



National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum (NMHCCF) Report

Name of Delegate:

State / Territory / Organisation:

Date of meeting: 18-19 March 2010

Consumer / Carer Representative (please circle)

Key Issues Discussed:

Executive Committee election

The NMHCCF agreed to expand its Executive to a six-person committee to acknowledge the level of work undertaken by the NMHCCF Executive. The following members were elected to the incoming NMHCCF Executive Committee:

<i>Consumer Co-Chair</i>	Isabell Collins (VIC)
<i>Carer Co-Chair</i>	Keiran Booth (Mental Health Carers Arafmi)
<i>Consumer Deputy Co-Chair¹</i>	David Lovegrove (ACT)
<i>Carer Deputy Co-Chair</i>	Judy Bentley (ACT)
<i>Consumer Ordinary Executive member</i>	Lyn English (SA)
<i>Carer Ordinary Executive member</i>	Jean Platts (QLD)

These positions take effect from the end of the March 2010 meeting until the end of the first face to face NMHCCF meeting in 2012.

Advocacy Briefs

NMHCCF members are developing Advocacy Briefs to enable consumers and carers to better understand and comment on key issues in mental health. Eight Advocacy Briefs have been completed and are available at: <http://www.nmhccf.org.au/advocacy-briefs>.

Additional Advocacy Brief topics were discussed at the meeting and members agreed that a small Editorial Working Group should be established. The Editorial Working Group will receive and regularly assess potential Advocacy Briefs from members.

Planning documents

Forward Plan 2009-2011 and Work Plan 2009-2011 documents are on the NMHCCF website: <http://www.nmhccf.org.au/forward-planning>. The Executive has endorsed the NMHCCF Business Plan; a summary version will soon be available on the NMHCCF website.

Mental Health Standing Committee (MHSC) update

The MHSC has requested assistance from the NMHCCF to identify two Australian mental health consumers and two Australian mental health carers to attend the 2010 IIMHL leadership exchange and network meeting. This is a late stage process with very limited funds to enable Australian consumer and carer participation at the IIMHL.

¹ The Consumer Deputy Co-Chair position received no nominations prior to the NMHCCF meeting and was filled through an additional, out of session, nomination and selection round.

Members agreed to a proposal that the NMHCCF develop and manage a mental health consumer and carer conference funding project for national and international conferences. A project proposal will be developed by the Executive Committee and Secretariat.

Membership review

Members discussed NMHCCF membership at length and developed recommendations for MHSC consideration. Members believe that Indigenous, CALD, youth and aged care representatives should be added to the existing membership to make the NMHCCF more nationally representative.

Nationally consistent approach for consumer and carer selection and representation

A draft of the *Nationally consistent approach for consumer and carer selection and representation* was first tabled and discussed at the March 2008 NMHCCF meeting. Since then NMHCCF members and state/territory Liaison Officers have provided comments on the approach, which have been incorporated into the document.

Members endorsed the revised approach, with one agreed change – that members' appointment to the NMHCCF will be reviewed after an initial four years, and every two years after that. The endorsed process will be sent to state/territory/organisation Liaison Officers for information and to the MHSC for endorsement.

Operating Guidelines

NMHCCF members endorsed the revised Operating Guidelines, with agreed changes. The Operating Guidelines Working Group and Executive Committee will further review and revise the Executive Committee election section and then forward to all NMHCCF members for endorsement.

Carer peak body

NMHCCF carer representatives agreed that a national mental health carer peak body should exist. Members agreed that it would not be appropriate for the NMHCCF to undertake a scoping project for a carer peak body, but the NMHCCF would formally support a scoping project if it is progressed. Interested carers will approach the Department of Health and Ageing to explore this issue (as individual carers, not NMHCCF representatives).

Federal Election Strategy

Simon Tatz, Director of Communications and Marketing at the MHCA, discussed the federal election and what the NMHCCF might want to do in the lead up to it. Members agreed to consider this issue further and develop a list of priority mental health issues they would like addressed.

Key Decisions Made:

- Election of new Executive Committee.
- Member endorsement of the *Nationally consistent approach for consumer and carer selection and representation* and the Operating Guidelines.
- Recommendations on NMHCCF membership for the MHSC.
- Next NMHCCF teleconference will be on 16 June 2010.

Actions Required:

- Progression of Forward Plan 2009-2011 projects.
- Executive Committee election section of the NMHCCF Operating Guidelines to be reviewed and revised.
- Membership recommendations to be made to MHSC.