

Voices

The E-Newsletter of Flourish, Vol. 1, No. 2, August 2016



From The Editor's Desk

The 2016 federal election has been fought and won, but in essence little has changed. Rather than tackling national issues like our alarmingly high suicide rate, the Government has instead decided to link mental illness to terrorism, and target people on welfare. It's time we started talking to our politicians and making sure they hear, and understand, what it is we are telling them. We need to start a genuine, ongoing, and meaningful dialogue with our politicians.

Meanwhile, congratulations to our hard working Jaisen Mahne. Jaisen has put a great deal of time and effort in working towards establishing a Flourish Regional Advisory Group on the west coast. Nathan Gelston, Flourish's technology wizard, is also deserving of a special mention. Nathan has worked tirelessly in recent months to completely overhaul Flourish's computer systems and software, including getting SharePoint up and running as well as our monthly E-Newsletter



A Thank You To Former Flourish EO, Miranda Ashby

In honor of the work, friendship, dedication and development of Flourish and the Tasmanian Peer Support Network that Miranda provided, a few of us who had notification, and time at the Tasmanian Peer Support Network (TPSN) meeting, did a round up to get Miranda a present to say thank you. Upon presenting it, it was acknowledged that if all of the consumers had the opportunity to contribute, it would have occurred, so in spirit it was from every one of the consumers of Flourish. The gift was a lovely Waterford crystal vase to go with the flowers.

Lucy Lester

And Not Forgetting...

With so much happening within Flourish these past six months, sometimes things get overlooked. Miranda Ashby was, as Executive Officer, the 'face' of Flourish for many people. However, behind the scenes were two other people who are no longer a part of Flourish. Maggi Boughton and Janette Papps carried a heavy workload, and as many may appreciate, the hours paid did not

match the hours dedicated to ensuring Flourish stayed functional. As those who replaced them are learning, the path of administration is not as easy as it seems, so Maggi and Jeanette deserve that their hard work and dedication be recognized, so from everyone at Flourish, thank you.



A Champion Of Our Time ~ Lucy Henry (1973 – 2013)

Wherever Lucy (Hamer) Henry went she was instantly recognized because of her Dalmatian assistance dog, Lottie. And wherever Lucy went she made it clear she wanted mental health reform. She wanted a more informed and caring mental health work force. She wanted consumers to be treated equally, fairly, and with compassion rather than being discriminated against. Lucy also wanted justice and equal human rights for people with disabilities. To that end she worked tirelessly, and would often comment that, “On the whole, I very much hope that some of the mistakes in my care are used to guide the prevention of those mistakes in the care of others.”

Lucy’s fight for justice had its roots in her diagnosis of Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD). Like so many others with BPD, she was considered untreatable, and often accused of attention-seeking behaviour. Lucy’s impulsive behaviour saw her spending a lot of time in psychiatric wards, yet each admission made her more determined to change the system that continually failed her.

Lucy was a consumer representative for Flourish and was the state representative on the National Consumer Register, plus a member of the Private Mental Health Network. Lucy also sat on the board of the Mental Health Council of Tasmania. Lucy also travelled and performed as a member of Hobart’s Choir of High Hopes. In 2013, Lucy was honoured with a human rights award dedicated in her name. The Lucy Henry Mental Health Award is bestowed upon a person, or organization, that is dedicated to mental health reform and the protection of human rights.

Sadly, Lucy departed this world way too early. There was so much she wanted to achieve and so little time in which to do it, but Lucy will always be remembered as a Champion Of Our Time.



Terrorism And Mental Illness

Our Prime Minister has ordered an investigation into possible links between ‘lone wolf’ style terror attacks and people with a mental illness. This means anyone with a mental illness can be profiled to determine whether they might potentially become radicalised and initiate a terror attack. The

government has also proposed preventative detention. The last time preventative detention reared its ugly head was in 2000. At that time the British Government, in a knee-jerk reaction to a terrible double murder, profiled everyone with a mental illness to determine if they posed a danger to the public. The British government identified 2,400 people as dangerous, of whom 300 were detained indefinitely, despite committing no crime. Attorney-General, George Brandis, is on record as saying that doctors and health workers should report patients who show signs of being susceptible to radicalisation. However, Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists President, Dr. Malcolm Hopwood, has warned that asking doctors to report people simply on grounds of suspicion was dangerous. People with mental illness have to battle stigma and discrimination just about every day in one form or another. Now, because of ill-conceived comments by politicians, that stigma and discrimination is more entrenched than ever. Because of the fear of being thought a potential terrorist, there will be people who need help, but who will avoid seeking it out of fear.

Dannii Lane, Mental Health and Human Rights Advocate

Mental Health News



Mental Health Carers Tasmania

Mental Health Carers Tasmania (MHCT) are seeking expressions of interest for people to join their Board. For more information and a copy of the selection criteria, please contact the MHCT by phone; 03 6228 7448, or via email; admin@mentalhealthcarerstas.org.au.

Nominations close on Monday 19th September 2016.



Royal Hobart Hospital Department of Psychiatry Decant

Yet again the process to transfer (decant) patients from B Block (DPM/PICU) to the new modular facility being assembled off Liverpool Street has been put on hold. Meanwhile, a working group, which includes two consumers from Flourish, has been established to oversee the decanting process when it finally begins.



Honoring those killed at Tsukui Yamayui En
and help support disabled people

White Flower Memorial <https://www.facebook.com/WhiteFlowerMemorial>

People with disabilities, including mental health disabilities, suffer abuse, neglect, and maltreatment every day by their parents, by loved ones, by their carers, and by support staff. They are also murdered. The latest killings occurred in Japan on 26 July, when 19 people were murdered, and 25 injured. The killer believed people with disabilities deserved to be euthanized. We shall remember them.



Workplace Mental Health: An Action Plan for Australia

13-14 October 2016 • Hobart Conference and Function Centre



Workplace Mental Health: An Action Plan For Australia

Luminous Events warmly invite you to attend an exciting inaugural event, Workplace Mental Health: An Action Plan for Australia, which will be held at the Hobart Conference and Function Centre in Hobart on the 13th and 14th October. Hear what is happening internationally in research, policy and practice. Contribute to the development of a collectively authored white paper with the UTAS Work, Health & Wellbeing Network. In order to be notified when registration opens and to be kept up to date with event announcements, register your interest here: <https://goo.gl/80gLOR>

A Conversation Between Consumers And Northern Mental Health Services

A conversation between consumers and Northern Mental Health Services will occur between 1:00 pm and 3:00 pm on Wednesday 16 August. The meeting will be held at Anglicare Tasmania's Meeting Room 120, located on the corner of Elizabeth and Wellington Streets, Launceston.

Consumers are invited to attend this important discussion, which will focus on the Mental Health Service's Consumer Feedback Complaints Process. Afternoon tea will be provided. If you wish to attend, please let James McLellan know by phoning: 03 6777 4196, or by email: james.mclellan@ths.tas.gov.au. Please direct any queries to Flourish CEO, Julia Fassina. Mobile: 0408 185 629, or email: admin@flourishtas.org.au

Comments And Submissions

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Newsletter guidelines

Submissions should be neatly written or typed articles. A maximum of 500 words per story applies. More than one article per person is welcome, but dependent on space and other restrictions, publication is at the editor's discretion. The editor reserves the right to edit spelling, punctuation, and if needed, grammar. Articles will not be otherwise altered without the permission of the author. Contributors may be anonymous, use only their first name, or use their entire name. If reporting on project/policy committee involvement, it is the responsibility of the author to check with the relevant organisation and/or the Flourish CEO, to ensure that confidentiality is not being breached.