



**flourish**

*Mental Health Action  
In Our Hands Inc.*

# VOICES

**Vol. 2, No. 8, September 2017**



**Suicide Prevention  
Australia**

## **World Suicide Prevention Day**

World Suicide Prevention Day is held every year on 10 September. On and around this day, join others who are working towards the common goal of preventing suicide. 'Take a Minute: Change a Life' is the theme for 2017. Take time to notice what's going on with your family, friends and colleagues – and yourself. It is about taking time to have those conversations when you notice something has changed and equipping yourself to help yourself and others. In Australia, more than 2500 people die each year. Research tells us that hundreds of Australians are impacted by each suicide. Research also tells us that some 65,000 people attempt suicide each year and hundreds of thousands of people think of suicide. Take a minute to think about the pain and suffering suicide being felt by every single person impacted by suicide.

## **Organisations And Consumers Work On 'Rethink'**

I recently attended a meeting for local mental health organisations and consumers organised by the Mental Health Council of Tasmania (MHCT). The MHCT is the peak organisation representing the non-government mental health sector in Tasmania. Consumers and organisations discussed the results of a survey on what people thought were the most important goals in the state government's Rethink strategy. An integrated system with clear pathways for people to get the right help without having to repeat their story was thought to be the main priority. However, all 10 'Rethink' priorities are important. What I found most interesting was an introductory talk by Eric Beecher who was helping the MHCT with the discussion and a pathway forward for lobbying the government. Mr. Beecher has been a political journalist, so knows how politicians think. For me, the most inspiring thing Mr. Beecher said was something to the effect of... "A clear and consistent message, repeated by many over a period of time, will deliver positive results." So, politicians don't get it straight away. We need to say the same thing over and over many times before they will act. Consumers and non-government organisations need to stick together and be aware of what we want as a group and keep sending the same message. (edited) **J-Ellen (Mental Health Consumer Rep)**

## Self-harm And Suicidal Behaviour Of Young People

Rates of self-harm and suicidal behaviour are high among Australian teens. Among the 14-15 year-old age group, one in ten reported that they had self-harmed in the previous 12 months, and five per cent reported they had attempted suicide. Girls appeared to be at greater risk than boys of both self-harm and suicidal behaviour. One in four girls had had thoughts about self-harming, and 15 per cent had engaged in some form of self-harm. When it came to suicide, 12 per cent of girls had thought about suicide in the past year, with six per cent actually attempting suicide. Among boys, eight per cent had thought about self-harm, and four per cent had done it. With suicide, six per cent of boys had thought about it, and four per cent had made a suicide attempt. However, boys were more likely to act impulsively and make an unplanned suicide attempt. Self-harm and suicide do not happen in parallel, and often self-harm can act as a "gateway" to suicide. Of those who had attempted suicide, two thirds had previously self-harmed. Some teens are more at risk of self-harm than others. Teens who reported that they were same-sex attracted, bisexual, or were unsure of their sexuality were at greater risk of self-harm than heterosexual teens. Teens with more reactive temperaments; those who had depression, anxiety or general feelings of unhappiness; and those who reported being threatened or feeling victimised by their peers because of their health, skin colour, sexual orientation, language, culture or religion were also at greater risk of self-harm.

Overall, the findings highlight that preventative strategies should be directed towards young people in order to increase their awareness of risk factors for themselves and also their peers, as well as increase awareness of the support services and other resources available. Programs to assist teachers and parents to appropriately assess the signs of self-harm and suicidal intent also could be of considerable benefit of reducing the overall disability burden of self-destructive behaviour in young people. (edited)

### **Galina Daraganova**

Source: LSAC ASR 2016 chapter. Published by the Australian Institute of Family Studies, August 2017

## Brain Food Lunch-box

Celebrate Mental Health Week (9th to 14th October) with a Brain Food Lunch Box.

Support the Hamlet Café, Flourish, and your own mental health with brain food; yum-yum.

Look out for yummy menus closer to the date. Order and pay for a menu item prior to Mental Health Week. Pick up your lunch boxes from the Hamlet Café on your nominated day and time, or have them delivered by the Hamlet Café to your office block or arranged place.

This is a Flourish Local Action Group South (FLAGS) initiative. For further information, contact Julia:  
Mobile: 0418 724 794

Email: [juliaw@flourishtas.org.au](mailto:juliaw@flourishtas.org.au)

(edited)

## Civil Voices: Pro Bono Australia



Civil Voices is an investigation into the relationship between not-for-profit organisations and the current state of advocacy in Australia. Please spend 10 minutes completing the Civil Voices survey. Your participation in the survey is essential for a holistic insight into the sector's ability to advocate on matters of public interest. The survey

is being run by Melbourne University, and the results will be used to build upon an existing evidence in order to provide a deeper understanding of trends surrounding advocacy and the sector. The final report will be utilised by the Human Rights Law Centre and Pro Bono Australia to ignite a broader discussion on the issue. By taking part in the survey you be contributing your voice to an essential investigation, plus you will have the chance to win one of four places to the 2018 Annual Human Rights dinner.

To complete the survey, go to: [https://scc.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_4NKILzcm7Vsw1db](https://scc.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4NKILzcm7Vsw1db)

**Karen Mahlab AM**

**Pro Bono Australia**

(edited)

## Tasmanian Human Rights Awards 2017

The Tasmanian Human Rights Week Committee is calling for nominations for the nine Human Rights Awards:

- Individual Award
- Organisation Award
- A Fairer World School Award
- Lucy Henry Mental Health Award
- Angus Downie Print Journalism Award
- Multicultural Award
- Lesbian Gay Bisexual Trans and Intersex (LGBTI) Award
- Youth Award
- Robin Hood AM Sport Award

Nominations close 5:00pm, Friday 6 October 2017. Each category winner will receive a certificate and a \$500 prize. Winners will be announced at the ceremony and Human Rights Week launch event, Saturday 2 December at Parliament House. For more information or to download a nomination form, go to [www.afairerworld.org/hrw](http://www.afairerworld.org/hrw) or call (03) 6165 7512.

**“Sanity is madness put to good uses.” (George Santayana)**



## R-U-OK? Day

R U OK Day is held on Thursday 14 September. It is a national day of action dedicated to encouraging everyone to connect with the people they care about. It is also about giving them the skills to have a conversation with someone they're worried about any day of the year. Taking part can be as simple as

asking your friends, family and colleagues, "are you ok?" For more information visit [ruok.org.au](http://ruok.org.au)

## Statement on Public Policy Principles and Recommendations (edited)



COMMUNITY VOICE  
ON POKIES REFORM

A coalition of community organisations was formed in 2015 to express concerns about gambling in Tasmania. Flourish is now a member of the coalition.

The coalition wants the Tasmanian Government to consult with the community on the future of gambling, including the number and location of poker machines, the number of casinos, and the level of consumer protection required by the State. The Treasurer promised public consultation. Parliament has established a committee to investigate the future of gambling in Tasmania. Community Voice on Pokies Reform wants a number of public policy principles to form the basis of negotiations about gambling:

1. Gambling problems are a public health issue that should be treated in the same way as other public health issues.
2. Parliament should use the data from Tasmania's three Social and Economic Impacts Studies (SEIS) to guide its public policy approach on gambling.
3. Public policy on gambling should address both the risk factors that lead people to gamble and the gambling features that are attractive to people who subsequently develop a gambling problem.
4. Public policy on poker machines should recognise that 98 per cent of the adult population either never touch a poker machine or spend less than 12 hours per year at a machine. Public policy should therefore focus on the people who face harm because of their intensified daily or weekly visits to the machines.

Community Voice on Pokies Reform has evidence-based recommendations for the Parliament. Community Voice on Pokies Reform recommends the Parliament introduce the following measures:

1. Remove poker machines from all hotels and clubs.
2. Not increase the number of poker machines in the casinos, and impose a maximum \$1 bet limit, plus a 4% levy to contribute to community supports. Furthermore, it should be mandatory for the licensee to intervene where customers may be experiencing harm from poker machines.
3. Continuation of counselling and other support services for those harmed by gambling.
4. Support hotels and clubs that currently have poker machines to transition their business model.



## MHCT Rethink Review

On August 8th last, the Mental Health Council of Tasmania (MHCT) held a workshop on the state government's mental health Rethink strategy. Titled, Rethink: Achievements, Reflections and Future Thinking, the workshop provided valuable information that there was a real value in facilitating the discussion. The workshop greatly assisted the MHCT in achieving their goal of developing a community sector perspective for the ongoing implementation of Rethink. A snapshot of the key considerations provided on the day included:

- All 10 reform directions were considered to be of high importance, and an integrated mental health system could be seen as the overarching goal.
- Rethink – or the directions in Rethink – still resonate, and there is significant support to seeing the goals achieved for Tasmania, regardless of who wins the state election.
- Consumers and carers priorities indicate an interest in integration and improving experience for those accessing services.
- Consideration of how other areas impact and influence Rethink must remain at the forefront of discussion, e.g., housing and drug and alcohol related issues.

A summary of the key messages that were agreed upon were:

- More unites us than divides us.
- An integrated mental health system is number 1.
- Improving experience should be a basis for anything we're doing. The way to achieve this is by improving access and support.
- Don't lose sight of how achievement in one area will provide benefits/outcomes in others.

The workshop was a valuable component in the development of an election campaign with the next steps being:

- Collating considerations, ideas, key messages, and researching potential solutions to address the needs identified.
- Consultations with members, the MHCT Board, and key stakeholders, to refine ideas and proposed 'solutions'.
- Developing an election campaign to deliver to politicians, members and the general public.

**Connie Digolis, CEO**

**Mental Health Council of Tasmania**

**Phone: 03 6224 9222**

**Mobile: 0418 431 995**

(edited)

## Peer Workforce Organisation Feasibility Study



Private Mental Health Consumer  
Carer Network (Australia) Limited

*engage, empower, enable choice in private mental health*

The Private Mental Health Consumer Carer Network (Australia) Limited has been funded by the Commonwealth Government through the National Mental Health Commission to

undertake an 18-month feasibility study into the establishment of a peer workforce member organisation. The Network has formed a consortium with the National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum (NMHCCF) and the National Mental Health Commission (NMHC) to determine if a member-based organisation can bring the peer workforce together.

Peer work is a growing occupational group in the mental health workforce. However, many peer workers are employed report feeling alienated and alone. Many function with little support, and there appears to be little opportunity for mentoring from peer colleagues. All other mental health professionals have organisations that promote the skills and capabilities of their discipline and advocate strongly for their role within the broader mental health workforce.

The Network Deputy Chief Executive, Mr. Patrick Hardwick, said that, "Currently the peer workforce in Australia does not have this level of structured representation or support, although it is easy to see the benefit that such an opportunity would provide. A member based organisation for peer workers could similarly offer a clear recognition for workers in this role, support them in their work, and advocate for their collective interests as required."

The Project will be:

- Undertaking an Australian and international review of peer workforce best practice.
- Scoping for a better understanding of the peer workforce.
- Conducting workshops in all Australian capital cities.
- Collaborating and communicating with other organisations in supporting peer workers.
- Developing a model for a National Peer Organisation.
- Supporting the development of educational material focused on the employer.

(edited)



### The Hottest Auction In Town Is Coming!

Flourish is planning to host an on-line auction in February 2018 to raise funds to assist with training and other activities. Therefore, Flourish is looking for donations of suitable items to auction. The items can be new or old, large or small, antique or modern. We just require that any item be in good to fair condition. For more information contact Flourish.

Phone: 62231952 BH or email: [admin@flourishtas.org.au](mailto:admin@flourishtas.org.au)

## Regional Mental Health Group Meetings

The last round for the year will be held in November. The dates and venues are listed below.

### North West

Tuesday 14 November, 1.30pm - 3.30pm

Wellways, 1/41 Mount Street, Burnie

### North

Wednesday 15 November, 1.30pm - 3.30pm

Anglicare, 116 Elizabeth Street, Launceston

### South

Thursday 16 November, 1.30pm - 3.30pm

TasCOSS, Meeting Room 1, Ground Floor

McDougall Building, Ellerslie Road, Battery Point

If you would like to offer up your time as guest speaker, please get in touch with the Member Services Officer, Brittany Szlezak on 6224 9222.

Source: Mental Health Council of Tasmania



### Board Vacancies: Richmond Fellowship Tasmania

Richmond Fellowship Tasmania is a globally affiliated, not for profit organisation providing residential and community support services across Tasmania for people with severe and recurrent mental illness. Our primary focus is working alongside people to achieve their recovery goals and dreams. We strive for a collaborative approach with the people we work for and the communities we work within. We

recognise that people are expert in their own lives. We are people helping people. RFT is seeking forward thinking and motivated individuals to join its Volunteer Board. We are seeking interest from experienced and interested individuals in the areas of Governance, Strategy, Finance, Housing, Psychology, Human Resources, Management, Quality Assurance, Risk Management and Lived Experience. EOI close 15 September. For a confidential discussion or to express an interest, please forward your resume outlining qualifications and experience to Ian Munday (Chairperson), at [admin@rftas.org.au](mailto:admin@rftas.org.au)

**Got something to say? Do you have an event you want to promote? Do you want to tell people about your journey towards better mental health? Maybe you have an update on a project you are working on? Whatever it is, we at Flourish would love to hear about it for our newsletter. Check out details on our Comments And Submissions page.**

**MENTAL HEALTH WEEK 2017 OFFICIAL LAUNCH**  
**22nd SEPTEMBER | FRANKLIN SQUARE | 10AM-12PM**



**STRONGER**  **TOGETHER**  
**MENTAL HEALTH WEEK 8-14 OCTOBER**

**JOIN US TO HELP LAUNCH MENTAL HEALTH WEEK IN STYLE...**

**THE THEME THIS YEAR IS STRONGER TOGETHER SO INVITE A FRIEND, A WORKMATE, IN FACT BRING TEN!! ITS ALL ABOUT PROMOTING THE WEEK AND ENCOURAGING PEOPLE TO GET INVOLVED!**

**FREE ACTIVITIES AND ENTERTAINMENT**  
**WE ARE ENCOURAGING EVERYONE TO DRESS UP AS A 'MENTAL HEALTH SUPER HERO!'**  
**PRIZES FOR THE BEST COSTUME ON THE DAY!**  
**FOR MORE INFO CALL 62249222 OR [cd@pbro@mhc.t.org](mailto:cd@pbro@mhc.t.org)**

SUPPORTED BY



## Mental Health Week 2017: Stronger Together

Mental Health Week (8 – 14 October) is part of a national mental health promotion campaign held in October each year. It aims to engage communities in activities that promote mental health and wellbeing. MHW also seeks to raise awareness and understanding about mental health issues and how they affect the lives of people in our community. The Mental Health Council Tasmania would like to encourage everyone to be involved. The theme this year is ‘Stronger Together’. The concept behind the theme this year is embracing the idea of communities working together to:

- Build resilience
- Support each other through tough times
- Celebrate diversity and promote the things we can do to maintain our mental health
- Encourage people to seek help when they need it

Another aspect to the Stronger Together theme is that we all know someone in our networks and communities that is a mental health hero. Not all super heroes wear capes or fight crime. A mental health hero is the person, or people, that encourage and support other members of the group and are the glue that holds that community together. A mental health hero might have a powerful story of recovery and resilience around how they maintain their mental health every day. This Mental Health Week we will be highlighting some mental health heroes in the Tasmanian community and we encourage others to do the same. (edited)

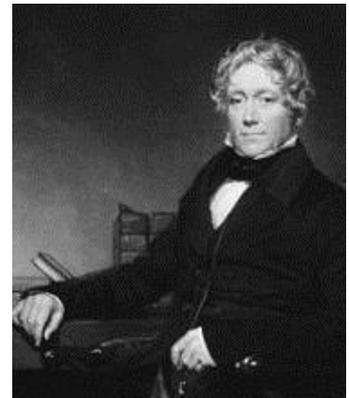
Source: Mental Health Council Tasmania

## Did You Know...



During the French Revolution in 1794, Philippe Pinel, a French physician who developed a more humane approach to the custody and care of psychiatric patients, implored the Revolutionary Council to grant people with a mental illness the same rights as listed in the revolution's ‘Declaration of the Rights of Man’, i.e., Liberty and equality. Pinel is also credited with freeing asylum patients from iron shackles secured to walls as if they were

dogs. Sixty-one years later in 1856, John Conolly, the superintendent of the Middlesex Lunatic Asylum at Hanwell in England, published a paper, ‘The Total Abolition of Personal Restraint in The Treatment of the Insane’. Conolly’s efforts at mental health reform eventually led to the abolition of mechanical restraint in all English asylums.



Images: Philippe Pinel & John Conolly. Source: Encyclopedia Britannica

## **Flourish Board Update**

The following information is to let people know of some changes and developments. It is not a formal account of the minutes from a Board meeting.

We now have a full Board and it is an impressive skills-based group of people. It includes consumers. It also has experience and expertise in governance, not for profit leadership, community links, legal and financial management.

We have had a thorough consultation process and a review of Flourish structures and processes. Consequently, we are in the process of making changes which will:

- Invite consumers to become registered members of Flourish
- Introduce voting rights for registered members
- Require each regional Flourish Advisory Group (FLAG) to elect a member of the Board

We will then invite members to take part in a nomination and voting process to elect three regional Board members

We will have up to 10 board members; three elected by the FLAGs and up to seven appointed by Board make up a skills-based Board.

This will establish a formal register which will be kept in confidential status. This will also become a data base of valuable and important information which (without names) can inform stakeholders. Registered members will be entitled to vote at Annual and Special General Meetings. An application form will be forwarded soon.

**Harry Wilsdon**

**August 2017**

**If any article in this issue of VOICES causes distress and you need to talk to someone, you can contact any of the following support services.**

**Lifeline: 131114**

**Wellways: 1300 111 500**

**Headspace: 03 6231 2927**

**Kids Helpline: 1800 551800**

**MensLine Australia: 1300 789978**

**Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467**

**Mental Health Help Line: 1800 332 388**

## **Comments And Submissions**

Newsletter content does not necessarily reflect the views of the Flourish Board or staff. Flourish is not responsible for, and refutes all liability for, damages of any kind arising out of use, reference to, or reliance on any information contained within the newsletter. There is no guarantee the information provided in the newsletter is correct, complete, or up-to-date. Although links may be provided to Internet resources, including websites, Flourish is not responsible for the accuracy or content contained in these sites.

## **Newsletter Guidelines**

Submissions should be written or typed articles. A maximum of 500 words per story applies. More than one article 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. Contributors may be anonymous, use only their first name, or use their full name.

**Deadline for submissions for Vol. 2 No. 9 October 2017 is Monday 25 September**

## **Flourish Participation**

Membership of Flourish is free to all Tasmanian's who have a lived experience of mental illness. Participating in Flourish activities can provide you with information about mental health through our newsletter, website, Facebook page, and regional forums where people with an interest in mental health can meet and share their experiences and ideas. To participate, complete the attached form, and agree to the Flourish Code of Conduct. If you would like to discuss Flourish participation in more detail, please phone our office on 03 6223 1952 or email [admin@flourishtas.org.au](mailto:admin@flourishtas.org.au)

## **Flourish Code of Conduct**

The Code of Conduct guides all Flourish members. The term 'member' refers to employees, Board members, volunteers, Regional Advisory Group (RAG) members, Consumer Representative Consultants (CRS), and anyone undertaking work-experience. Flourish expects a high standard of behaviour from members and there is an expectation that members will conduct themselves in a professional manner. This code underpins other policies, e.g., Anti-Discrimination Act. The following principles form the Code of Conduct:

Members work in a professional manner, adhering to relevant professional and organisational codes of ethics, and working with respect, fairness and integrity at all times.

Workplace Health and Safety and the Anti- Discrimination Act are adhered to.

Flourish policy and procedures such as Anti-Discrimination and Harassment, Complaints, Privacy and Confidentiality are adhered to.

Members are respectful of colleagues and work to resolve conflict in an appropriate manner.

Members conduct themselves professionally and do not act in a manner that might jeopardise the safety of others or themselves or bring the name of Flourish into disrepute.

Members show due care when using all assets and property belonging to Flourish.

Members are aware of diversity in the workplace and are respectful of others.

Members are aware of harassment and bullying issues, discrimination and sexual harassment.

The Code of Conduct mandates the need for appropriate working relationships and the resolution of conflict in a safe and respectful manner. Where conflict is not resolvable members should refer to the Grievance Policy or the Bullying and Harassment policy.

I understand and agree to abide by the Flourish Code of Conduct.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

## Flourish Participation Application Form

Application date:

First Name:

Last Name:

Gender:

Date of Birth (optional)

Phone:

Mobile:

Email:

Preferred method of contact:

I agree to Flourish disclosing my contact details to other members for the purposes of contacting me about relevant matters (circle).                      YES                      NO

Do you have any special needs that Flourish should be aware of?

What activities would you like to participate in?

- |  |                   |       |       |
|--|-------------------|-------|-------|
| 1. Flourish Action Group (FLAG)          |                   | YES   | NO    |
| Which group?                             | WEST    NORTHWEST | NORTH | SOUTH |
| 2. Consumer Representation Service (CRS) |                   | YES   | NO    |
| 3. Volunteering for Flourish             |                   | YES   | NO    |

By signing this application for membership, you have read and agree to abide by the Flourish Code of Conduct. This is a requirement for participation in Flourish activities.

Signature of applicant:

**OFFICE USE ONLY**

- Application processed (date)
- Information on register (date)
- Letter sent to applicant (date)