MESSAGE FROM THE CEO...

Hello carers, volunteers, students and staff,

We would like to start this message by wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays. Our leader, Jonathan is off on holidays at present, so this message is coming to you from David Peters and Caitlin Bambridge.

This week being the last working week of the year has been one of tidying things up here at MHCN. David attended the CADRE get together on Wednesday at Buckingham House in Surry Hills. The CADRE project consists of training communities to better understanding mental illness in their community, have knowledge of the ways to effectively combat social exclusion and isolation, and bind together as a community more in order to overcome these barriers for the benefit of all. Douglas Holmes (who facilitates the annual Team Marbles Challenge) advised that funds collected from this year’s challenge will go towards promoting more training for CADRE within the local communities. We look forward to working more with Douglas in 2017 around this project.

Some of you will have noticed that our website has been down for a short period lately. This is due to the fact that we are currently looking at re-designing our entire branding which includes a brand new website. Our hope is that this new website will be user-friendly, full of useful information and pleasing to the eye. Caitlin has been doing some wonderful work on designing the new site, and we hope to have this up and running and fully functional in early 2017. A big acknowledgment goes to Caitlin for all her hard work.

Our volunteer, Stephanie has been busy collating a report on the statistics and effects of domestic violence, family violence, homelessness and mental illness which we aim to have completed early 2017 and will circulate via the new website and newsletters.

We would also like to thank other staff, in particular Laura Knight, Edward Curtis, Audra O’Grady, Lyn Anderson and Richard Baldwin for their continued hard work and support on the various advocacy positions MCHN has undertaken during the year.

And let’s not forget our other volunteers, Zafer Yalcin, Helda Lee and John Bear for their amazing efforts also.

We would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you and acknowledgment to our fearless CEO Jonathan Harms for his leadership, guidance and undying commitment to mental health and those who care for someone with a mental illness. Without Jonathan, our organisation would not be what it is today.

Finally, to all those hard working, wonderful carers out there, you are the reason our organisation exists. We greatly look forward to working with you all in 2017.

David Peters & Caitlin Bambridge, MHCN.
1. We have changed I.T. providers as of 30th November. No longer contact eNerds with I.T. concerns or issues, instead please contact Ensys. Flyers with contact details have been posted on partition boards at each desk. If you cannot locate one, the document has been saved at N:\Manuals & Guides\Ensys.

2. MHCN’s last day of trading will be the 23rd December. We will reopen on the 9th January. Please put an out of office message on your email accounts for this period. Staff will not be able to enter the building during this period with an access key. Please see Jonathan Harms if needing to access the building during closure.

3. The NSW Mental Health Commission has appointed three new Deputy Commissioners: Karen Burns (CEO of UnitingRecovery), Dr Martin Cohen (psychiatrist with expertise on the NDIS) and Allan Sparkes CV, VA (former police officer & consumer). Click here for further details.

4. Yoga runs on Tuesdays from 12.30pm—1.30pm in the Namatjira Room and costs $10. Bring your mat and comfortable clothing. To attend please contact Sharon Leadbetter as they need a minimum of 3-4 to run the class, otherwise the class is cancelled.

5. Zumba runs on Tuesdays from 5.15pm—5.45pm in the Namatjira Room. This class is free. Please contact Sharon Leadbetter to attend as they need a minimum 3-4 to run the class, otherwise the class is cancelled.

6. If presenting formal MHCN reports or presentations at external meetings, please send through your documents to Caitlin Bambridge for branding approval.

7. Meditation is Wednesdays from 1.00pm—1.30pm in the Mabo Room.

8. David Peters will no longer be filling out staff, student or volunteer timesheets by request. This is the responsibility of each staff/student/volunteer. If you are a paid staff member and fail to fill out your timesheet by the fortnightly deadline, you risk not being paid on time. There is no longer any exception to this rule.

If you have any further questions about staff notices or roster changes please see David Peters E: david.peters@arafmi.org
DEMAND FOR HOMELESSNESS SERVICES AT ALL TIME HIGH

Demand for specialist homelessness services are at an all time high with a greater proportion of people receiving assistance due to domestic and family violence, according to a new report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

During 2015/16, an estimated 279,000 Australians were assisted by specialist homelessness services, equivalent to one in 85 Australians (up from nearly 256,000 in 2014/15).

Of those, 106,000 (38 per cent) sought support due to domestic and family violence.

The fifth annual report of the Specialist Homelessness Services Collection, provides information on the clients of homelessness agencies who were assisted in 2015/16, the services they requested, the support they received, and outcomes achieved.

Click here to continue reading.

100,000 MENTALLY ILL LOSE NDIS COVER

Official modelling shows more than 100,000 severely mentally ill people who now receive government support will not be included in the $22 billion National Disability Insurance Scheme, threatening a major health crisis.

The government modelling — undertaken for all health ministers by the NSW and Queensland governments and kept secret for two years — shows there are more than 500,000 people with a severe mental illness -between the ages of 18 and 64, compared with just 57,000 places allowed by the -Productivity Commission for the NDIS. Adjusted for population growth, the NDIS allows 64,000 in this category at full rollout.

Using the unpublished findings of the National Mental Health Service Planning Framework, it is understood about 290,000 mentally ill -patients -require some form of community support each year, such as individual help, group support or non-acute residential care.

The modelling shows that as programs shift focus and are phased out, 100,000 people from this group of 290,000 are likely to lose all or part of their support.

Click here to continue reading.

MHCN E-NEWS - www.arafmi.org

NEW RESOURCES

All new resources can be found at J:/ General/Research Reports Resources and Studies/AAA New Resources

- Family and Carer Participation in Mental Health Services—MHDA Procedure Policy, NSW Health North West Sydney LHD
- Amendments to the NSW Mental Health Act (2007), Fact Sheet: Carers and Families, NSW Health

VIEW HERCULES HOUSE JANUARY 2017 PROGRAM

Hercules House Day to Day Living Program is a free service, although some activities may incur a small cost. The Program supports adults who are living with a mental illness, experiencing isolation from the community and may be having difficulty with tasks of day to day living.

VIEW SUICIDE PREVENTION AUSTRALIA’S DECEMBER E-NEWS

Carer’s Corner

Carer’s Corner is a section in MHCN’s e-newsletter & website where we promote carer’s creative outlet! You can submit stories, poems and artwork about mental health for publish on our website & e-news. Email caitlin.bambridge@arafmi.org to submit!
COAG: FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EXTENDS FUNDING FOR HOMELESSNESS SERVICES

The Federal Government has extended funding for homelessness services by one year after the sector warned a funding cut could prompt a human and economic disaster.

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has also committed to making any breach of protection orders issued by a family court a crime, in a bid to reduce family violence.

The announcement comes hours before state and territory leaders gather in Canberra for a COAG meeting, which is set to be dominated by discussions about the national electricity market and climate change.

Click here to continue reading.

NDIS STANDING COMMITTEE: PROVISION OF SERVICES UNDER NDIS FOR PEOPLE WITH PSYCHOSOCIAL DISABILITIES

As part of the committee’s inquiry into the implementation, performance and governance of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), the committee will inquire into the provision of services under the NDIS for people with psychosocial disabilities related to a mental health condition.

The committee calls for submissions on the provision of services under the NDIS for people with psychosocial disabilities related to a mental health condition.

The due date for submissions is 27 February 2017.

Click here for more details.

CARERS NSW NDIS DECEMBER UPDATE

Where is the NDIS up to?

The latest quarterly report from the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) shows that between July and September 2016 the NDIS brought in more than 11,000 additional people nationally, including more than 3,500 children referred through the Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) program.

At 30 September nearly 38,000 Australians (and just over 14,000 NSW residents) had an NDIS plan. Overall satisfaction has gone down but remains high, with 85% of participants with a plan rating their satisfaction with the NDIS as good or very good.

Click here for more information.

NDIS falls short for carers in the ACT

Carers ACT has released some initial findings from a survey they did of carers in the ACT to find out about their experiences of the NDIS. The survey results show that for many carers the level of support for the person they care for had increased with the NDIS, but more than half of respondents did not feel that this translated to a break for them. A more detailed report will follow soon, click here to read the Carers ACT media release.

Click here to read further updates.

Arafmi Illawarra - Consumer Rights & the NDIS

This presentation will help consumers understand their rights under the Australian Consumer Law, particularly when selecting disability related goods or services through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). It makes no difference whether consumers pay for the goods themselves, as an NDIS participant, or through a disability support system – their consumer rights still apply. For further information, please contact ARAFMI Illawarra on 02 4220 5458 or email arafmi_i@bigpond.net.au

Click here to find out more about the workshop.
CODEINE-CONTAINING MEDICINES TO REQUIRE PRESCRIPTIONS FROM 2018

Australia to follow other western countries, including the US, in requiring script amid figures showing opiate use has quadrupled in past decade.

Medicines containing codeine will require a prescription from 2018 amid ongoing concerns about overuse and abuse of the pain killer.

After being swamped with submissions on the proposal, the Therapeutic Goods Administration has decided products with codeine will no longer be available over the counter. The change will begin on 1 February 2018.

The regulator said it had taken in consideration the US, most of Europe, Hong Kong, Japan and UAE had already stopped the sale of codeine products without a script.

Its public consultations indicated many consumers use low-dose codeine medicines to self-treat chronic pain, even though they are not intended for long-term conditions.

Click here to continue reading.

UPDATE FROM THE MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION OF NSW

New Mental Health Post-grad Qualifications Focus on the Person as well as the Illness

New courses for mental health professionals will focus as much on recovery, hope and self-determination as they do on evidence-based practice, according to Commissioner John Feneley. Click here to learn more.

Mahlie’s Story

Mahlie Jewell has no problem talking about her experience of living with borderline personality disorder (BPD). But finding people willing to listen hasn’t always been easy. “I’ve had this illness for a very long time, and I’ve been trying to talk about it for a very long time,” Mahlie explains.

“I tried to break into consumer work about five years ago, but couldn’t get anywhere. People don’t realise how incredibly stigmatised borderline is within the mental health community.” Click here to continue reading.

New NDIS Resources from the Mental Health Coordinating Council (MHCC)

MHCC has released two resources relating to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and its application to people with a psychosocial disability as a consequence of mental illness. Click here to view the resources.