



## NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMER & CARER FORUM

### National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum (NMHCCF) Report

<b>Name of Delegate:</b>
<b>State / Territory / Organisation:</b>
<b>Date of meeting: 18-19 March 2013</b>
<b>Consumer / Carer Representative (please circle)</b>
<b>Key issues discussed:</b>  <b>National Mental Health Commission</b> Janet Meagher, Mental Health Commissioner, provided an update on the National Mental Health Commission's recent activity and current projects. The Commission recently hosted a two day meeting with state, national and international mental health commissioners. This meeting provided a great opportunity for collaboration and enabled representatives to share experiences and best practices.  Robyn Kruk, CEO of the Commission, attended the NMHCCF meeting on Day 2 and spoke to members about issues requiring national support and future areas of work. The Commission will be co-hosting two workshops in May 2013 specifically for consumers and carers to provide expert advice in relation to setting appropriate indicators and targets for mental health reform and assist the Commission in developing a participation and engagement framework.  A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Commission and NMHCCF will be formally signed at the workshops in May 2013. This partnership will help encourage sector collaboration and enable the voices of mental health consumers and carers to inform policy and drive informed improvements in the systems and services that provide support.  <b>NMHCCF Forward Plan</b> The NMHCCF Forward Plan (titled <i>Strategic Directions 2012-15</i> ) was endorsed by members. In small working group sessions members identified actions and recommendations under each of the priority areas. It was agreed that new working groups need to be established to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• progress the actions from the Rights, Disability &amp; Mental Health Forum</li><li>• review state and territory workforce development activities and consumer &amp; carer participation</li><li>• collate information and evidence base for peer workforce and develop a strategy for the expansion of peer workforce across Australia</li><li>• identify potential NMHCCF partnerships and alliances and formalise relationships with jurisdictions and organisations with representatives on the NMHCCF</li><li>• update consumer and carer participation policy</li><li>• consider marketing and promotional opportunities for the NMHCCF</li><li>• promote and support research led by consumers and carers</li></ul>

## **Federal Election Strategy**

Frank Quinlan, CEO of the Mental Health Council of Australia (MHCA) spoke to members about the challenges of the current political environment and the importance of strong advocacy work in the lead up to the federal election. Members agreed to promote and maintain the prominent profile of the NMHCCF and engage with all political parties as part of a federal election strategy.

## **Electro Convulsive Treatment (ECT) Protocols and Guidelines**

NMHCCF members discussed issues relating to the apparent lack of national minimum standards for the administering of ECT and the training requirements of psychiatrists.

The following concerns were raised:

- states and territories each have different legislative requirements
- the potential number of mental health consumers having ECT in an involuntary capacity
- without national standards, ECT is not ordered or administered in a consistent way.

Members agreed to write to the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) enquiring about current ECT protocols and guidelines and to seek clarification from the Safety & Quality Partnership Standing Committee (SQPSC). It was also agreed that an advocacy brief be drafted on this issue as a helpful reference for consumers and carers.

## **National Committees**

Updates were provided from representatives on the following national committees:

- Mental Health Drug & Alcohol Principal Committee Stakeholder session
- Health Workforce Australia Mental Health Workforce Reform Program Advisory Group
- National Disability Insurance Scheme Eligibility and Assessment Working Group
- Health Workforce Australia Standing Advisory Committee for NGO and Private Sector
- Mental Health Professionals Network Project Reference Group
- Forensic Mental Health Information Development Expert Advisory Panel
- National Mental Health Services Planning Framework Project
- Safety and Quality Partnership Subcommittee

## **Guest speakers**

- Robyn Kruk, CEO National Mental Health Commission
- Frank Quinlan, CEO Mental Health Council of Australia.

## **Key Actions and Decisions Made:**

- NMHCCF to participate in workshops co-hosted by MHCA and the National Mental Health Commission on 6 & 7 May 2013.
- NMHCCF members to promote and maintain the prominent profile of the NMHCCF when addressing all political parties in the lead up to the 2013 federal election.
- NMHCCF Strategic Directions document was endorsed and the Forward Plan workplan was endorsed in principle pending agreed amendments.
- Clarification to be sought through RANZCP and SQPSC about current ECT protocols and guidelines.
- Next NMHCCF teleconference will be held on Wednesday 21 June 2013.