

Working Groups for the MHCA's NDIS Capacity Building Project

The Mental Health Council of Australia is planning to convene a number of working groups to examine the following issues identified as important to the mental health sector in more detail.

The working groups would meet via teleconference (at regular intervals, the frequency of which would be decided by members) and could exchange information/ideas electronically in between these meetings to progress deliberations on key issues.

The working groups could then come together for a face-to-face meeting towards the end of 2013 to exchange ideas and information about resolutions and outcomes in relation to DisabilityCare Australia.

The MHCA has developed the following list of issues that the working groups may wish to examine and provide advice to the Council about.

1) Scheme design and administrative arrangements

The scheme design and administrative arrangements working group will develop terms of reference for the group and may wish to examine and provide advice to the MHCA on the following issues:

- Identification of key concerns with scheme design that may limit access to DisabilityCare Australia by people with psycho-social disability both currently and in the future.
- Mapping of programs and services considered 'in scope' or that are being transferred to DisabilityCare Australia as 'in-kind' contributions to the scheme by the Commonwealth and State/Territory Governments (as detailed in the bi-lateral agreements).
- Future access to programs that are fully in-scope.
- The adequacy or otherwise of the unit pricing as it stands currently.
- Examining opportunities that may exist for affecting change to the design of the scheme to ensure it provides the most effective ongoing support possible for people with psycho-social disability.
- What tier 2 referral pathways might look like and how people not eligible for tier 3 supports will benefit.
- Developing a satisfactory understanding of early intervention from the perspective of psycho-social disability.
- Additional insights from the launch-sites.

2) Eligibility and assessment

The eligibility and assessment working group will develop terms of reference for the group and may wish to examine and provide advice to the MHCA on the following issues:

- The assessment tool(s) being used to determine whether or not a person meets the (psycho-social) disability requirements for eligibility for the scheme.
- Alternative assessment and screening tools that may be more appropriate for determining whether the level of functional impairment that a person with psycho-social disability has is sufficient to be eligible for tier 3 supports from DisabilityCare Australia.
- The role that carers can play in the assessment process, in particular in situations where the person needing support may not be fully conscious of the severity of their impairment of functioning.
- Identifying/compiling case studies that may help us gain a better understanding of who is likely to be deemed eligible/ineligible for tier 3 and early intervention supports on the basis of their circumstances.
- How permanency is defined in practice and how the language used by assessors could be tailored to meet the objectives of recovery oriented practice.
- Determining the referral pathways that exist to enable people with psycho-social disability to access DisabilityCare Australia via the 'wide gateway'.

3) Monitoring and evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation working group will develop terms of reference for the group and may wish to examine and provide advice to the MHCA on the following issues:

- Developing an 'early warning system' in the launch-sites to identify issues/problems related to access requests and service offers for people seeking support for psycho-social disability.
- Monitoring the types of service offers that people receive when determined eligible for tier 3 supports for psycho-social disability and where people are referred to DCA from.
- Monitoring the level and effectiveness of communication between DCA, other Government departments/agencies, service providers and consumers and carers in the launch-sites.
- How the mental health sector and peak bodies can contribute the evaluation process, including accessing information as it emerges through DCA.



4) Service quality

The service quality working group will develop terms of reference for the group and may wish to examine and provide advice to the MHCA on the following issues:

- Monitoring registered DCA providers and tracking how referral pathways are operating in the launch-sites.
- Monitoring the quality of the service offers that eligible participants receive.
- Determining how to support consumers and carers who are not satisfied with the quality of services they receive to access the complaints/appeals process established by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.
- Determining how to capture and respond to consumer and carer feedback about the quality of services funded by DisabilityCare Australia in the launch-sites.

5) DCA participants from diverse groups (including ATSI)

The DCA participants from diverse groups working group will develop terms of reference for the group and may wish to examine and provide advice to the MHCA on the following issues:

- How DisabilityCare Australia will reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and engage in a planning conversation.
- The compatibility of Aboriginal concepts of emotional and social wellbeing and sickness with the language of DisabilityCare Australia.
- The impact of service delivery gaps and shortfalls in regional, rural and remote Australia on the ability of people to exercise 'choice and control'.
- How different concepts of mental illness, its causes and solutions held by people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities may be taken into account or act as barriers to participation in DisabilityCare Australia.
- The impact of stigma on help-seeking behaviour among people from particular communities (including issues of disclosure within own cultural groups).
- Identifying strategies that are (or should be) put in place to ensure DisabilityCare Australia offices are as welcoming as possible for people from diverse groups.



6) Supported decision-making

The supported decision-making working group will develop terms of reference for the group and may wish to examine and provide advice to the MHCA on the following issues:

- The extent to which best practice supported decision-making can align with NDIS rules outlining the role of 'nominees' in the context of DisabilityCare Australia.
- How the views of carers, supporters and existing service providers will be taken into account in situations where a person may not be in a position to determine the supports that will best facilitate ongoing recovery.
- What role advance care directives could play in a participant's support plan?
- Resolving the potential conflict between compulsory treatment orders and exercising 'maximum choice and control'.
- Aligning supported decision-making with the overarching objective of enabling people receiving tier 3 support to exercise maximum choice and control.

7) Organisational readiness

The organisational readiness working group will develop terms of reference for the group and may wish to examine and provide advice to the MHCA on the following issues:

- Securing funding to assist organisations, in particular smaller community mental health organisations, to effectively manage the transition from block funding to a purchaser-provider model.
- Opportunities that exist for modelling the potential impact of arrears-based purchaser-provider models on service viability.
- Mapping the level of knowledge that exists within the sector about the potential impact of changes to administrative and funding arrangements for providers after current contracts have expired.
- Assessing the range of needs of organisations to enable them to get ready to fully participate in DisabilityCare Australia.
- How to establish effective interagency networks (at a local area level) to collaboratively build the capacity of organisations to participate in the scheme.



8) Workforce issues

The workforce issues working group will develop terms of reference for the group and may wish to examine and provide advice to the MHCA on the following issues:

- Mapping current job roles in the mental health and psycho-social disability, rehabilitation and support sectors.
- Determining which body might be best placed to map current and projected workforce needs to ensure adequate support for people with psycho-social disability through DisabilityCare Australia providers.
- Building the capacity of consumers and carers to effectively utilise the option of employing their own workers using individualised funding packages.
- Determining what resources consumers and carers may need to enable them to exercise maximum choice and control over services and employees that will help them realise the aspirations and goals in their participant plans.