



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

<b>Name of Delegate:</b>
<b>State / Territory:</b>
<b>Date of meeting: 24-25 September 2009</b>
<b>Consumer / Carer Representative (please circle)</b>
<p><b>Key Issues Discussed:</b></p> <p><b>NMHCCF Statement on Seclusion and Restraint</b>  The NMHCCF position statement, <i>Ending Seclusion and Restraint in Australian Mental Health Services</i>, was launched at the TheMHS Conference in Perth on 2 September 2009 by Senator Claire Moore. Members who attended the TheMHS conference reported that the launch was very successful, attracting a large, standing-room only, audience.</p> <p>The statement will be distributed widely and is also available at:  <a href="http://www.nmhccf.org.au/Publications-info">http://www.nmhccf.org.au/Publications-info</a></p> <p><b>NMHCCF Website</b>  The NMHCCF website – <a href="http://www.nmhccf.org.au">www.nmhccf.org.au</a> – was also formally launched at the TheMHS Conference. The website provides information about NMHCCF meetings and activities and a range of consumer and carer publications (including advocacy briefs and the seclusion and restraint position statement). There is also a member's only section of the website, which contains meeting minutes and items for consultation or information.</p> <p><b>Advocacy briefs</b>  As part of the Forward Plan 2009-2011, NMHCCF members agreed to develop Advocacy Briefs, which will enable consumers and carers to better understand and comment on key issues in mental health.</p> <p>NMHCCF members have completed three Advocacy Briefs - <i>Supported Housing and Homelessness</i>, <i>Privacy and Confidentiality</i> and <i>Duty of Care - Duty to Care</i>. These advocacy briefs are available at: <a href="http://www.nmhccf.org.au/advocacy-briefs">http://www.nmhccf.org.au/advocacy-briefs</a>.  Three additional advocacy briefs will be released by the end of October, with another four to be completed by December 2009.</p> <p><b>Mental Health Standing Committee (MHSC)</b>  The MHSC consumer and carer representatives advised members that MHSC has confirmed NMHCCF 2009-10 funding. MHSC has also agreed to the NMHCCF undertaking a review of the appropriateness of current NMHCCF membership.</p> <p><b>Business Plan</b>  Members endorsed the draft Business Plan, with some minor changes. The final version will be approved by the Executive. The NMHCCF Secretariat is revising the Business</p>

Plan as a matter of priority.

### **Operating Guidelines**

NMHCCF members discussed the Operating Guidelines at length, focussing on the election and roles of Executive members.

Members agreed that from March 2010, the Executive will be broadened to a six member Executive Committee, which will include Co-Chairs, Deputy Co-Chairs and “ordinary” members. All Executive Committee positions will be elected at the same time, every two years. Members agreed that there be no maximum length of Executive Committee tenure.

A working group will review and revise the Operating Guidelines before March 2010.

### **Privacy & Confidentiality Issues Paper**

The consortium developing the issues paper presented their work. Members expressed positive feedback and agreed that the issues paper should be used to develop a NMHCCF position paper on privacy and confidentiality. The Privacy & Confidentiality Working Group will finalise this document on behalf of the NMHCCF. The position paper will be published and launched, as per the statement on seclusion and restraint.

### **Criminal Record Checks (CRC)**

Members discussed different jurisdictions’ requirements for consumers and carers to complete a CRC prior to commencing committee or other representative work. It was noted that if CRC are required for consumer representatives, those with a criminal history from when they were unwell may be precluded from representative work. Members and the Executive Officer agreed to keep a watching brief on the discriminatory use of CRC.

### **National Justice Mental Health Initiative**

A representative from Victorian Department of Justice discussed the National Justice Mental Health Initiative and preliminary analysis of their first round consultation. The NMHCCF had previously provided a written submission to the consultation, it can be found at: <http://www.nmhccf.org.au/submissions>. The NMHCCF was the only consumer/carer group involved in the first round consultation and members provided details of a number of other relevant consumer/ carer groups to the speaker.

### **Key Decisions Made:**

- Prioritisation of Forward Plan 2009-2011 projects.
- Member endorsement of the draft Business Plan.
- Expansion of the NMHCCF Executive and review of the Operating Guidelines.
- Development of a NMHCCF statement on privacy and confidentiality, based on the issues paper.
- Next NMHCCF teleconference will be on 25 November 2009.

### **Actions Required:**

- Forward Plan 2009-2011 actions continue to be a key area of focus for the NMHCCF over coming months.
- NMHCCF Operating Guidelines to be reviewed and revised before the March 2010 meeting. This revision may, amongst other things, suggest changes to the consumer and carer representative selection process.
- Membership scoping exercise for MHSC.