

MHiMA National CaLD Consumer and Carer Working Group (NCCCWG)

Annual Issues and Opportunities Workshop, May 2016

Presentation Topics and Abstracts:

1. Human Rights - 'Walk in our shoes' – *Sonia Di Mezza*

All human beings have human rights. They apply to everyone by virtue of being human and are inalienable. Having mental health challenges can create significant obstacles to being able to access those human rights. When you experience mental health issues as well as come from a CaLD background, this can create a double disadvantage, making it even harder to access your rights. Australia is a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In order to be able to access their rights, tools need to be implemented as an effective means to access those rights. Over 25% of the Australian population was born overseas. Despite the large numbers of people from CaLD backgrounds with mental health issues, few are able to access the specialist mental health services that they need. Stigma, languages and cultural issues are just some of the obstacles towards achieving access.

One way to bridge the gap between disadvantage and human rights is via the effective use of interpreters. Specialist services are needed, whereby service providers have an in-depth understanding of CaLD issues so that cultural barriers that may create misunderstandings and miscommunications can be overcome. By accessing such tools targeting the CaLD community facing mental health challenges, we can take effective steps to ensure that they are able to access their human rights. Ultimately, our communities are not seeking entitlement, but rather empowerment and equity with others in Australian society. This talk will present ways we can work together towards supporting CaLD people with mental health issues to access the support they may need.

2. CaLD Voice in MH Reform – Meaningful engagement with people from CaLD backgrounds – *Elida Meadows*

Increasingly, we see that governments at all levels are affirming their intention to improve CaLD engagement strategies. To avoid this intention from becoming and remaining a tokenistic gesture, particular efforts must be made to engage those considered 'hardest to reach', including people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities. The needs of people from CaLD backgrounds are perceived to be treated on the periphery of mainstream programs and services instead of being an intrinsic part of the planning and design at the outset to ensure equitable and appropriate services. In this climate of reform, engagement with people from CaLD backgrounds needs to be inclusive, meaningful and truly person-centred.



National CaLD Consumer and Carer Working Group

3. CaLD Men's MH and Well-being – *Damir Trokic*

The specific mental health and well-being needs of refugee men differ from those of the general population. This presentation will discuss these differences, the barriers between the general and migrant, multicultural and refugee populations and ways we can address and improve the health of refugees and men of CaLD backgrounds.

4. CaLD Issues in Parenting, fostering and adopting – *Angela Rao, Chandi Powell and Dianne Ioannou*

Parenting & culture – *Angela Rao - WA*

The experience of coming to a new country, can be very difficult in terms of fitting in when you don't understand the culture of the new country. Learning and adopting to the new ways of life, can be a daily challenge. As a parent it can take time and patience to support a family member to adopt new values.

Brita Futures – *Chandi Powell - QLD*

Brita Futures Building Resilience in Translational Australians is a program for promoting resilient life skills in children, young people and adults from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

https://www.health.qld.gov.au/metrosouthmentalhealth/qtmhc/brita_futures.asp

Mirabel Foundation – Permanent Care, Foster and Adoptive Families – *Dianna Ioannou - VIC*

The Mirabel Foundation, works with children who have lost their parents to alcohol and drug abuse. Many challenges are created through adoption and the necessary partnership that needs to be created with foster parents.

<http://www.mirabelfoundation.org.au/>

5. Defining Recovery - Applying a CaLD Lens – *Nevena Simic*

This presentation explores what recovery means from the culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) perspective and how it is different from the mainstream definition of recovery. For people who have experienced trauma and/or loss and grief through immigration and the resettlement process recovery can be a long, long journey. Quote (NCCCWG member) - "If you are not ready for recovery, then it will not happen, and that will have ongoing effects on the person, the next generation and generation beyond that".

We hope our stories of loss, grief and trauma can influence and raise awareness in those seeking to better understand the nature of wellness of people from CaLD backgrounds.

Panel Discussion and Q&A

Presenters will respond to questions sparked from the presentations and also cover other topics around CaLD MH Reform agenda and where CaLD/NCCCWG sit in that.



National CALD Consumer and Carer Working Group

For further information, please contact the MHiMA Project Team:

Phone: (02) 6285 3100

Email: info@mhaustralia.org



National CALD Consumer and Carer Working Group