



## **2017-18 Achievements**

The National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum (NMHCCF) is a combined national voice for mental health consumers and carers. Members listen, learn, influence and advocate in matters of mental health reform. The NMHCCF was established in 2002 by the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council and reports to the Mental Health Principal Committee. Funding is provided by the Australian Government and state and territory governments. It is currently auspiced by Mental Health Australia.

Membership of the NMHCCF is comprised of one consumer representative and one carer representative from each Australian state and territory and representatives from the following consumer and carer organisations and population groups:

- blueVoices
- Carers Australia
- Consumers Health Forum of Australia
- Grow Australia
- Mental Health Carers Australia
- Private Mental Health Consumer Carer Network Australia
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The NMHCCF provides advocacy on mental health consumer and carer issues through representation on a large number of national bodies, such as government committees and advisory groups, professional bodies and other consultative forums and events. NMHCCF members also research and prepare submissions, raise awareness and share information relevant to consumers and carers at the national level. Members use their lived experience, understanding of the mental health system and communication skills to advocate and promote the issues and concerns of consumers and carers and ensure these are addressed as part of the national policy development and planning processes in Australia.

The NMHCCF met three times face to face in 2017-18; 26-27 October 2017, 15-16 March 2018 and 22 June 2018. Reports from the two-day face to face meetings are available at:

<https://nmhccf.org.au/content/reports-meetings>

### **Submissions**

The NMHCCF contributed to the following consultations, reports, issues and policies:

- Submission to the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists clinical practice guideline for the treatment of panic disorder, social anxiety disorder, and generalised anxiety disorder
- Submission to the Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee inquiry into the National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Quality and Safeguards Commission and Other Measures) Bill 2017

- Submission to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner about consumer resources related to data breach notifications and what to do after a data breach
- Submission to the Senate Community Affairs References Committee inquiry into the accessibility and quality of mental health services in rural and remote Australia
- Correspondence to the CEO of the National Disability Insurance Agency reporting issues and concerns the NMHCCF believe people with a psychosocial disability may face when applying for the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

For more information and copies of public submissions please visit the NMHCCF website, [www.nmhccf.org.au](http://www.nmhccf.org.au)

### **Advocacy briefs**

The NMHCCF develops advocacy briefs to enable consumers and carers to better understand and comment on key issues in mental health. Advocacy briefs are written by NMHCCF members and reviewed annually.

In 2017-18 the NMHCCF published the following new and updated advocacy briefs:

- Co-Design and Co-Production (new)
- Borderline Personality Disorder (updated)
- Stigma and Discrimination (updated)
- Seclusion and Restraint (updated)
- Supported Accommodation (updated)

Advocacy briefs are available to the general public through the NMHCCF website.

### **Representation on national committees, working groups and at conferences**

In 2017-18 NMHCCF representatives continued to provide consumer and carer perspectives at national mental health committees and events. In addition to involvement on existing committees and working groups, a total of 8 consumer and 9 carer representatives from the NMHCCF have been selected for the following new opportunities this financial year:

- National Mental Health Commission
  - Housing, Homelessness and Mental Health Investigative Panels 1 and 2
- Mental Health Principal Committee sub-committees and working groups
  - Safety and Quality Partnership Standing Committee
  - Mental Health Information Strategy Standing Committee
  - Reducing Stigma and Discrimination Working Group
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW)
  - Authoring group - 3rd edition of National Mental Health Information Priorities
  - National Mental Health Performance Subcommittee
- Australian Mental Health Outcomes and Classification Network –National Mental Health Information Development Expert Advisory Panel
- Expert Symposium on the implementation of Optional Protocol to RMIT University the Convention against Torture (OPCAT)
- Independent Hospital Pricing Authority – Mental Health Phase of Care Project
- Australian College of Mental Health Nurses – Mental Health Nursing Workforce Project 1 Expert Reference Group

NMHCCF representatives also participated in the following forums and events:

- The national launch of Equally Well
- Australian College of Mental Health Nurses - Seclusion and Restraint Project findings briefing
- Consumer Privacy Network - Consumer Privacy Network meeting
- National Mental Health Commission Emergent Leadership Program within the Mental Health Sector - Advisory Committee
- 2017 and 2018 Annual Issues and Opportunities Workshops hosted by Mental Health Australia
- Mental Health Australia members dinner
- Grace Groom Oration by Hon Greg Hunt MP
- Mental Health Australia's members policy forum
- Australian Human Rights Commission
  - OPCAT Roundtable meeting
  - Roundtable on violence against people with disability in institutional settings
- Australian Mental Health Outcomes and Classification Network Workshop for NMHCCF and National Register members

### **NMHCCF Workplan activities**

In 2017-18, members participated in the following NMHCCF working groups to progress Workplan activities:

- Psychotropic Iatrogenic Disorders and Advocacy Working Group
- Communications, Promotion, and Partnerships Working Group
- Rights and Practices Working Group
- Consumer and Carer Participation Working Group

The working groups progressed activities aligned with the following six goals:

1. Enhance, promote and progress genuine national partnerships and inclusion of mental health consumers and carers at all levels of government and community
2. Improve access to, and sharing of, NMHCCF information between national, state and territory networks and organisations
3. Increase capacity of mental health consumers and carers to advocate and participate in legislation and policy development, implementation, delivery and evaluation at all levels
4. Provide an informed strong and unified voice on consumer and carer issues to government, the mental health sector, and other identified stakeholders
5. Identify and promote good and ethical mental health initiatives, ensure the adherence of human rights principles and legislation. Insist on meaningful inclusion and recognition of consumers and carers in all aspects of a contributing life framework
6. Build a knowledge base of mental health services and programs, national and jurisdictional plans, Acts and strategies to underpin and inform the work of the NMHCCF

Key working group achievements in 2017-18 included:

- Launching the *Critical Literature Review of the Direct, Adverse Effects of Neuroleptics – Essential Information for Mental Health Consumers, Carers, Families, Supporters and Clinicians* and accompanying booklet *What you may not know about antipsychotics* at the 2017 TheMHS Conference
- Rolling out new branding across the NMHCCF website and all NMHCCF documents

- Distributing NMHCCF brochures and advocacy briefs in conference satchels at the WA Mental Health Conference, Summer TheMHS, and the National Borderline Personality Disorder Conference
- Launching the NMHCCF Facebook page
- Finalising the 2018-2021 NMHCCF Strategic Plan and Workplan

## **Governance**

The NMHCCF executive election for 2018-20 was conducted in March 2018. The new NMHCCF Executive Committee consists of:

Consumer Co-Chair:	Lorraine Powell (WA Consumer representative)
Carer Co-Chair:	Emma Donaldson (blueVoices Carer representative)
Deputy Consumer Co-Chair:	Lyn English (SA Consumer representative)
Deputy Carer Co-Chair:	Elida Meadows (TAS Carer representative)
Ordinary Consumer member:	Jan West (TAS Consumer representative)
Ordinary Carer member:	Katrina Clarke (VIC Carer representative)



## 2017-18 Membership

State/Territory / Organisation	Representative
Australian Capital Territory	Jane Grace (Consumer) until January 2018 Matthew Martin (Consumer) from March 2018 Janet Milford (Carer)
New South Wales	Allison Kokany (Consumer) until June 2018 Eileen McDonald (Carer)
Northern Territory	Elizabeth Brown (Consumer) from June 2018 Aaron Morris (Carer)
Queensland	Noel Muller (Consumer) until February 2018 Tanya Kretschmann (Consumer) from February 2018 Peter Dillon (Carer) until February 2018 Cheryl Rudorfer (Carer) from February 2018 to March 2018
South Australia	Lyn English (Consumer) Margaret Springgay (Carer) until March 2018
Tasmania	Jan West (Consumer) Elida Meadows (Carer)
Victoria	Keir Saltmarsh (Consumer) from October 2017 Katrina Clarke (Carer)
Western Australia	Lorraine Powell (Consumer) Debra Sobott (Carer) until November 2017
blueVoices	Annabeth Bateman (Consumer) until March 2018 Emma Donaldson (Carer)
Carers Australia	Peter Heggie (Carer)
Consumers Health Forum of Australia	Heather Nowak (Consumer) from October 2017
Grow Australia	Helen Abbott (Consumer) until October 2017
Mental Health Carers Australia	Kristine Havron (Carer)
Private Mental Health Consumer Carer Network Australia	Patrick Hardwick (Carer) Norm Wotherspoon (Consumer)

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An interim representative from the former Australian Mental Health Consumer Network<sup>1</sup>

Michael Burge (Consumer) until October 2017

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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative

Simon Williams (Carer) until November 2017

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<sup>1</sup> The Australian Mental Health Consumer Network (AMHCN) ceased operations in late 2008. The (then) Mental Health Standing Committee has provided in principle agreement that the former AMHCN representative should remain on the NMHCCF as a consumer representative until the new peak national mental health consumer organisation is established. The interim representative resigned from the NMHCCF in October 2017.