

# Message to Members from NHWT

Dear Members,

In 2006 the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to a significant national health workforce reform package to enable the health workforce to better respond to the evolving care needs of the Australian community, while maintaining the quality and safety of health services.

The COAG package included the establishment of the National Health Workforce Taskforce (NHWT) to undertake project-based work and advise on and develop workable solutions for workforce innovation and reform.

The NHWT operates within the National Health Workforce Strategic Framework endorsed by COAG in February 2006, and is a time-limited, project-based and outcomes-focused entity tasked to action and coordinate the achievement of agreed COAG requirements. The NHWT will shortly be subsumed by a new national health workforce agency, Health Workforce Australia (HWA), to be established following the most recent COAG agreement in November 2008, and all commitments undertaken by the NHWT will become the responsibility of HWA. This is not expected to have any effect on the work which is the subject of this letter.

The NHWT is conducting a survey of the mental health non-government workforce to enhance our knowledge of the mental health NGO sector. It is acknowledged that this sector is increasing in size and importance, yet little is known about the workforce, which hinders planning. The data collected in this survey will highlight the valuable contribution being made by your sector and will assist in raising a consistent and professional profile for the non-government organisation mental health workforce.

This survey is being conducted by the National Health Workforce Planning and Research Collaboration ('the Collaboration'). The Collaboration is a tri-partite partnership between the Australian Health Workforce Institute, PricewaterhouseCoopers and the NHWT, and has been created to undertake a significant body of national health workforce research over a three-year period.

The Collaboration is commencing the first phase of the project on the 16<sup>th</sup> of December 2009, which is a survey to provide a snapshot of the non-government organisation mental health workforce. In order to complete the first stage of this project we are seeking the input of your organisation in completing the survey below. This stage is to be completed by one individual at an executive/managerial level. This stage is aiming to provide a workforce profile, service activity data, and assist the sector in future planning and as such we encourage you to participate to ensure that highest quality data is collected about your workforce. The data will be de-identified and will assist the sector with forward planning and ongoing workforce recruitment, retention and development.

The link to the survey is at: [www.nhwt.gov.au/MHNGOsurvey](http://www.nhwt.gov.au/MHNGOsurvey)

**Instructions for completion:**

The survey is an internet-based survey and will be open from Dec 16, 2009 - Jan 31, 2010. We will provide hard copy surveys on request via fax or post if you do not have access to internet facilities, please contact the hotline below if you require this.

The survey is for completion by one person employed at your NGO at executive/ management level. The survey information may be gathered from different people within your organisation, particularly for large multi-site organisations, however it is important that only one person complete the online version to minimise duplication.

The survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. The survey may be completed at different times - you can safely close the survey and re open again on the same computer and any information that you have previously entered will be saved.

A hotline to answer any specific questions about the survey has been set up and is available Monday-Friday 9am-5pm. The hotline number is 03 9092 1890.

Thank you for your participation.

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