

Minutes

**Workforce Development Reference Group Meeting
Mental Health Coordinating Council
Rose Cottage, Building 402, Central Avenue,
Rozelle Hospital Grounds, Lilyfield**

**Thursday 17th January 2008
1:30 to 4:00 PM**

1. Welcome

2. Attendance and apologies

Attendance:

1. Nicole Schleder- Chair Workforce Development Reference Group, MHCC
2. Eryn Thomas- MHCC LDU
3. Valli Beattie- RFNSW
4. Nich Rogers- NEAMI
5. Wayne Peterson- MHCC
6. Rod West- MHCC
7. Jessie Williams- CCWT
8. Jo Khoo- NADA
9. Sandy Watson- Consumer rep
10. Seyma Afriecq- ECC
11. Jonine Penrose Wall – MHCC
12. Emily Adams – MHCC Psychology Intern

Apologies:

1. Pedro Diaz - AfterCare
2. Danielle Bagust - Catholic Healthcare
3. Bronwyn Howlett – Mission Australia
4. Janet Meagher - PRA
5. Judi Matthews – New Horizons
6. Tina Smith – MHCC LDU
7. Jess Williams – CCWT-ACWA

3. Previous Minutes

Accepted as a true and accurate record and seconded

4. Business arising

4.1. Workforce Development Initiatives

a) Current projects-

- i. VET Sector pocket guide – VET Sector Pocket guide now online MHCC website, downloadable, large file, in colour. Targeted at those thinking of entering mental health field, in collaboration with ITAB, i.e. gives pathways to sector, for example, Cert IV. Part of a bigger LDU project to recruit new staff with sufficient training and retain staff. Jo mentioned that a similar package had been used in AOD workforce development to recruit people in to the field- **Jo will speak to Cathy Barry for further information.** Some were handed out to people that attended the meeting. Can be picked up from MHCC office.

- ii. Poster shown to participants- Nicole requested that people start to put it up in their own/other organisations they have access to (consumers, carers, general public etc) in prominent positions. Poster online also, as are postcards, which were distributed by AvantCard over Christmas, and since spotted in several cafes, including Bar Italia in Leichhardt! Jessie asked if postcards can be sent out to training sites (CCWT has 16 sites throughout the year). Poster distributed to universities, member organisations & CSHISC Community Active Careers (youth focused) - other peak bodies/suggestions for distribution were- NCOSS, job networks, local council, advertisement on Seek, library notice boards, neighbourhood centres, LCSA. Eryn suggested a 'competition' idea for distribution- who could make logo most visible/most creative location.

b) Recruitment campaign

MHCC now in partnership with BRC for recruitment/advertising within the mental health community sector. Jo mentioned it had been difficult to find MHCC on the BRC website since they are listed under 'Community & Housing' on the BRC website - Nicole informed all that there is a direct link to BRC through MHCC web. Currently MHCC is promoting BRC as 'one stop shop' for jobs- encouraging member organisations to advertise with BRC (mention of new Employment page on MHCC web). Cost to advertise with BRC is \$50 per job. Jessie suggested an email subscription to BRC so that job updates are sent to you. Jo seconded this idea, suggesting that people could request to be alerted to certain job types. At present, Barnados Social Works and NCOSS are other online recruitment agents, although not community mental health specific.

Commendation to Nicole and LDU team at MHCC for excellent work on poster/postcards-very well received by peers.

c) Mental Health NGO Service User and Peer Leadership Project (Sandy)

- Joint project between NSW CAG and MHCC

- Sandy Watson updated the group on the discussion paper at the meeting and summarized that the paper is not ready for launch- currently on hold while they look at the use of the paper. Sandy raised the current issue as to whether the paper is to be conceived as discussion paper only with service providers, or as paper on carer/consumer participation tailored to consumers? The direction of the paper will be determined by funding, which is currently under revision by the respective Boards.

- d) Nicole asked if the team wanted to set WFD strategic planning day or to go through WFD directions now. Agreed to go through in today's meetings.

Program Area 1- Building Capacity of the Sector

Project 1: Promotion of the NGO mental health sector as a career choice- to be achieved through promotional material (posters, postcards etc) distributed online and hard copies also, presentations, open days, Sydney Morning Herald & My Career.

Project 2: Develop/source, and provide resources to assist the NGO mental health sector in workforce development- Working group to create a staff development guide- 'needs analysis' by group to determine what is included in guide- e.g. professional development, mentoring, supervision. Jo requested that the guide include a section on the challenge for NGOs to retain staff.

Project 3: Develop and promote a biannual training calendar for the sector and maintain an online, searchable training database- 2008 Jan-June Training Calendar coming soon. Nicole asked those present at the meeting if they wanted printed copy of training calendar, as well as online version, and the consensus was to keep hard copy for promotional material as it is more 'recognisable' as a wall chart.

Idea raised about 'career pathing' - giving advice to people based on core competencies (1:1). Can this be formalised in any way, e.g. online service that streamlines career paths into core themes. Research at NADA gave ambiguous findings (Jo). Jessie mentioned that differentiating between foundation courses and strengthening courses would help this, but beyond that, advice had to be personal and tailored, and staff had to have knowledge of sector.

Project 4: Develop and maintain workforce development content on MHCC's website- All promotional material will be uploaded online, links created, i.e. MHCC want as much information on line/downloadable as possible.

Program Area 2: Increasing Effectiveness of Program Delivery

Project 1: Develop programs and initiatives to promote effective workforce development in the NGO mental health sector- List of all university postgraduate level courses so that mental health staff can know, given their own qualifications, what degrees they are eligible to enrol in.

Project 2: Disseminate information about evidence and good practice to the sector and other relevant stakeholders, and update the sector on information, initiatives and opportunities concerning workforce development- Helping LDU with launch of promotional material (March), participating in sector meetings, sharing information, e.g. articles on good practice online. Discussion around the definition of 'good practice', which Sandy suggested may be better phrased as 'better practice'. Nicole gave example of On Track Program in Northern Rivers Area, which targets youth employment and has had a positive success rate. It was agreed that there was a need for greater literacy in methods for assessing good practice (Nick) and a working party was proposed to further explore how we measure effectiveness.

Program Area 3: Developing Partnerships & Collaborative Activity

Project 1: Form partnerships with workers from other sectors to promote employment in the NGO mental health sector for clients from disadvantaged groups- Seyma (ECAV) is working closely with multicultural and Aboriginal communities- how can we better include this population in the mental health sector (especially refugees)? It was agreed that this population brings a different understanding and set of values that are needed in the sector (Nicole). MHCC to partner with NADA because of their alliance within the sector, i.e. these disadvantaged groups often access NADA.

Project 2: Develop resources to assist MHCC's LDU, such as workplace training- Community Services Training Package will be changing in the next few months, Eryn requested that people send feedback to MHCC as the upcoming review will determine the program for the next 5-6 years. Eryn proposed announcing at MHCC Launch a half day forum to discuss the draft for the training package. Promotion of traineeships, e.g. Cert IV in Mental Health (non-clinical) to new communities, such as indigenous groups, and within all organisations.

Program Area 4: Facilitating Good Practice in Consumer Participation

Project 1: A guide for NGOs, workers and consumers to be more inclusive of consumer participation in the workplace and program development is being developed in partnership with NSW CAG- Funding has allowed papers, forums and discussion to promote better peer leadership and consumer participation. Sandy led a discussion that pushed for MHCC/mental health sector to think of consumer and carers as 'core business' and to integrate the role of consumer/carer participation in to all planning, decision-making and policy development. Discussion about the use of the guide- Nicole suggested the guide be used to create awareness in the sector of developing consumer relationships, i.e. to embed the concept in to the minds of the community sector. Idea proposed for a 'position statement' - the leading sectors to state their position and 'flag' advocacy for consumer/carer participation (Jonine)

- Nicole to rewrite program area objectives and the group to discuss when they next reconvene.

4.2. Routine Consumer Outcome Measurement

- Jonine discussed Routine Consumer Outcome Monitoring Familiarisation and Continuing Education Training packages which have now been distributed (evidence based). Aim is to embed continuing education in the workplace.
- Jonine requested feedback- she is hoping to conduct interviews towards end January, e.g. feedback re language used in DVD
- DVD to be launched at 4 dates- opportunity for organisations to publicly declare their involvement (consumer DVD also being made).

4.3. Learning and Development Unit – Eryn provided update

- Brief overview - MHCC to go ahead with traineeships. Tina is working with Rob Moorhouse from AAC who has offered to come to the next meeting for 30 minutes- Eryn requested that participants think about what they would like to know about traineeships in mental health so that Rob's visit will be worthwhile (email Nicole at MHCC). At present, MHCC to start with small pilot of traineeships, moving to as many as possible/full load by late 2008 (upskilling existing workers as well as training new people). Also noted that for existing workers with qualifications older than 7 years AAC will be able to tell you how much funding you are eligible for.
- Stage I & II Training 2008 (February courses) online now. Eryn will be making targeted phone calls soon.
- Mental Health Training Industry Reference Group meeting held prior to current meeting- most participants present attended earlier meeting so no real debrief needed.

5. **New Business**

Updates to be covered at next meeting due to time constraints.

6. **Next Meeting**

13th March 2008 1:30-4pm- some possibility that this may have to be rescheduled as LDU Launch is same day and may run over time. If so, Nicole will advise all in advance.

FUTURE MEETINGS: 3rd Thursday of every 2nd Month Jan – Nov, 2008. 1.30 – 4pm

- ❖ 13/3/08 (please note: 2nd Thursday in March)
- ❖ 15/5/08
- ❖ 17/7/08
- ❖ 18/9/08
- ❖ 20/11/08