



National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum

Annual Achievements: 1 July 2020 – 30 June 2021

The National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum (NMHCCF) is a combined national voice for mental health consumers and carers. We listen, learn, influence and advocate in matters of mental health reform.

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.

NMHCCF members continue to represent mental health consumers and carers on many national bodies, such as government committees and advisory groups, professional bodies, and other consultative forums and events. During this time members also used their lived experience, understanding of the mental health system, and communication skills to advocate and promote the issues and concerns of consumers and carers through providing submissions on key mental health issues.

Submissions

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

- Response to the RACGP's draft standards for prison health services
- Response to the Australian Government's consultation on Adult Mental Health Centres
- Submission to the independent review by the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission into the death of Ms Ann-Marie Smith
- Submission to the 2020 Review of the Disability Standards for Education 2005
- Submission to the Australian Government Department of Health in response to the Productivity Commission Inquiry into Mental Health Final Report
- Response to the Consultation Paper on the scoping and development of the National Digital Mental Health Framework
- Consultation on the Fifth Plan Action 9 draft national guidelines to improve coordination of treatment and supports for people with severe and complex mental illness and subsequent submission
- Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme regarding the Independent Assessments program
- Submission to the Select Committee on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention

Copies of public submissions are available on the NMHCCF website www.nmhccf.org.au.

Representation on national committees, working groups and at conferences

NMHCCF representatives continue to provide consumer and carer perspectives at national mental health committees and events. Members report on their advocacy activities annually and further details of the range and scope of activities. Details of these activities are available in Attachment 1.

Sector engagement

NMHCCF members strengthened relationships and engaged with peak mental health consumer and carer organisations, MOU partners, and other key stakeholders through the following activities:

- Regular teleconferences with MOU partner, Mental Health Australia
- Regular teleconferences with the CEO, National Mental Health Commission
- Teleconferences with CEOs of key national disability and mental health organisations to discuss future partnership opportunities
- Participation in the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO) Forums and through agreement with AFDO to support, engage and promote the Disability Royal Commission to people with disabilities and their families and as a Disability Representative Organisations promoting the needs of people with psychosocial disability
- Development of a partnership with the National PHN Mental Health Lived Experience Engagement Network (MHLEEN) progress three projects to enhance consumer and carer leadership skills, knowledge and capacity
- Participated in regular meetings with other national mental health peak organisations and the Australian Government Department of Health.

Meetings

With the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic impacting our ability to meet face-to-face the NMHCCF has continued to meet via videoconference on a six-weekly basis to progress its workplan. During the current financial year meetings were held on:

- 10 July 2020
- 26 August 2020
- 9 October 2020
- 9 December 2020
- 5 February 2021
- 26 March 2021
- 12 May 2021

Reports from the Forum meetings are available at: <https://nmhccf.org.au/content/reports-meetings>.

In addition, the NMHCCF met via videoconference to participate in training and development activities, webinars on specific topics, and to progress content for submissions.

NMHCCF Work plan activities

In addition to the preparation of submissions on significant reviews in mental health and psychosocial disability, the main activities progressed by the NMHCCF in 2020/21 have been:

- Finalisation of the Combined Lived Experience Voice project where the NMHCCF led a project, using a co-design process, to discuss the development of a national combined mental health lived experience voice. This project was funded by the Mental Health Principal Committee. In light of the recommendation from the Productivity Commission to establish national peak bodies the NMHCCF agreed that no further work on this project was required at this time. Further details on this project and the final report are available at: <https://nmhccf.org.au/publication/nmhccf-combined-lived-experience-voice-workshops-final-output-report-august-2020>
- Review and revision of seventeen current NMHCCF publications and development of two new advocacy briefs and a Discussion Paper on Lived Experience Research. This work will be concluded by August 2021. The NMHCCF publications are available at: <https://nmhccf.org.au/resources/publications>
- The development of a new website for the NMHCCF. The new website will enhance the information provided on the website to promote the work of the Forum, assist organisations seeking consumer and career representation, provide a central repository for lived experience information and resources and a member's area for ease of access to forms meeting papers and the like.
- Participation in multiple focus groups on mental health and psychosocial disability.
 - ACSQHC - National Safety and Quality Mental Health Standards for Community Managed Organisations
 - Meeting with staff from Minister Coleman, the Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, to discuss issues around mental health carer distress in the community, need for flexible funded carer respite and systemic issues encountered in the Carer Gateway in relation to funded carer respite.
 - Participation in focus groups to review the Recovery-Oriented Framework for NDIS
 - Presentation to the NDIS Provider Practice Health Alerts - Disability Sector Consultative Committee.
- Progressing the focus on psychosocial disability in accordance with the requirements of the agreements with the AFDO. Particular activities include:
 - Participation in the Disability Representative Organisation Workshops and regular meetings on the National Disability Strategy Beyond 2020 (two members)
 - Submission on the 2020 Review of the Disability Standards for Education 2005
 - Invited members to provide feedback on the Australian Government Disability Services Gateway pilot website.
 - Provided a submission on the National Disability Strategy, Nov 2020
 - Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme regarding the Independent Assessments program

- Revision of the NMHCCF's Psychosocial Disability brochure
- Continue to promote the issues impacting people with psychosocial disability
- Invited Gerry Naughtin, Mental Health Advisor to the NDIA to speak at the October 2020 NMHCCF meeting about current activities in the psychosocial disability space
- Participation in three Ministerial Roundtables with Minister Reynolds who has responsibility for the NDIS
- Presentation to the NDIS Provider Practice Health Alerts - Disability Sector Consultative Committee
- Participation in focus groups to review the Recovery-Oriented Framework for NDIS

Planned project work during 2021/22

Focus of work for the Forum in 2021/22 will be around the five strategic priorities of the NMHCCF:

1. Advocacy
2. Consumer and Carer Leadership
3. Marketing and Communications
4. Psychosocial Disability
5. Governance

Some specific activities to note include:

- Undertaking a research project, funded by the National Mental Health Commission, to develop an evidence base on levels of mental health carer distress associated with the Covid-19 Pandemic and gathering data on mental health carer self-care and coping strategies. The project is due for completion in June 2022.
- Progressing the three projects focusing on consumer and carer leadership, in partnership with MHLEEN:
 - I. Development of a curated central repository, or clearing house, of mental health consumer and carer leadership-related knowledge and leadership initiatives throughout Australia.
 - II. Co-design a Mental Health Lived Experience Governance Framework and Toolkit to guide organisations and jurisdictions when engaging with people with lived experience.
 - III. Formal lived experience expertise training through a stepped approach:
 - Developing a scoping paper on Lived Experience training programs
 - Running the Advanced lived experience leadership (Yale University's LET(s)-Lead program)

NMHCCF Executive

The members of the 2020-2022 NMHCCF Executive are:

Consumer Co-Chair	Keir Saltmarsh (VIC Consumer representative)
Carer Co-Chair	Hayley Solich (WA Carer representative)
Deputy Consumer Co-Chair	Shannon Calvert (Blue Voices Consumer representative)
Deputy Carer Co-Chair	Kerry Hawkins (Mental Health Carers Australia Carer representative)
Ordinary Consumer Member	Elizabeth Brown (ATSI Interim Consumer member)
Ordinary Carer member	Eileen McDonald (NSW Carer representative)

Conclusion

The NMHCCF continues to implement its workplan with a focus on developing lived experience leadership capacity, publications, advocacy and work in the psychosocial disability space while also keenly awaiting further reforms to the mental health sector as a result of the recent reports by the Productivity Commission, the Victorian Royal Commission and the National Suicide Prevention Advisor.

August 2021

Member engagement and activity during 2020

Forum meetings:

- All NMHCCF meetings for 2020 (six-weekly from March 2020) and out-of-session work as required.

Working Group meetings:

- Marcomms Working Group monthly meetings.
- Out of session work on proposals, WG activities etc.
- Consumer and Carer Leadership WG
- Member Engagement and Operating Guidelines WG
- Co-design of a combined national lived experience voice WG
- Publications Review WG

Webinars

Offered to all NMHCCF members

- NMHC Vision 2030 Roadmap Workshop
- NMHC Webinar with Christine Morgan as Chair
- Covid-19 webinars run by Dept of Health
- Launch Digital MH Service Standards
- MHA, MIND & AHURI Trajectories (Housing) Policy Development webinar
- Board Meeting and Member's Policy Meeting MHA

Attended as individuals

- Social Prescribing
- Lived Experience Australia information webinars-bi monthly April, May & June (Caring for Carers Webinar - Presenters: Sharon Lawn and Sarah Sutton)
- Aust. College of Emergency Medicine "Nowhere Else to Go" report
- Attended Indigenous MHY and Suicide Prevention Webinar
- TheMHS Codesign webinar

National Register/NMHCCF workshops

- 21 May Issues & Opportunities workshops – National Register and Forum
- 3 June & 5 August – Embrace Multicultural Mental Health webinar
- 2 December – with Michelle Banfield on lived experience research

Submissions/consultation sessions:

- Chaired Fifth Plan Action 9 Guidelines consultation session with NMHCCF for input on the National Guidelines to improve coordination of treatment and supports for people with severe and complex mental illness.
- Productivity Commission Inquiry into Mental Health Draft Report consultation and submission
- Productivity Commission Final Report submission to Dept of Health
- Aged Care Royal Commission submission
- ACSQHC Digital Mental Health Standards consultation
- Disability Services Royal Commission
- Natural Disasters Royal Commission Health Arrangements Paper
- RACGP Draft standards for prison health services
- Commonwealth's Adult Mental Health Centres consultation
- Fifth Plan Acton 9 –submission prepared
- Disability Standards in Education review
- National Disability Strategy submission
- Combined lived experience voice workshops organised by NMHCCF
- Publications work

Other/training

- Cultural awareness training organised by NMHCCF
- Rural & Remote Mental Health Symposium – on-line participant

External representative activities: On behalf of Forum or as an individual

Forum representative

Fifth Plan

- National Mental Health Policy Renewal Group meeting
- Mental Health Expert Reference Group
- Stigma and Discrimination Advisory Group
- Fifth Plan Action 9 Guidelines Working Group
- Fifth Plan Action 9 Guidelines Writing Sub-Group – Action 9 Working Group representative.
- Individual sessions with consultants working on Action 9 Guidelines to provide consumer input and write/review guidelines.
- National Digital Mental Health Framework consultation – NMHCCF representative.
- Action 21.3: Safety & Quality Consumers & Carer Engagement Guide – Finalised and due for release in the New Year.
- Action 21.4: Review of the National Mental Health Standards – Currently on hold pending the outcome of Action 22.
- Action 22: Review of the National Safety & Quality Standards, with relation to the inclusion of a Mental Health Supplement is still in progress.
- Fifth Plan Technical Advisory Group (FPTAG)
- National Safety Priorities in MH Steering Group

MHPC Standing Committees and working groups

- Safety and Quality Partnerships Standing Committee (SQPSC)
- Mental Health Information Strategy Standing Committee (MHISSC)
- NMHPSC
- MHPOD Advisory Group

Australian Federation of Disability Organisations/Psychosocial Disability

- Disability Education Standards Review
- National Disability Peak Bodies Webinar - 2020 Review of the 2005 Disability Standards for Education (DESE)
- AFDO Members Forums
- Research interview re psychosocial disability as NMHCCF peak body rep
- National Disability Strategy beyond 2020 Roundtable
- Disabilities Royal Commission Update AFDO

Other Forum roles

- Equally Well Consumer & Carer Expert Working Group
- National Mental Health Workforce Strategy Taskforce and the five working groups:
 - Rural and Remote
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities
 - Workforce Training and Education
 - Peer and Lived experience
 - Inter-jurisdictional and inter-government workforce policies and strategies
- MHA / Carers Australia COVID Advisory Group
- Department of Health Technical Advisory Group designing the Model of Care for the 8 Adult Mental Health Centres
- ACSQHC Digital Mental Health Advisory Group (DMHAG) (Deputy Chair)
- NMHC - National Mental Health Research Steering Committee
- NMHC - National Mental Health Research workshop
- NMHC - Safety & Quality Engagement Guide
- Primary Health Care Reform MH Roundtable, guest speaker
- Mental Health Clinical Trials Research mtg (MAGNET)
- ADHA MHR MH Resource Compendium consultation
- ABS MH Study linkage project consultation Disability & MH workshop
- NMHC Stakeholder workshop key underpinning factors to address the challenges created by the introduction of disruptive technologies in MH & wellbeing
- NHMRC panels
- AIHW: National Child Digital Health Record: National Clinical Content Definition MH Consultation Workshop

Activities undertaken as individuals

- Lived Experience Australia – Advisory Group on MH gaps and survey on ‘missing middle’.
- Mental Health Coalition SA Board – lived experience rep.
- Consumer rep.- Queen Elizabeth Hospital (redevelop) Community & Consumer Reference Group
- Marion LEG
- Centacare MH CCAG
- C&C Policy Reference Meeting (meeting with local Liaison Officer and Carers ACT)
- MIFA working group meetings

- Provided a submission on the *Mental Health (Secure Facilities) Act 2016* to the ACT Mental Health Policy Unit.
- Liaising with women experiencing domestic violence and mental health issues and supplying personal needs at Beryl Women's Refuge and NDIS Community Mental Health homes.
- Liaison with Joanne Taylor, Assistant Director Complaints, NDIS Commission ACT.
- Liaison with NDIS Fraud Taskforce.
- Liaison with ACT Mental Health Consumer Network.
- Carer Representative on the Pharmacy Guild Project relating to addressing mental and physical health of individuals with severe mental health issues
- I have been working with other lived experience representatives to establish a local lived experience network in the NT
- Community Managed Mental Health Service Sector Review Final Report Feedback
- Community of Practice
- MHPN Personality Disorders and Trauma-Informed Practice Meeting
- New Adult Health Mental Health Centre Consultation Meeting
- PHN Lead Site Evaluation Project - EAG Meeting
- ACDC Information Products Working Group CMHA
- WA COMMS Meeting (State Liaison)
- WA Mental Health Network EAG – Carer & Consumer Reps
- WA Safety & Quality Co-Leadership Steering Group – Carer & Consumer Reps
- Practical Guide to Working with Carers Training Project – delivery of over 70 sessions to WA public mental health services
- WA Peer Champions Community of Practice
- WA Health Directive re AV Use Guidelines due to COVID Working Group – C& C Reps
- Western Australian Recovery College Alliance Education Committee
- Chair of WAAMH Board
- Helping Minds Board Member
- NMHC Commissioner
- Appointed as a Commissioner for the South Australian Mental Health Commission
- Carer Representative on the NDIA Participant Reference Group
- Carer Representative on the NDIA Independent Assessment Working Group
- Carer Representative on the SA Office of the Chief Psychiatrist NDIS Psychosocial Disability Transition Taskforce.
- Carer Representative for SANE Australia's Stigma Report Card Launch
- Carer Representative on the SA Office of the Chief Psychiatrist MH Leadership Group.
- I serve on the ACT Ministerial Advisory Council
- Board member of ACT Advocacy for Inclusion on Age and Disability Care Services, ACT Mental Health Consumer Network and U3A
- SWSLHD Macarthur Community Rep Network
- Campbelltown Hospital Clinical Council
- Community Mental Health Drug & Alcohol Research Network (CMHDARN)
- NSW Carer Rep mtg with Mental Health Carers NSW CEO
- NSW - MHCN Co Design Project
- MHCN Peak Advisory Meeting
- NSLHD MHDA Co Design Acknowledgement
- NSW Future Health Strategy consultation
- NSLHD MHDA Statement of Lived Experience working group
- Project Air Personalities Disorders International Consumer & Carer Conference
- CHF members Forum Implementation Science & Dr Brendan Murphy
- NSLHD \ MHDA Recovery Oriented Practice Forum – Navigating Risks Together, Balancing Dignity of Risk & Duty of Care in Supporting Recovery
- UTS Carer Research Workshop
- Health Consumers NSW research trial



2020-21 Membership

State/Territory / Organisation	Representative
Australian Capital Territory	Jane Grace (Consumer) Rosslyn Williams (Carer)
New South Wales	Daya Henkel (Consumer) Eileen McDonald (Carer)
Northern Territory	Helen Day (Consumer) Roz Havard (Carer)
Queensland	Tanya Kretschmann (Consumer) Cindy Heddle (Carer)
South Australia	Lyn English (Consumer) Sarah Sutton (Carer)
Tasmania	Vacant
Victoria	Keir Saltmarsh (Consumer) Katrina Clarke (Carer)
Western Australia	Lorraine Powell (Consumer) until November 2020 Carli Sheers (Consumer) from November 2020 Hayley Solich (Carer)
blueVoices	Adrienne Hunter (Carer) Shannon Calvert (Consumer)
Carers Australia	Peter Heggie (Carer)
Consumers Health Forum of Australia	Heather Nowak (Consumer)
Mental Health Carers Australia	Kerry Hawkins (Carer)
Lived Experience Australia	Judy Bentley (Carer) Norm Wotherspoon (Consumer)
GROW	Alison Francis (Consumer)
Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) representatives	Nevena Simic (Consumer) Thi Nha Tran (Carer)
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation	Elizabeth Brown (Consumer)