

# FaHCSIA Programs Update

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) will provide funding over five years primarily to the non-government sector to deliver the following programs.

## Mental Health Respite Care Program

The FaHCSIA funded Mental Health Respite Program (MHRP) will provide a range of flexible respite options for carers of people with severe mental illness/psychiatric disability and carers of people with intellectual disability. There are two components to the Program:

Part A - a brokerage service model provided across Australia in all Home and Community Care (HACC) regions using the existing network of Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centres (Centres). This component of the Program was implemented in April 2007 using a brokerage model enabling carers, the care recipient and their families to have the maximum choice and flexibility tailored to their specific respite needs.

Part B - a direct funding model using the National Respite Development Fund (NRDF) to increase the availability (supply) of appropriate respite services through the MHRP where limited service supply needs to be addressed.

The Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association (PRA) Westworks is one of the successful service providers under the NRDF. They have already been running a Respite For Carers Program since 1995 providing regular in-home and community access respite for people caring for an adult living with mental illness. The program has been run from a peer support model, with all support workers having personal experience of mental illness.

"The new NRDF monies have allowed us to expand our services to include overnight and weekend respite as well as one-off respite. This new flexible respite model means we can now provide a broad range of respite options to suit the individual needs of those caring for an adult living with mental illness and the people for whom they care" says Joshua Thorpe, NRDF Coordinator says,

Successful service providers to deliver the first round of the Mental Health National Respite Development Program, in a number of Home and Community Care (HACC) Regions across Australia are as follows.

### NSW Round 1 Recommended Service Providers:

- o The Ascent Group Australia Ltd
- o Moffat Falls Pty Ltd
- o Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW Inc
- o Central Coast Disability Network
- o Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association
- o North Coast Children's Home Incorporated
- o The Benevolent Society
- o The Trustees of the Society of St Vincent de Paul (NSW)
- o On Track Community Programs Incorporated
- o Illawarra Disability Trust
- o Catholic Healthcare Ltd
- o Interchange Shoalhaven Inc

## Personal Helpers and Mentors Program

The Personal Helpers and Mentors Program is an initiative of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) National Action Plan on Mental Health 2006-2011. The Program aims to assist people aged 16 and over with a severe functional limitation resulting from a severe mental

illness by helping them to create opportunities for recovery and increase their connections to their community.

“The PHaMS program commenced in July 2007 at New Horizons and the good news stories from the participants are inspiring” says Vanessa Vaughan, PHaMS Manager. Participants are benefiting from this funded program by being supported to secure accommodation, sometimes for the first time in their life. Many are reaching employment and educational goals and for some, getting out of their homes for socialisation for the first time in a long while. PHaMS staff and other clinical and non-clinical referrers are also excited about the early success of the program and referrals are flowing fast. “Another plus is that there is also very positive working relationships being forged across the sector as FaCSIA staff are keen to provide encouragement and positive input into the development of the program” says Vanessa.

Service providers to deliver the Personal Helpers and Mentors Program Round 1 & 2 Sites in NSW are as follows:

**NSW Round 1 Service Providers**

- o Campbelltown Macarthur Disability Service
- o Central Coast New Horizons
- o Newcastle Mission Australia
- o Orange Mission Australia
- o Parramatta Uniting Church trading as Parramatta Mission
- o Ryde New Horizons
- o Sydney – Inner City Centacare Catholic Community Services
- o Wollongong Neami Limited

**NSW Round 2 Service Providers**

- o Armidale - The Benevolent Society
- o Blacktown - Aftercare
- o Croydon / Bankstown - New Horizons Enterprises Limited
- o Dubbo - Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW Inc
- o Hornsby / Ku-ring-gai - New Horizons Enterprises Limited
- o Liverpool - The Benevolent Society
- o Lower North Shore - New Horizons Enterprises Limited
- o Moree Trustees of the Roman Catholic Church [Centacare New England North West (NENW)]
- o Northern Beaches - New Horizons Enterprises Limited
- o Penrith - Aftercare
- o Tweed / Byron - New Horizons Enterprises Limited
- o Ulladulla / Shoalhaven - Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW
- o Wagga Wagga - Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW
- o West Wyalong - Lambing Flat Enterprises
- o Wingecarribee - The Benevolent Society

**Round 3 Funding –**

The department will be calling for service providers to deliver Round 3 of the Personal Helpers and Mentors Program in early 2008.

**Mental Health Community Based Program**

The Community Based Program is an Australian Government initiative of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) National Action Plan on Mental Health. The initiative aims to assist families, children and young people (between 15-24 years old) affected by mental illness. In June 2007 two projects were funded under the Mental Health Community Based Program to support families, children and young people affected by mental illness.

The program seeks to build on family strengths and improve resilience and family functioning, particularly for Indigenous families and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Phase 1 of the Mental Health Community Based Program has funded:

**Family Mental Health Support Services**

Family Mental Health Support Services (FMHSS) will deliver projects that target prevention and early intervention. Seven pilot sites were nominated to deliver FMHSS to families affected by mental illness through the existing Family Relationship Services Program providers.

**Carers Workshops for Families Coping with Mental Illness**

This project is being delivered by the Mental Health Council of Australia (MHCA) to provide coping and management skills for family members and carers of people with mental illness. MHCA expects to deliver 40 Carers Workshops nationally with at least four workshops in each jurisdiction. The workshops will be delivered to around 2,000 families and provide practical skills on how to support a family member with mental illness, access available government and community services, and self-care for carers and family members. In addition to the workshops, the Mental Health Council of Australia also will develop a national reporting mechanism for family members and carers to assist in the support provided as well as the identification and analysis of issues.

**Phase 1:**

Organisation: Centacare - Wilcannia Forbes, NSW

Demonstration Site: Lachlan, Bathurst, Orange, Central Tablelands excl. Bathurst and Orange, Far West

**Phase 2:**

Service providers to deliver Round 2 of the Mental Health Community Based Program across Australia have been announced.

- The Nautilus Project Inc - Sydney
- Regional Social Development Group Inc - Deniliquin
- On Track Community Programs Inc - Tweed Heads
- Newcastle Family Support Services Inc - Newcastle
- Southern Youth and Family Services Association Incorporated - Illawarra
- The Trustees for the Roman Catholic Church for the Diocese of Armidale - West Tamworth
- Anglicare Canberra & Goulburn, ACT - Canberra