

24 APRIL 2018

## Project Management Group – optimal psychosocial support services in the NDIS

The Project Management Group met by teleconference on 24 April 2018.

### Attendees:

Liz Crowther, Wellways (Chair)  
Kerry Hawkins, Carer representative  
Dr Sarah Pollock, Mind Australia – from 3.20pm  
Tony Stevenson, MiFA  
Jenny Hall, Neami National – until 4.35pm  
Mark Orr, Flourish Australia  
Judi Higgin, New Horizons  
Alan Murnane, Star Health  
Andrew Young, Aftercare  
David McGrath, McGrath Consulting  
Debbie Kaplan, McGrath Consulting  
Josh Fear, Mental Health Australia  
Belinda Highmore, Mental Health Australia  
Kath Sequoia, Mental Health Australia

### Apologies

Arthur Papakotsias, Neami National (Deputy Chair)  
Debbie Hamilton, Consumer representative  
Damian Ferrie, Star Health

### Project progress report

#### *Data*

- David McGrath provided an update on data integration and analysis and described the records he has received from providers for various programs. The data set is sufficiently large (54,000 records) and will show patterns for the NDIS cohort.

#### *Project content development*

- David McGrath described his next tasks. Outcome domains will be mapped. An activity list will be developed. A weighting structure will be applied to differentiate service items that are similar to another service but are different in their complexity. It is anticipated that for some items in the existing NDIS price guide definitions will need to be changed. The Project Expert Group will be provided with a number of options as result of analysis of patterns of activity for different cohorts.



### *Update on the Project Expert Group*

- It was noted that Prof Richard Newton is unavailable for the first two meetings of the Project Expert Group, and consequently his input at later meetings would have a diminished value. The Project Management Group discussed finding a replacement in sufficient time for the person to attend the next meeting of the Project Expert Group on 8 May 2018. It was agreed that Damian Ferrie will approach Simon Stafrace, Program Director of Psychiatry at The Alfred. As a fall back, Belinda Highmore will also approach the College of Psychiatrists for a nominee from its NDIS group.

### **Red Cross Involvement**

- The Red Cross is able to provide in-kind support by making their venues, and those of their corporate partners, available for stakeholder engagement activities.

### **NDIA engagement strategy**

- The meeting with Gerry Naughtin on 7 May 2018 will be used to plan engagement with the relevant areas of the NDIA on each element of the project.
- The meeting noted Mental Health Australia has included information about the project in its report to the NDIA on the pathway experience project – people who were consulted on the pathway experience identified that poor support packages are fundamental to the overall NDIS experience. This has also been identified in correspondence between the NDIA and providers about the lack of support coordination in plans.

### **Sector engagement strategy**

- The PMG noted the discussion between Mental Health Australia and State Peaks and CMHA were very helpful in:
  1. shaping the draft communique about the project. Mental Health Australia will provide another communique for clearance
  2. Suggesting a round of consultations with providers, organised by State Peaks, to “sense check” the outputs of the project, as means of ensuring their contribution to the project.
- In addition to the activities listed in the proposed strategy, the meeting identified that the consumer advisory groups of project partners presented opportunities for project partners to further engage the sector.
- The meeting noted the estimated costs of the proposed sector engagement strategy and agreed that project partners could make up the funding shortfall. Mental Health Australia will provide a detailed schedule of activities to support the strategy, with firmer costings.
- With regard to the information to be included on the project webpage, the meeting agree that the outcomes of Project Management Group meetings should be included on the website.
- The meeting considered a request from CMHA for a State Peak representative to be included on the Project Expert Group. Liz Crowther and Kerry Hawkins declared their positions as chair and deputy chair of CHMA respectively and recused themselves



from the discussion. The meeting noted that the Project Expert Group was designed to bring specific expertise to the project and therefore the question is “does it have the right expertise?” which the meeting agreed it did. It was also noted that some CEOs of the project partners are on the boards of State Peaks, and therefore members of the Project Management Group can be conduits to the membership of State Peaks. The meeting agreed that CHMA be asked for thoughts on how the members of the Project Management Group might strengthen engagement with State Peaks.

### **Post project advocacy activities**

- The meeting agreed to proceed with the activities as per the proposal described in the paper.

### **NDIS pricing discussion**

- The meeting provided the forum for open discussion on issues about pricing, and noted that the McKinsey pricing review did not take account of the industrial factors that determine the cost of psychosocial services, or very many of the other issues submitted to it by providers and advocacy groups.
- The discussion recognised that as yet, no method exists to identify when supply is disappearing and the extent of market failure.

The next meeting of the Project Management Group will be held by teleconference on Tuesday, 22 May 2018.

