



**Mental
Health
Council**
OF TASMANIA



www.mhct.org

Annual Review 2019–20

→ A leading voice in the Tasmanian mental health system

Our year in review

CEO, Connie Digolis



Connie Digolis, CEO

The ongoing work of MHCT and its members has never been more important

This time last year I wrote that I was looking forward to a demanding but rewarding year ahead. I think we can all agree it has certainly been challenging – though not in the way that myself or anyone else could have anticipated.

While it was a challenging 12 months for all of us, it can be easy to dwell on the many difficulties and uncertainties we have faced, but we should not lose sight of all the incredible things we have achieved, despite the adversity.

2019 Mental Health Week was our biggest yet, with over 50 applications for event grants, and a program of over 80 events held right across the state. We also launched a new Mental Health Week theme: 'We all have a role to play', which acknowledged the things we all do to support our own mental health, and the mental health of those we care about.

In November 2019 we launched Tasmania's Peer Workforce Development Strategy. Peer workers, through their lived experience, possess unique expertise and qualifications. The benefits of including peer workers within mental health systems is widely recognised, and our state-based Strategy paves the way for their inclusion in workplaces across the Tasmanian mental health sector.

The reimagine.today project wrapped up in June 2020, following the successful launch of the Stage 2 website at the end of May. MHCT worked in partnership with the Mental Health Coordination Council of NSW to contribute to the redevelopment of the reimagine.today website, creating a suite of new resources to assist people in navigating their NDIS journey, now available through the reimagine.today website.

We have been involved with, and are closely following the progress of the Tasmanian Mental Health Reform program. Much of MHCT's focus throughout this process has been on the interface between State Mental Health Services (SMHS) and the community-managed mental health sector in the development of several of the SMHS new models of care.

In April we helped facilitate a \$450,000 grant round funded by State Government to assist community managed mental health organisations to purchase technology to adapt their services around evolving COVID-19 restrictions. It's been incredible to witness the passion and dedication across the sector, as organisations have been able to respond so quickly to uncertainty and provide continuity of support to those Tasmanians who rely on it.

→ Advocating for a mentally healthy Tasmania

Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have been working closely with our members to try and understand the impact of restrictions on organisations and individuals. Thank you to all members who have been involved and participated in these groups. Your input throughout the process has been invaluable in helping us highlight to the State and Federal Government and the community, the impacts of the pandemic on our sector and on those people that access the many supports and services it provides.

A huge thanks to the fantastic MHCT team. You have shown incredible passion, patience and resolve as we have navigated the uncertainties that COVID-19 presented. Thank you also to our Board for the support and guidance you have provided myself and the MHCT team. Thank you to our members. Your dedication and commitment to supporting all Tasmanians throughout the pandemic has been nothing short of inspiring.

I know that the last 12 months have not been what anyone had hoped or planned for. But, given everything we have faced together during this period, the ongoing work of MHCT and its members has never been more important. There is undoubtedly another challenging yet rewarding year ahead of us.

Connie Digolis

CEO

Mental Health Council of Tasmania



Shareen Pearson

Corporate Services Manager



Julie Martin

Operations Manager



Cat Delpero

Media and Communications Manager



Nick Sullivan

Media and Communications Officer



Bree Klerck

Project Officer Sector Reform



Ezra Thomas

Project Officer Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Communications Charter



Astrid Wootton

Peer Leader and Policy Officer

MHCT Chair Report

Jules Carroll



Jules Carroll, Chair

MHCT has been working hard to advocate for systemic change across the breadth of our mental health and suicide prevention sectors here in Tasmania

Saying it has been a significant period since I took over as Chair of the Mental Health Council of Tasmania in November 2019 would be a slight understatement!

The onset of COVID-19 restrictions from mid-March 2020 placed an unprecedented imperative on community-managed mental health services to ensure continuity of service for Tasmanians accessing mental health and psychosocial supports. As Chair of MHCT, I want to commend and acknowledge the incredible work of our service providers, all of whom found immediate and innovative ways to provide support during what has been an incredibly challenging period.

Through the reporting period, MHCT has been working hard to advocate for systemic change across the breadth of our mental health and suicide prevention sectors here in Tasmania. In particular, over the past year, MHCT has been facilitating and encouraging a conversation to explore the needs of our young Tasmanians. This included planning and hosting the Tasmanian Youth Mental Health Forum, in partnership

with Primary Health Tasmania and the Mental Health Alcohol and Drug Directorate within the Tasmanian Department of Health. The two-day event in November 2019 brought together over 100 Tasmanian participants to hear from local, national and international speakers. The Forum explored how a truly co-designed and delivered integrated youth mental health service will support our young people's mental health and wellbeing early and at the right time.

I would like to extend my congratulations to Connie and the MHCT team for your work over the past year. Your achievements have been significant, ensuring our state continues to work towards real reform and system transformation whilst ensuring the contributions of the community-managed mental health sector are acknowledged and included in these important conversations.

Moreover, MHCT's response and monitoring of the impacts of COVID-19 restrictions on our service providers and the Tasmanians they support has been so important –

OUR BOARD

Jules Carroll	– Chair
David Tilley	– Deputy Chair
James Versteegen	– Treasurer
Paul Campbell	– Board Member
Deb Fast	– Board Member
Nicky Osborne	– Board Member

assisting government and agencies to understand clearly where gaps were emerging and how best to fill them.

Finally, I would like to pass on my sincere thanks to my predecessor, Debbie Evans, for her dedication and contribution as a Board Member from 2013 and as Chair of MHCT from 2016 until November last year. I took over a resilient and responsive Board and organisation, thanks to Debbie's outstanding leadership.

I look forward to the next exciting year as Chair of the Mental Health Council of Tasmania!

Jules Carroll

Chair

Mental Health Council of Tasmania



IT'S TIME TO

#checkin

→ checkin.org.au

Who we are

OUR VISION

ALL TASMANIANS HAVE
AWARENESS OF AND
VALUE THEIR MENTAL
HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The Mental Health Council of Tasmania (MHCT) is the peak body for community managed mental health services in Tasmania. We represent and promote the interests of our members and work closely with Tasmanian Government agencies and Primary Health Tasmania to ensure sectoral input into public policies and programs. We advocate for reform and improvement within the Tasmanian mental health system. Our purpose is to improve mental health and wellbeing for all Tasmanians.

→ A leading voice in the Tasmanian mental health system



Tasmanian Youth Mental Health Forum, Hobart 2019



Tasmanian Peer Workforce Development Strategy launch, Hobart 2019

OUR PURPOSE

IMPROVING MENTAL
HEALTH FOR ALL
TASMANIANS

OUR ROLE

Provide leadership by advocating for continuous improvement across all facets of mental health and suicide prevention

Provide trusted advice to our members and decision makers to enable a robust and contemporary mental health system

Be a collective, representative voice to ensure future sustainability of the sector, the community and the MHCT

Form and support strong networks and collaboration to support sector development and capacity building

Promote the reduction of stigma and champion mental health awareness and the value of good mental health

Influence policy development in the interests of our members and the needs of the broader population

OUR VALUES

- ▶ COMPASSIONATE AND RESPECTFUL
- ▶ COLLABORATIVE AND SUPPORTIVE
- ▶ RESPONSIVE AND ADAPTIVE
- ▶ LEADING AND ENGAGING

What we do

MHCT would like to acknowledge funding support for a number of MHCT projects and initiatives from the State Government and Primary Health Tasmania, and sponsorship for the Tasmanian Youth Mental Health Forum from a number of our members.

As the peak body for mental health in Tasmania, MHCT is accountable to its members and committed to continuous improvement and real reform across the Tasmanian mental health system. Over the past 12 months, MHCT has been busy working across the breadth of our Strategic Priorities, many in partnership with our members, other stakeholders, government and agencies, and other peak bodies.

LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY



38

member organisations



15

individual members



6

associate member organisations



Released the Tasmanian Peer Workforce Development Strategy to support the evolution of the workforce

Developed Peer training modules and provided these training opportunities for consumers, carers, families and friends



Completed the Tasmanian Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Communications Charter Project and delivered Safely Talking Workshops across Tasmania

- Created COVID-19 strategy Groups from April 2020 to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on the community-managed mental health sector and collect data to feed back to government and agencies
- Coordinated the Tasmanian Government's Community Managed Mental Health and Alcohol and Drug Sector Technology Fund Grants program

MHCT members shared their events & ideas with:



2391

Facebook followers



598

eNews subscribers

THE LEADING VOICE IN MENTAL HEALTH

Coordinated 2019 Mental Health Week
and distributed

\$40,000

in Mental health Week grants
provided by State Government

to
47
organisations

Planned and hosted the Tasmanian Youth Mental
Health Forum, bringing together 100 participants

from across the sector in partnership with the
Tasmanian Government, PHT and our sponsors



Conducted a number of
community consultations
focused on youth
mental health

A STRONG VOICE

in the media for the community
managed mental health sector
and system reform in Tasmania



Undertook a broad range of Sector
Development work, member engagement,
submissions and consultations, including:

- › Regional Mental Health Group Meetings with a network of over 300 representatives
- › Tasmanian Mental Health Leaders Forum
- › Roundtables, focus sessions and consultations with members and stakeholders
- › COVID-19 Mental Health Sector Network, Psychosocial Supports Working Group and Consumers, Carers Families and Friends Network
- › Submission to the Tasmanian State-wide Review of Services: Mental Health Service Helpline and Crisis and Assessment Treatment Teams (CATTS)
- › Submission to the Launceston General Hospital Master Plan
- › Submission to the Inquiry into the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission
- › Contributed to TasCOSS Submission to Tasmanian House of Assembly Inquiry into Housing Affordability

INFLUENCING REFORM AND SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT



Key stakeholder and voice
for the community managed
mental health sector in
Rethink 2020 (Regional
planning) process



Our Budget Priority
Submission 2020-21
identified four key initiatives
to support the Tasmanian
mental health system



Conducted consultations,
presented at a public hearing
and delivered a final submission
to the Productivity Commission
Inquiry into Mental Health



Key contributor to the
Tasmanian Mental Health /
Integration Taskforce and
Reform program

WE ALSO

- › Launched a reinvigorated www.mhct.org
- › Welcomed a new Chair of MHCT Board
- › Delivered the Removing Barriers for Testing to the NDIS consultation and report to PHT
- › Completed the final phase of the ILC NDIS Reimagine Today Peer Leader project
- › Developed #checkin to support Tasmanians during COVID-19 pandemic period and beyond



Our Members 2019–2020

MHCT is a member-based peak body, and we acknowledge the dedication of our member organisations, all of whom make a difference to the lives of Tasmanians through the provision of the high-quality programs and supports.

MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

Advocacy Tasmania

Anglicare Tasmania

Baptcare

Bethlehem house

Caroline House

CatholicCare

Choose Life Services

Club Haven

Colony 47

CoRES Australia

Cornerstone Youth Services
(Headspace Launceston)

Engender Equality

Flourish

GROW

iTrain Australia

Langford Support Services

Life Without Barriers

Lifeline Tasmania

Live Well Tasmania

Migrant Resource Centre

Mindfulness Programs Australasia

Mission Australia

OzHelp Foundation

PSYCH2U

Psychology CAFFE

Red Cross

Relationships Australia Tasmania

Richmond Fellowship (RFT)

Rural Alive and Well (RAW)

Royal Flying Doctor Service

Salvation Army Bridge Program

Teen Challenge Tasmania

The Hobart Clinic

The LINK (Headspace Hobart)

Wellways

Working It Out

Youth Family & Community
Connections (YFCC)

yourtown – Kids Helpline

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

Colin Ayton

Emmy Bostock

Patrick Carlisle (Life Member)

Sonia Cook

Mark Davis

Kate Griggs

Matt Hill

Karalyn Hingston

Tammy Horton

Renate Hughes

Daryl Lamb (Life Member)

Therese Ryan

Laura Smith

Diana Taylor

Stephen Yam

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Carers Tasmania

Epilepsy Tasmania

Lambert Training & Events

RESPECT Occupational Therapy

Salveo Healthcare Services

TasTAFE



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