

# FACES NEWSLETTER

## Editorial – October 2019 Issue

“Life is full of challenges.” How many times have you heard that saying? Well no-one knows that better than I do. I have just been re-appointed as the A/Peer Work Coordinator, coordinating our peer workforce. This means I am working almost full-time hours, plus providing care to family members. What can I say but that I love a challenge!



As all of you carers will know, time will tell how I can manage all of the different plates I have in the air. It is certainly a juggling act at work and at home, but I do wonder if it isn't an opportunity for those who have relied so heavily on me at home will now have to empower themselves to do some of what I was helping them do, on their own.

I think this is a topic that needs to be highlighted; just how challenging our roles can be, especially for those who are the bread winner for the family. And also, how we can unintentionally disempower our loved ones by doing too much for them. You know the times you bend over backwards and make it all happen and then the time that something prevented you from being there and strangely enough it all seemed to take care of itself, or not, without your intervention?

Suffice to say, necessity is the mother of all inventions – or so someone famous once said. And, as I learned when my mother was taken from me suddenly, life goes on, with or without us.

The best we can do is put our best foot forward in life and hope to cope and manage whatever life throws at us. Then life can delight us with all the little wins along the way.

I am as committed as ever to ensuring this newsletter continues to be informative, inspiring and relevant to carers and family members, as well as other supporters, consumers and the people in their world.

As they say - knowledge is power!

**Hayley** | A/Peer Work Coordinator  
Adult Community

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## MHPHDS CARER SUPPORT SERVICES

### Older Adult Carer Support Group

**Lower West** meets monthly at 6 Lemnos St, Shenton Park. For carers of a person with mental illness or behavioural difficulties related to dementia, who reside in the Lower West. To attend, contact Lower West OAMHS Social Work Department or Carer Liaison and Education Service on 9328 0800.

**Mirrabooka Carer Support Group** meets on the **3rd Tuesday** of every month.

**Osborne Park Carer Support Group** meets 10am-12pm, **2nd Monday** of every month, (starting 8 Oct, 2019)

**Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital Inpatient Unit** Carer Support Group for carers of inpatients only.

**Osborne Park Hospital Community Clinic, Mirrabooka Community Clinic Carer, Joondalup Community Clinic Carer Peer Support Workers** - available upon request, ask the case manager.

**Youth Hospital in the Home (HiTH) Carer Support** Available upon request, ask the social worker.



Would you like to receive this newsletter in your inbox?  
Or would you like to contribute an article, poem or story?  
Contact: [Hayley.solich@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:Hayley.solich@health.wa.gov.au).

## Self-Care Tips

**Do you really have to exceed expectations?**

by Hayley | A/Peer Work Coordinator | Adult Community

I recall when I had four children in primary school, all very close together in age and a mixed bag of personalities. This particular day I was dropping off my children to school, when I was parked in by some dear older women who were gathering at the church next to the school. I had spent the whole car ride getting to school, mentally preparing the list of things I wanted to achieve while my kids were out of my hair, so you can imagine my frustration at the interruption to my careful plans.

Feeling the stress of not being able to leave immediately, I was approached by a concerned mature-aged lady.

She asked me what the matter was and when I told her I needed to get going because I had a 101 things to do before I had to come back and pick up the children, she simply smiled at me and patted my hand and said, "You know the washing will still be there tomorrow, don't you, dear?"

That one comment lifted the weight of all that expectation off my shoulders – even if only for a few moments.

You see, I was under the misimpression that I had to be a high achiever in every aspect of my life. And that I had to exceed everyone's expectations to be acceptable.

What I learned from this experience is that it is okay to 'roll with the punches' in life. That I didn't have to have a rod to my own back; I could relax and tackle life's challenges from a place of calm and peace, instead of dread and stress.

Consequently, I have given myself permission over the years to not exceed expectations. I don't have to have an immaculate household anymore. I don't have to turn myself inside out to meet other's expectations of whom or how I should be. This has been very liberating.

I thought I would extend the same freedom to all of you carers and give you the same advice. If today is not a good day for whatever reason, don't stress. You don't have to exceed expectations today. Pace yourself.

Certainly, if I thought a clean laundry was at all possible with four children who just seem to change clothes for the fun of it, then I was very mistaken. Imagine how worn out I would have made myself over the 21 years of having children if I had not heard those wise words of wisdom..."the washing will still be there tomorrow." Truth is, it still is. And the reality is, if I fix it today, it will just come back tomorrow and the next day.

Choose where you invest your energy and stay in the game for the long haul.

## Creative Expressions

***Bone Weary***

by Anonymous | A Carer

I know how I got here  
I chose to say yes  
- Repeatedly.

I know how I got here  
I let myself lay awake  
worrying  
- Night after night.

I know how I got here  
I forgot something very  
important  
- That I matter too.

I know how I got here  
I consistently put the needs  
of others first  
- Above my own.

I know how I got here  
When I should have walked  
away but didn't  
- I chose to stay.

I know how I got here  
I resisted the wisdom of so  
many  
- Arrogant and ignorant was I.

And I know how I get out of  
here  
I find my voice  
Take back my power  
And speak my truth  
Make time for rest  
- Make time for me.



Creative  
Expressions  
**Acceptance**  
by Norm |

When I waken, screaming in  
the darkness

At the early edges of the  
morning

When the memories sweep  
so vivid and so painful

Through my consciousness.

When the day ahead seems  
all too hard to get through

And my mind cannot  
envisage any value in my  
life

When I have no dreams, but  
just their ashes trashing  
everything

That I have ever done, or  
said, or thought was good,  
or somehow worth the  
while.

When the only goal that I  
can hold within the  
fragments of my mind

Is this: to stay in bed a day,  
a week, a month

And seek the numb  
forgetfulness of dreamless  
sleep

Although I know that sleep  
is only possible with pills.

When death seems like the  
only life worth living

Because I can't escape the  
torment of the past

No matter how hard I might  
try, because

Cruel memory is the oldest,  
and the only friend I have.

Then I hear the silent voice  
that calls

From deep within my spirit  
as it travels blind

"Be still!" it gently counsels,  
"and accept yourself

Just as you are, and this will  
surely get you through this  
day."

Slowly, and with love, my  
spirit

Guides me from the  
labyrinth of my pain

And slowly moves my focus  
to

The love I share with family,  
friends, and all the people in  
my life.

"Accept yourself," my spirit  
says,

"Just as you are, for this is  
all you need to be

Someone who loves, who  
tries each day, by word and  
deed

To demonstrate your caring  
to the people in your world."

And so, each day, I struggle  
from the chains of memory

I give myself permission to  
be free, and to accept my  
value

By simply understanding  
that I, too, have choices in  
my life

In who I am, and what I do,  
and how I choose to live this  
day.

I will accept myself today,  
and smile out on the world

I will accept, respect, and  
find the value in all those I  
meet today

In the way I treat others, by  
my words and my deeds

I will find the path to my own  
recovery, and my own  
acceptance.

## Let's Talk About It

### **Medication Compliance**

by Hayley | A/Peer Work Coordinator | Adult Community



From my perspective as a carer, medications have been a bone of contention in my relationship with the consumers in my life.

To my mind, medications represent a necessary 'evil'. Evil because they both help and hinder:

- helping with managing the physical symptoms
- hindering because of the side effects, cost and potential stress on relationships due to disputes over management and compliance in relation to medications.

A consumer in my life recently went from using two medications a day, to seven a day, almost overnight, due to some new health challenges.

Managing two medications had been difficult, as he had sometimes overused medications as a form of pain management. However, managing seven proved to be so much more difficult. We had many confrontations about medications compliance and overuse. The increased number of tablets just made it that much more difficult to manage.

So, what did I try in my attempt to manage this with the least amount of stress?

Initially, he managed it himself. Then we had the episodes over his overuse and it became clear that I needed to provide some support in this area.

Then he allowed me to manage it when I noticed he was overusing and had to call him out on that behaviour. All confrontations over medications resulted in difficult conversations where he became defensive and I wished I didn't have the responsibility. When the medications increased to seven and the fights shifted to whether or not I had stuffed up in setting up the pill box or he had overused, with no possible positive win-win outcome in sight. Finally, I decided to investigate a better system.

Having a long conversation with my local pharmacist, it became clear that a Webster pack would be the best option moving forward.

To set up a Webster pack arrangement, all I had to do was take all the scripts and the medication regime into my local pharmacist. It was an additional cost of \$15 to set up the account and then \$5 per pack. The packs could be either one-week or two-week's supply. Packs could be home delivered at no additional charge. Accounts are done monthly or you can pay as you go.

***Please note: Pricing and conditions may vary between pharmacies.***

Other benefits I noted were:

- When I needed a list of his medications for an appointment with a medical professional, I simply called the pharmacy and they faxed over the list.
- I no longer have to chase scripts around the house, because the pharmacy manages them, letting us know when we need a new one, which can be faxed directly to the chemist from our medical practitioner.

The end result? My consumer is compliant with medications. And when he gets out of rhythm and I notice, I can just gently ask if he realised he had messed up his days. He has then re-regulated himself back into rhythm with the pack.

It has taken a LOT of stress out of our relationship, so I can highly recommend Webster packing as a solution to the medications management issue.

From my perspective, the additional financial commitment was well worth the peace of mind and harmony in the relationship that taking this item out of the contention it created.



## Showcasing Carer Support Services

### ***Treatment, Support & Discharge Planning resources designed by families 4 families***

by Margaret | Carer Representative  
Mental Health Matters 2

What do you know about the specifics of law? Maybe not a lot unless you're a lawyer or someone who just likes reading long documents!

As families and supporters, we cannot assert our rights if we don't know what they are or where to find out about them. Many of us don't think to ask about what authority is being used to detain and treat our family member or friend when they are first made an involuntary patient. We are often faced with trying to understand our own and our family member's legal rights under the Mental Health Act 2014 (MHA14) when we have the least time and energy to do so.

Mental Health Matters 2 through hearing families' experiences at its peer-led Families 4 Families WA group identified the need for resources to support families and friends, particularly around their specific rights relating to Treatment, Support and Discharge Planning (TSDP) under the Mental Health Act 2014.

The need was validated by a 2017 Mental Health Advocacy Service Inquiry which showed that no health service was meeting its requirements in relation to TSDP.

Two co-design groups were convened through an Expression of Interest process to design and develop the resources. These groups were held in May and June 2019. They comprised families and supporters of individuals who had been subject to the MHA14 and a person who had experienced involuntary detention under the Act.

The group decided that what was most needed was an informative brochure in regular English which could be available at wards, Emergency Departments or given by a staff member, peer worker or another family member.

The group also designed a PowerPoint presentation which is a format that's easy to make available online or in hard copy, can be updated and made locally relevant or shared on a tablet or laptop.



Regional peers gave input to the developing resources to make sure they were relevant for regional and rural families and supporters. The resources were launched on 13 August 2019 followed by a panel discussion on the topic.

Panellists (*pictured above*) included Sarah Cowie, Director of the Health and Disabilities Services Complaints Organisation (HaDSCO); Debora Colvin, Chief Mental Health Advocate; Karen Whitney, President of the Mental Health Tribunal; Toni, consumer perspective, and Ron Deng, family perspective. The free resources are now available at

[www.mentalhealthmatters2.com.au/resources](http://www.mentalhealthmatters2.com.au/resources)

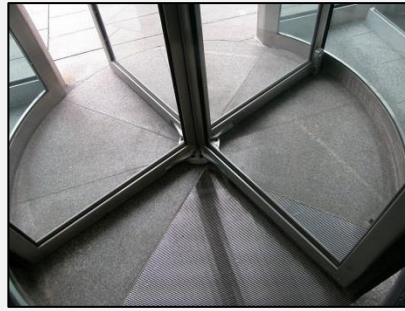
The work was made possible through a Connect Groups Pay It Forward grant, funded by the Mental Health Commission.

### Let's Talk About It

#### ***The Revolving Door***

by Trudy | Carer

Some people with mental illness find themselves in a cycle of hospitalisation, discharge, a period of wellness and a return to hospital. We call this the 'revolving door'.



Alternatively, the cycle may be police assistance, being detained and then released.

When released, the person usually returns to their home/family. If the family have not been included, informed or supported, there is minimal opportunity for changes in communication or home environment and potentially that door will yet again revolve.

Each time the door revolves, all concerned experience further trauma, decreasing the hope for recovery, trust in the support system and for one another.

A bit like the saying, "If you keep doing what you have always done, you will keep getting what you have always got."

I wonder how we make a change, improve, support, and understand, if we have no access to information or lack understanding? Would we not seek out the information and strive to understand? And would this not be considered okay?

It's an emotionally excruciating experience for a carer to have to call for police assistance or emergency response teams. To witness such distress, to not know where the person they love are going, how long for, how will they be treated, will they be ok or when they may be coming back?

Being provided with minimal information, not aware of when the door will revolve, means families and carers experience extreme levels of anxiety. There are so many unknowns - what everyone's future holds, whilst trying to manage work, finances and the family home.

A carer may experience ambiguous loss and grief. They may experience a feeling of relief the first time the door revolves, believing that having reached out for help all will be well.

However, each time the door revolves, the trauma increases, the resilience reduces and holistically the family becomes distressed.

If we walk together, side-by-side – hey, we may have a chance to stop the Revolving Door.

### ***Barriers to Care Planning***

By Hayley | A/Peer Work

Coordinator | Adult Community

### **We need your help!**

Stirling Community Mental Health Service will be hosting a forum for consumers, carers and clinicians to discuss barriers to completing care plans collaboratively.

A **care plan** is a document that outlines the consumer's treatment plans, recovery goals and actions.

Optimally, the plans are to be created in partnership with consumers and any carer, family or support person involved in their recovery however, we have not consistently been able to get them completed.

We would like to ask carers and consumers to partner with our clinicians to discover any barriers that may be stopping this process from occurring.

On 3 October 2019, between 9:00am and 10:30am, we will be hosting a community forum at Scarborough Beach Community Centre. All consumers and carers who are currently participating in our services are invited to join and help us.

**To register or find out more please contact:**

Hayley Solich 0466 625 944

[Hayley.solich@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:Hayley.solich@health.wa.gov.au)



## Let's Talk About It

**WAAMH – Who are they and what do they do?**

Kerry Hawkins | President WAAMH

### About WAAMH

The Western Australian Association for Mental Health (WAAMH) is the peak body for community mental health in Western Australia. Its membership base comprises of community-managed organisations providing mental health services, programs or supports; and people and families with lived experience of mental health issues and suicide, with whom WAAMH engages in genuine partnership.

WAAMH influences community attitudes, mental health priorities, policy and practice through mental health promotion, systemic advocacy and sector development so Western Australians have the rights, resources and support needed for mental wellbeing, recovery, and citizenship.

Find out more about WAAMH and becoming a member:

<https://waamh.org.au/membership>

## What's On

### WA Mental Health Conference 2019

The WA Mental Health Conference 2019 will be hosted by the Western Australian Association for Mental Health, with the support of the WA Mental Health Commission, with the theme, '*Strengthening our community*' on 19-20 November 2019 in the Hyatt Perth.

The conference aims to develop, strengthen and support WA's mental health sector; providing collaboration opportunities for mental health workers and people with lived experience; and sharing resources, perspectives and best practice; so together, we can move forward in the same direction with clear actions and solutions in mind.

The program's four core streams sessions will include:

- Recovery & Wellbeing
- Balancing the System
- Service Integration
- Mental health starts where we Live, Learn, Work and Play.

The conference will appeal to a diverse range of delegates including people with lived experience as a consumer, carer or family member; professionals from primary health, private sector and NGO services; funding bodies; policy makers; mental health educators and advocates; and people whose work relates to mental health, HR and/or OH&S.

Register now and find more information at: <http://waamh.org.au/conference>

Lived experience consumer and carer subsidies and scholarships are available! Apply now on the website.



## What's On

### **Mental Health Week**

By Hayley | A/Peer Work Coordinator | Adult Community

Last year we had some fabulous events for Mental Health Week that we covered in our newsletter. I thought we'd get ahead of the game and give you the heads up on what is happening. The theme this year is: Mental Health starts in our communities where we live, learn, work and play.

This year we are celebrating Mental Health Week with our participation in local community events and by hosting a large Mental Health Festival at Graylands Hospital.

All carers and consumers are invited to participate in our events as follows:

### **Mental Health Festival – Graylands Hospital 9 October 2019**

Join us at Graylands Hospital for a large community festival with music including an open choir, drumming session and guest local musicians; over 20 stall holders from our Health Department and community partners; free sausage sizzle lunch; prizes and giveaways; and a range of activities such as hand massages, sensory modulation activities and maybe even a face painter or two!

**Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital/Lower West Community Mental Health Clinic – 9 October** will be hosting an information table at Watling Walk at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital between 9:00am and 3:00pm. If you are at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, please come by and say hi!

**Joondalup Community Mental Health Clinic – 9 October** Consumers, carers, clinicians and community are invited to join the consumer advisory group at the Joondalup clinic for a sausage sizzle and other fun activities.

**Mirrabooka Shopping Centre – 10 October** Join the team from Mirrabooka Mental Health Community Clinic and community partners at the Mirrabooka Shopping Centre where you can participate in activities promoting positive mental wellbeing.



## Did you know?

### **Providing Feedback**

By Sarah | PR Coordinator

Carers and family members of those affected by a mental illness are well placed to provide valuable feedback to us on our services. MHPHDS Mental Health is committed to improving the experience of care for you and the person in your care. Our staff are always available to talk to you, or you can provide feedback to our Stakeholder Liaison Service or via Patient Opinion.

Patient Opinion Australia is an independent online social media platform to give feedback anonymously, be it a story of excellence or one where our care has fallen short. All WA Health sites are subscribed and will respond to you. Visit [www.patientopinion.org.au](http://www.patientopinion.org.au) to 'Tell your story'. We'd love to hear from you.

Our Stakeholder Liaison Service is also available to take compliments, complaints or other feedback by emailing [feedback.NMHSMH@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:feedback.NMHSMH@health.wa.gov.au), calling (08) 9242 9612 or in writing to Stakeholder Liaison Service, Reply Paid 83619, PO Private Bag 1, Claremont WA 6910.



### Let's Talk About It

#### ***What is Safety and Quality?***

By Kim Pedler | A/Quality Improvement Coordinator



Patient safety and quality is often summarised as the 'right care, in the right place, at the right time and cost'. The [Australian Commission on Safety & Quality in Health Care](#) (ACSQHC) defines patient **safety** as 'prevention of error and adverse effects caused by or associated with health care'; and **quality** as 'the degree to which health services for individuals and populations increase the likelihood of desired health outcomes and are consistent with current professional knowledge'.

[ACSQHS](#) developed the Australian Safety and Quality Framework for Health Care in 2010 which sets out actions for people in health organisations to establish safety and quality systems that are;

- **Consumer Centred** - care that is easy for consumers to get when they need it; that consumers are respected and health care staff respond to choices, needs and values; and partnerships are formed between clinicians, consumers and carers.
- **Driven by information** - health organisations are using up to date information to guide decisions about health care; data is collected, analysed and given back to services for improvement; take action using this data to improve consumer experiences.
- **Organised for safety** - safety is a central feature of how health care facilities are run, how staff work and how funding is organised.

The Safety Quality and Performance Unit (SQPU) within MHPHDS Mental Health aims to support mental health staff in achieving optimal health outcomes for our consumers by providing expertise and feedback on patient safety and quality issues. We promote continuous improvement and innovation in services for consumers, carers and staff across all divisions of MHPHDS Mental Health by delivering and supporting a consumer

centred, intensive and evidence driven Safety and Quality Framework.

The systems that assist the SQPU to provide that expertise and feedback are:

- **Risk Management** system that identifies risks within the workplace and either corrects or mitigates the risk
- **Clinical Incidence** system that investigates all incidence caused within the clinical setting to develop lessons learnt and opportunities for improvement
- **Feedback** system that listens to consumers and carers opinion on their experience of the service
- **Education** system that ensures our staff are working professionally within their role
- **Quality Improvement** system that identifies areas of improvement through the other safety and quality systems and follows a defined cycle to embed improvements

For more information contact Kim Pedler, [kim.pedler@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:kim.pedler@health.wa.gov.au)



# My healthcare rights

This is the second edition of the **Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights**.

These rights apply to all people in all places where health care is provided in Australia.

The Charter describes what you, or someone you care for, can expect when receiving health care.

## I have a right to:

### Access

- Healthcare services and treatment that meets my needs

### Safety

- Receive safe and high quality health care that meets national standards
- Be cared for in an environment that is safe and makes me feel safe

### Respect

- Be treated as an individual, and with dignity and respect
- Have my culture, identity, beliefs and choices recognised and respected

### Partnership

- Ask questions and be involved in open and honest communication
- Make decisions with my healthcare provider, to the extent that I choose and am able to
- Include the people that I want in planning and decision-making

### Information

- Clear information about my condition, the possible benefits and risks of different tests and treatments, so I can give my informed consent
- Receive information about services, waiting times and costs
- Be given assistance, when I need it, to help me to understand and use health information
- Access my health information
- Be told if something has gone wrong during my health care, how it happened, how it may affect me and what is being done to make care safe

### Privacy

- Have my personal privacy respected
- Have information about me and my health kept secure and confidential

### Give feedback

- Provide feedback or make a complaint without it affecting the way that I am treated
- Have my concerns addressed in a transparent and timely way
- Share my experience and participate to improve the quality of care and health services



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**AUSTRALIAN COMMISSION**  
ON SAFETY AND QUALITY IN HEALTH CARE

For more information  
ask a member of staff or visit  
[safetyandquality.gov.au/your-rights](https://safetyandquality.gov.au/your-rights)

## Showcasing Carer Support Services

### **Men's Shed**

by Nadine | Carer Consultant  
Adult Community

**“Men don't talk face to face,  
they talk shoulder to shoulder”.**

Men shed Motto

With numerous locations in Perth, the aim of Men's Shed is to *'deliver a wide range of services which aims to improve the health and wellbeing of members and reduce the number of men who are at risk from preventable health issues that may emanate from isolation'*.

Isolation can mean being retired, unable to work, a lack of a social network as lives have changed, loss of loved ones or family changes. There can be a lot of time on hand and a sense of feeling unable, a lack of self-worth or like you are just too old and everything is moving too fast.

You can also be very busy and still be very isolated. Isolation can affect mental health significantly.

Men's Shed offers a space for men to enter, work on projects for themselves or together as a team in making items for communities groups. Men's Shed has also progressed beyond just a 'wood work' group.

The space offers an environment to talk, work, create, learn and just to be with some men. It's healing and purposeful, and it's just for blokes of all ages and races.

Carers - if you are or you know of a man or men who need something to do or look forward to, I encourage you to connect with a local Men's Shed in your area.

The link to find a Shed near you is –  
Sheds near you / A listing of WA Sheds as at 5 July 2019

<http://www.mensshedswa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/MSWA-SHED-CONTACTS-5-JULY-2019.pdf>

[http://www.mensshedswa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/MSWA\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.mensshedswa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/MSWA_brochure.pdf)

## Other Carer Support Services

Helping Minds (08) 9427 7100  
Carers WA 1300 227 377  
MIFWA 9237 8900

## Important Numbers

**Mental Health  
Emergency Response  
Line (MEHRL)**  
1300 555 788

**Rural Line**  
1800 552 022

For help with mental health  
emergencies

**Crisis Care Help Line**  
1800 199 008

Help with temporary  
accommodation, protection for  
children, financial aid, counselling  
and other support services

**Police**  
131 444

For police assistance or  
attendance: when any person  
feels in danger, under threat or at  
risk.

**Triple 000 Emergency  
(Police, Fire,  
Ambulance)**

For urgent help in a life-  
threatening emergencies

**LifeLine**  
131 114

24/7 crisis support telephone  
counselling service.





Government of Western Australia  
North Metropolitan Health Service  
Mental Health, Public Health and Dental Services



# Mental Health Festival

A Mental Health Week 2019 Celebration

**Wednesday 9 October**  
**10am – 2pm**

Anderson Hall,  
Graylands Campus

Live music, free lunch,  
information stalls, activities and more.

Patients, carers / family  
and staff welcome.

**This event is FREE**

