

Spotlight on the issues that matter

Hobart community advocacy forum

16 May 2017

Wellways Australia has a vision for society's future, in which people experiencing mental ill health and psychosocial disability, their families and friends, are understood, accepted and have the same life opportunities as other citizens.

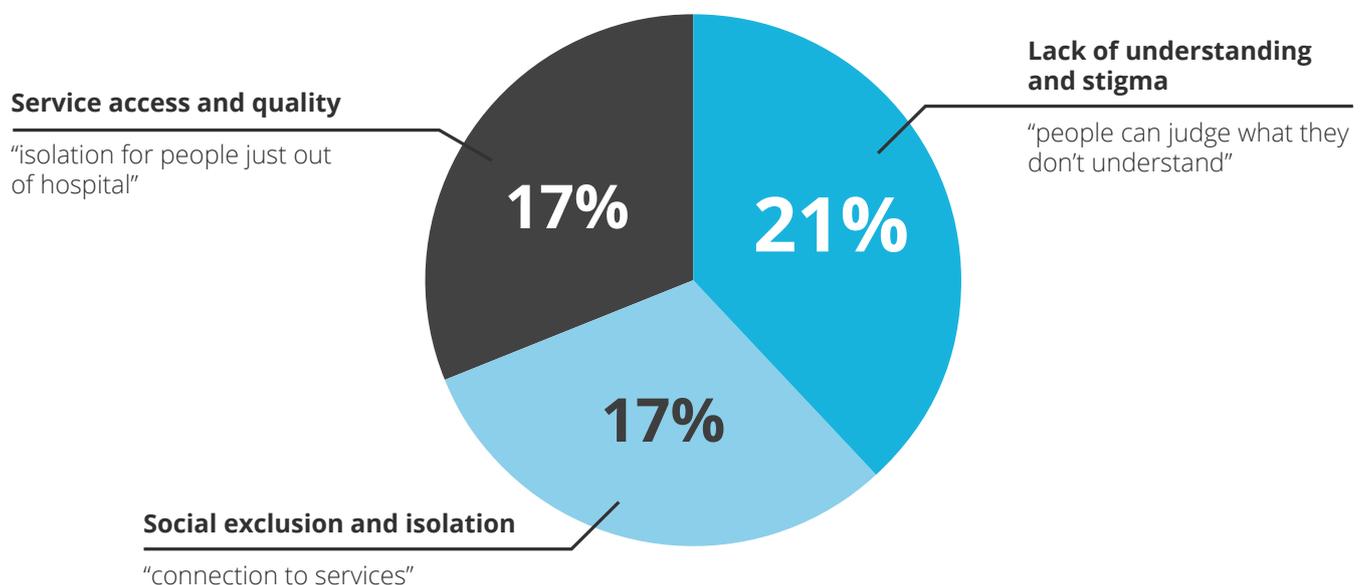
Community-centred advocacy is key to Wellways' advocacy framework and strategy. We work closely with regions where we have a service presence to assist the development of local advocacy and community inclusion activity – to influence and improve service provision, to reduce stigma/discrimination and promote equitable access to resources, and social inclusion.



Total: 33 people attended the Hobart forum

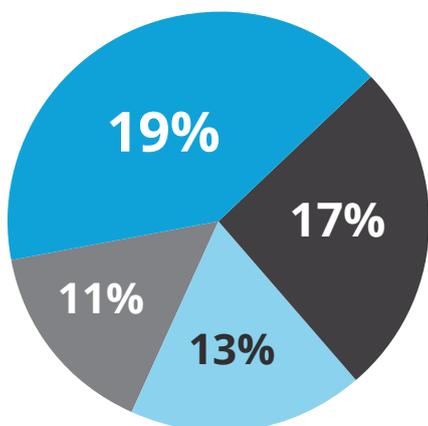
What are the important issues for you?

There were 46 responses highlighting diverse issues. The top 3 issues represent 55% of all responses.



What are the important issues in your community?

There were 52 respondents who identified diverse issues. The top 4 issues represented 60% of all responses.



Issue 1: Service access and quality (19%)

"Access to MH services (ASAP – Clinical)"

Issue 2: Stigma (17%)

"There is still fear and stigma which prevents good outcomes for people with mental illness"

Issue 3: Social issues (13%)

"Families being strained/severed due to adult children remaining in family home due to lack of suitable housing."

Issue 4: Community understanding (11%)

"Pretending that suicide doesn't exist, so people feel isolated and uncomfortable reaching out."

Forum attendees formed working groups focussing on creating advocacy responses to 4 issues:

Issue 1:

Service integration

Issue 2:

Stigma, social change movement

Issue 3:

Families/carers lived experience

Issue 4:

Education and awareness raising: child and youth services

Outcomes

Our community advocacy forums:

- Identify the key mental health issues for individuals and the community
- Empower people and communities with knowledge, resources and strategies to join together and create the change they want to see in their community
- Foster inclusion in all aspects of community life for people with mental health challenges and their families
- Assist Wellways in policy reform and legislation at a local, state and commonwealth level.

Advocacy Membership

Wellways' advocacy mission is to identify and address the key issues relating to mental health recovery and social inclusion. Advocacy members contribute to improving mental health systems and educating the community so that every person can access the support and understanding they need, and the dignity and respect they deserve. We listen to what you care about and what you think will make a difference, and we work with you to make sure government gets the message.

To have your say, become a Wellways member

<https://www.wellways.org/get-involved/membership>