



**Private Mental Health
Consumer Carer Network (Australia)**

engage, empower, enable choice in private mental health

Communiqué No 2: February, 2013

The purpose of this two page Communiqué is to keep our members informed about the major discussions, deliberations and activities after each of two face to face meeting of the National Committee. We hope that it give you some indication of our meeting discussions. We would be pleased to have any comments you may wish to make about any of these issues.

The Network held its **twenty seventy meeting** on the **25th and 26th February, 2013** in Melbourne . Major items of discussion were:

Governance Documents

The Network is currently negotiating through the Private Mental Health Alliance a new funding cycle through an *AMA Agreement for Services 2013-2015*. A large part of the meeting reviewed and amended where necessary all the Governance documents.

These comprised:

- 1) The Operating Guidelines 2013-2015
- 2) Position Descriptions for the Chair, Deputy Chairs, State Coordinators
- 3) The development of a 'Code of Behaviour' for the National Committee
- 4) Nomination and selection process for State Coordinators
- 5) Risk Management Plan
- 6) Communication Plan 2013-2015

We would like to thank Ms Kim Werner (Deputy Chair) for her work in developing, reviewing and amending these documents. All Documents were endorsed by the National Committee. We would like to acknowledge the guidance from the documents of the National Mental Health Consumer Carer Forum particularly around the Nomination and Selection Process for State Coordinators.

Restructure of the Network's current State Committees

Part of the review of the Network's Governance was a review of the role of State Committees in the Network's structure. The National Committee agreed that the current committee structure should be modified to allow engagement with a greater number of consumers and carers. All Network members within the States and the ACT will be invited to attend what will now be known as **Network State Advisory Forums**.

The purpose is to have a less formal meeting procedure and to invite the wider Network membership to each Forum meeting. This will in no way diminish the importance of our current core group of members who provide much needed input into Network activities and feedback on issues critical issues. It is rather to encourage more people to be involved in our activities. A letter will be sent in the next few weeks to all core members of what has been previously known as State Committees in Queensland, South Australia and Victoria, explaining the restructure.

The primary purpose of Network State Advisory Forums is to provide the Network's National Committee with consumer and carer perspectives on issues of national significance. They also provide an opportunity for State Coordinators to provide feedback and to update participants on current Network activities. It is important to note that the Network is funded to provide systemic and not individual advocacy.

The *Criteria for Participation* has not change however a '*Code of Behaviour*' consistent with that for the National Committee has been incorporated within our Internal Policy structure. A formal reimbursement for expenses has been adopted and an amount of \$25 will be paid for each Forum attendance to people who are not otherwise paid to attend.

The other slight change will be that a 'Brief Summary of Outcomes' will now be adopted rather than formal Minutes of meetings.

Network External Policies - endorsed

The following External Policies were reviewed and subsequently endorsed by the National Committee with only one change to Policy 1: Smoking within Private Hospitals, with a 4th point under our Policy - '*Smokers do not cause discomfort, inconvenience or distress to non smokers*'.

Policy 1	Smoking within Private Hospitals
Policy 2	Consent
Policy 3	Advance Directives
Policy 4	Health Information Privacy and Security
Policy 6	Consumer and Carer Participation with Private Mental Health Services
Policy 7	Involuntary Treatment and Detention

Network Policies - under development

The following External Policy was endorsed by the National Committee for distribution to our state members for their input and advice. Once all comments have been received, this External Policy will be endorsed if possible by the National Committee out of session.

Policy 11	Payment for consumer and carer participation
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National Disability Insurance Scheme

There was lively debate around the NDIS and the appropriation to people with an enduring mental illness.

Network survey of members

We will again survey our members in a month or so to gain a greater understanding of national or major issues of concern, suggestions on how these might be taken forward and what areas you may wish the National Committee to focus on.

After the National Committee has endorsed the Minutes of this meeting in a month or so, they will be posted onto our website of www.pmhccn.com.au where you can read the full content of the two days.