Rethink process through representation on committees including, the Steering Committee, the Expert Panel and at Rethink Mental Health Project Workshops to discuss the findings and provide input into the final report.

Mental Health Week 2014

In October 2014 MHCT coordinated and promoted Mental Health Week across the state and the theme was Act-Belong-Commit as part of the Mentally Healthy TAS health promotion initiative. MHCT provided grants to assist in event delivery for 22 different events state-wide.

Mental Health Week in 2014 had a greater reach and attendance than previous years and was a great opportunity to get the whole community more aware of mental health and the work being done by our members. MHCT will continue to be the lead organisation promoting and developing Mental Health Week into the foreseeable future with the aim to make it a key part of everyone's calendar in Tasmania each year.

Welfare Reform Forum with TasCOSS, 30 July 2014

A community forum on the proposed federal welfare reforms was held on Wednesday 30 July at the Glenorchy Civic Centre, Hobart. Speakers from Flourish, Mental Health Carers Tasmania, TasCOSS, and the Mental Health Council of Tasmania gave their perspective followed by a lively discussion.

The input from people with lived experience was particularly valuable and contributed to the MHCT submission to government on welfare reform.

What's next for MHCT?

Our future focus will be:

- Strengthening our membership and membership services
- Increasing Tasmanians awareness and engagement with mental health campaigns and programs
- Advocating for a smooth transition to NDIS for our members and consumers and carers – and as little disruption as possible to services and programs
- Sector development – supporting organisations to consider their workforce needs and promote the development of a peer workforce
- Harnessing the work achieved through the Rethink Mental health process to achieve better mental health outcomes
- Strengthening our linkages with primary health and community service providers.



Members

MHCT has a diverse membership of community organisations and individuals and is always open to new members who want to engage further with the mental health sector in Tasmania.

Consumer Organisations

Club Haven
GROW
Flourish
Tasmania Recovery from Eating Disorders

Carer Organisations

Mental Health Carers Tasmania
Carers Tasmania

Individuals

Darryl Lamb (Life Member)
Therese Ryan
Robin Wilkinson
Patrick Carlisle
Harold Dunbavan
Lucy Lester
Jane Bower
Emmy Bostock
Karl Willrath
Sonya Strafford

Service Providers

Advocacy Tasmania
Anglicare Tasmania
Baptcare
Bethlehem House
Caroline House
Centacare
Choose Life Services
Colony 47
CORES Australia
Cornerstone Youth Services (Headspace)
Headspace Hobart
Langford Support Services
Lifeline Hobart
Life Without Barriers
Migrant Resource Centre
MI Fellowship
Mission Australia
OzHelp Foundation
Rainbow Communities TAS
Red Cross
Relationships Australia
Richmond Fellowship
Rural Alive & Well
Salvation Army Bridge Program
The Hobart Clinic
White Cloud Foundation
Wise Employment
Working it Out
Youth, Family and Community Connections

Committees and Representation

Health Promotion Community of Practice
Mindframe Communications Advisory Group
World Mental Health Day Coordinators Network
R U OK? Day Working Group
Tasmanian Suicide prevention committee and suicide prevention strategy steering committee
Rethink mental health committee and reference group
NDIS transition options reference group
Tasmanian community sectors peaks network
CMHA (Executive Leadership Group and national board)
Peaks network and government strategic forum
Partners in Recovery (PiR) reference group
Mental Health In Touch
TasCOSS Social Policy Council
MHCT Community Mental Health Industry Advisory Group
CALD Community Connections Steering Committee
Tasmanian Transcultural Mental Health Advisory Group
Tasmanian Policy Network
Social Determinants of Health Advocacy Network
ACMHS Review Committee
Seclusion and Restraint Oversight Committee

Member Services

Regional Mental Health Group Meetings
Mental Health Leaders Meetings
Mental Health Leaders Network
Training Opportunities
Systemic Advocacy to government on sector based issues
Mental Health Consultation and Forums
E-news/member communications
Member surveys and consultation
Sector development support (whole of sector and individual regions or organisations)

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a blue short-sleeved shirt and a black lanyard with a badge, is smiling and holding a yellow paper. The background is a blurred office setting with a computer monitor and keyboard. A large diagonal overlay in green and blue covers the left side of the image.

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