

# The Consumer Connection



The Consumer Connection summarises news and events relevant to Ballarat Health Services Mental Health Service's consumers.

## Dates of Interest:

29 May

White Wreath Day

15-21 June

Men's Health Week

28 July-5 August

OCD & Anxiety Disorders Week

20-24 October

Sock it To Suidcide

## Your experience; our future...

Recently the National Mental Health Commission released some fact sheets as a result of the National Review of Mental Health Programmes and Services in Australia.

It came as no surprise to read that the review found high levels of unmet mental health need in rural and regional communities- which requires immediate attention.

In fact, in major cities, the per person Medicare funding for mental health services was \$43.44. Amazingly in regional, remote and very remote areas the same funding was \$7.46 per person. These are stats from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2014). Absolutely not fair or reasonable in any way!

Other areas identified were the issues of barriers in gaining entry to services, barriers to engagement with services, staffing levels and insufficient flexibility of services. If you have experienced some of these issues or have more feedback you would like to share with BHS, please email me:

[amandatu@bhs.org.au](mailto:amandatu@bhs.org.au) or phone 5320 4100.

Amanda



Behold the turtle!  
He makes progress only when  
He sticks his neck out  
*James Bryant Conant*



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## What is a Consumer Consultant?

Consumer consultants are people who have first-hand experience of both mental illness and mental health service provision.

The purpose of consumer consultancy is to collect the views of consumers throughout the region.

This information is used to guide service planning, delivery and evaluation to improve the quality of service for people with a mental illness and their family.

## Who are the Consumer Advisory Committee?

The consumer advisory committee is a group of people who have been consumers of Ballarat Health Services/ Mental Health Services and draw upon this experience to advise BHS-MHS on consumer views.

This ensures the consumers' views are recognized and reflected in service deliver, planning and policy development.



**‘Their prospect for achieving a good life... access to culturally appropriate services’**

**BHS-MHS: A new “Social Inclusion” committee–2015**

Did you know? Ballarat Health Services - Mental Health Services, recently established the ‘social inclusion’ committee. This committee is designed to ensure access to health services for the most disadvantaged in our community.

Included in this group is the culturally linguistically diverse (CALD) members. This term is used to describe people who were either born overseas or have parents who were born overseas; speak a language other than English and identify with a specific religion and/or culture.

According to MHiMA (mental health in multicultural Australia) CALD Australians are susceptible to missing out on mental health services due to language difficulties, different cultural understandings of mental health, cultural stigma and unfamiliarity with Western health systems.

People from CALD backgrounds have a

significantly lower level of access to mental health care and support in the wider community, due to stigma, language and cultural issues. Additional and consistent research into CALD specific mental health is needed to provide the baseline and guiding point for future projects in the arena of CALD mental health. BHS-MHS currently provides:



Mental Health Information for Families and Carers - Useful information for families or carers supporting a person with a serious mental illness. Translated into ten languages. (Source: Department of Health)

Mental Health Information Sheets - A large directory of translated mental health information translated into several languages. (Source: Victorian Transcultural Psychiatry Unit)

Mental Health Instruments - A range of mental health instruments, scales etc. translated into several languages. (Source: Victorian Transcultural Psychiatry Unit).

In line with the hospital’s general Cultural Responsiveness Plan, Ballarat Mental Health Services informs and trains staff on accessing and working with interpreters in addition to access of the translated mental health material.

The social inclusion committee therefore aims to ensure our mental health services remain non discriminatory; uphold the inherent dignity and equal protection rights. We recognise the correlation between mental illness, low socio-economic status and social inclusion.

**Support Groups**



**Support Groups:**  
*A safe place for people to talk and listen*

**Ballarat “ Insights”:**

**A group for anyone affected by mental illness in and around the Ballarat area.**

**Support for you to recover and cope with Mental Illness.**

**PH:**

**Michelle: 0433 491 940**

**Mark: 0466 746 928**

**Horsham “ RARE”:**

**Rural and Remote Engagement—support in a non-formal way.**

**Have a chat, work towards finding solutions and help with re-engaging in to the community.**

**Call:**

**0408 542 177**

**Talk to a MATE!**

**Ararat :**

**GROW:**

**12 Steps of Recovery and Personal Growth**

**Depression, anxiety, panic attack, mental illness support**

**For your nearest meeting: 1800 558 268**

**Www.grow.net.au**

**Got Money Problems? Get Free Advice:**

**Courtesy of The Australian Association of Participating Service Users Editorial:**

Financial stress certainly has a strong impact on recovery from (mental illness). It is not uncommon for a person to lose focus on money issues because they have become unwell.

There is an added risk of debt, fines, unpaid bills and possibly Centrelink issues.

Financial counsellors in general deal with people who are in financial stress and have debt related crisis or some debt related legal

issues. Most financial counselling services are funded by the government and involve no fees, charges or commissions for clients. Financial counsellors are not financial planners or professional debt managers.

MoneyHelp offers free financial counselling service over the phone, as well as a range of information regarding the management of finances and debts.

MoneyHelp will also help you find your closest financial counsellor.

MoneyHelp website is designed to allow you to find information of specific

relevance to you. If you want to know your options with credit card debt or mortgage payments, your rights regarding child support payments or your utility bills, you can go directly to these sections.

**MoneyHelp!**  
tel. 1800 007 007  
www.moneyhelp.org.au



MoneyHelp assists people who are experiencing financial difficulty. For example, you may have suffered job loss, reduced working hours or you may be struggling to pay your rent, mortgage or bills.

**BHS-MHS QUALITY AND SAFETY FRAMEWORK 2014**

The governance framework for safety and quality is guided by five key strategic directions:

1. Provide quality healthcare
2. Provide an informed, inclusive and positive patient experience
3. Actively promote partnerships and leadership in our community
4. Achieve and enhance sustainability
5. Foster excellence and innovation.



The NSQHS standard 2, Partnering with Consumers is a mandated requirement for BHS-MHS. Standard 2 provides a clear statement about the level of care consumers can expect from health service organisations while improving the quality of health service provision.

**The new Mental Health Act for Victoria**

**How does the new act benefit Consumers and Patients?**

- Patients can make and participate in treatment decisions
- Supporting Patients to understand their rights
- Patients can make an advance statement about treatment
- Independent oversight of compulsory treatment orders
- Patients can ask a nominated person to receive information and provide support.



**For a postal copy:  
Ph: 5320 4100 email: amandatu@bhs.org.au**



Ballarat Health Services  
Putting your health first

## Need help?

**BHS—Mental Health Services**

**24 hours a day**

**7 days a week**

**Call: 1300 66 13 23**

Other Supports:

**Multicultural -**



[www.mhima.org.au](http://www.mhima.org.au)

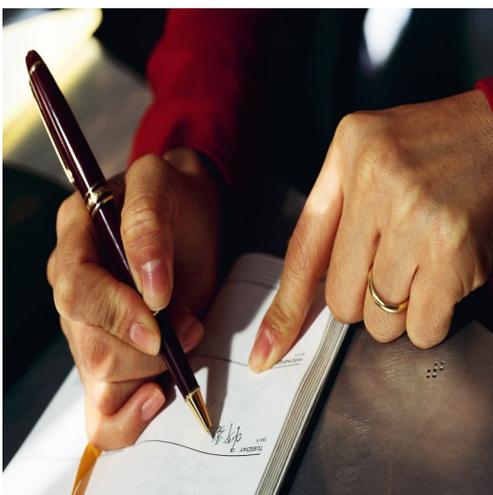
**MensLine—**

**1300 78 99 78**



## HAVE YOUR SAY .....

***Tell us what you think!***



**What would you like to see in the newsletter?**

**Email your idea: [amandatu@bhs.org.au](mailto:amandatu@bhs.org.au)**

**Other ways to have input:**

- ***Feedback forms - available from reception***
  - ***Inpatient surveys***
- ***Contact consumer consultant direct***
- ***Apply to join the consumer advisory committee***

