Mental Health Australia

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National Mental Health Consumer & Carer Forum

# Annual Issues & Opportunities Workshop Report

MAY 2018

Mentally healthy people,
Mentally healthy communities

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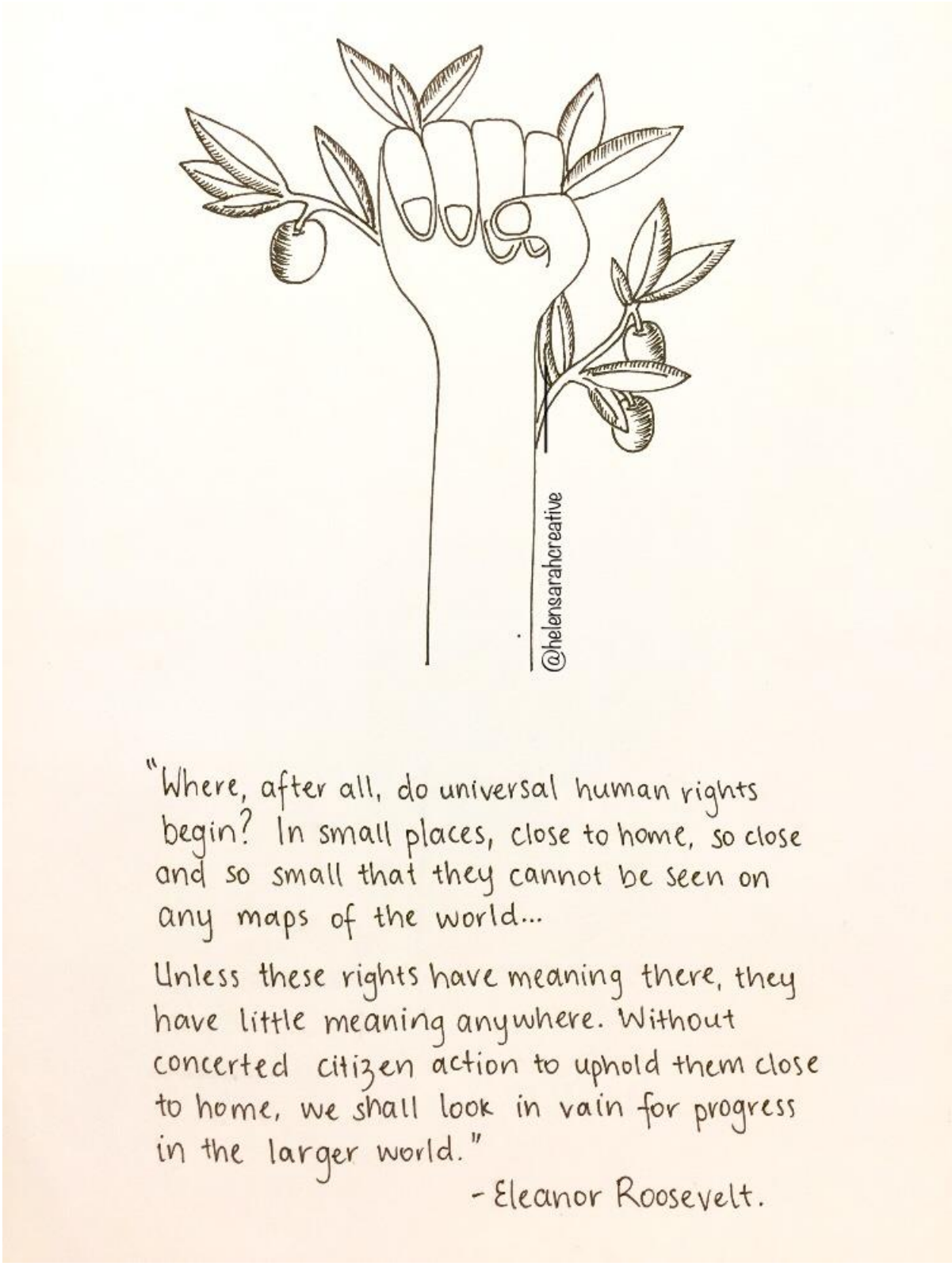



*Drawings throughout this report were created by Helen Pepper, workshop participant and National Register member. Find out more about Helen's work on Instagram, @helensarahcreative*

# Introduction

## Annual Issues & Opportunities Workshop

Each year, Mental Health Australia hosts an Annual Issues and Opportunities Workshop for members of the National Register of Mental Health Consumer and Carer Representatives (National Register) and the National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum (NMHCCF).

These two-day workshops aim to further develop the representative skills of mental health consumers and carers already participating in national policy initiatives. In particular, the workshops are designed to develop representatives' advocacy, policy development and leadership skills. The workshops also provide important networking opportunities for representatives.

The 2018 Annual Issues and Opportunities Workshop was held in Melbourne on Thursday 24 and Friday 25 May 2018 and was attended by 55 mental health consumer and carer representatives.

The theme 'Advance the consumer & carer perspective through a human rights lens' provided a thought-provoking program and opportunities to advance participants voices as consumers and carers.

An evaluation survey was sent to all participants following the 2018 Workshop, which 38% of attendees responded to. These responses have helped gauge the level of participant satisfaction with each workshop session as well as participants' reflections and insights.

This report provides highlights from the two day event and a summary of the key themes and outcomes raised by mental health consumers and carers during the workshop sessions or through the subsequent evaluation survey.

## 2018 Workshop Attendees

### National Register of Mental Health Consumer & Carer Representatives

The National Register is a pool of 60 trained mental health consumer and carer representatives from across Australia. National Register members work at the national level to provide a strong consumer and carer voice in the mental health sector. The National Register is a Mental Health Australia project.

### National Mental Health Consumer & Carer Forum

The NMHCCF is a combined national voice for mental health consumers and carers. The NMHCCF listen, learn, influence and advocate in matters of mental health reform. Mental Health Australia auspices and has a formal Memorandum of Understanding with the NMHCCF.

## 2018 Workshop Working Group

The 2018 Workshop was informed by a Working Group of consumer and carer representatives, who helped shape the theme and agenda for the workshop.

The agenda was designed to include a combination of presentations by invited guest speakers as well as networking opportunities and table activities. The Working Group also ensured that some light-hearted moments were incorporated into each day, and that a chill out room was made available to participants over the course of the workshop.

The Working Group developed the theme of "Advance the consumer & carer perspective through a human rights lens' for this year's workshop, which provided a focus throughout the two-day event.

Working group members included:

Noel Muller
*Consumer Representative - National Register and NMHCCF Member*

Ailsa Rayner
*Consumer Representative - National Register Member*

Norm Wotherspoon
*Consumer Representative – NMHCCF Member*

Kieran Booth
*Carer Representative - National Register Member*

Peter Heggie
*Carer Representative – NMHCCF Member*

Sarah Sutton
*Carer Representative - National Register Member*

Rachel Lovelock (Carer Representative – National Register Member) and Jo Farmer (Consumer representative – National Register member) were also on the working group during the earlier planning stages.

## Facilitator

The facilitator for the 2018 Annual Issues and Opportunities Workshop was De Backman-Hoyle. De is a professional speaker and experienced facilitator who previously led the 2016 Annual Issues and Opportunities Workshop. She is an active mental health carer representative, and was formerly a Co-Chair and representative on the NMHCCF.

# Day 1: Thursday 24 May 2018

## Agenda

| | |
|---|---|
| 09:55 – 10:05 | Welcome and Brief Opening Comment<br>De Backman-Hoyle, Principal, Inspired Workforce Performers® |
| 10:05 – 10:10 | Acknowledgement of Country |
| 10:10 – 10:20 | Acknowledgement<br>Those that have gone before us and whose work we continue to build upon |
| 10:20 – 10:25 | Purpose of the Workshop<br>Build on existing Capabilities |
| 10:25 – 10:55 | Guest Speaker<br>Lynne Coulson Barr, Victorian Mental Health Complaints Commissioner |
| 10:55 – 11:10 | Our Shared Focus – Building our Capabilities and Capacities<br>Mental Health Advocacy and Representation |
| 11:10 – 11:45 | Human Rights Objectives<br>How and When Human Rights can assist your Advocacy and Representation work |
| 11:45 – 12:15 | The Power of Many – The Risk of Fractures<br>How does this combined group maximise its potential? |
| 12:15 – 13:15 | Lunch |
| 13:15 – 13:20 | Announcements |
| 13:20 – 13:45 | Group Activity<br>Peer to Peer Soapbox |
| 13:45 – 14:45 | The Big Issues NDIS & PHNs Part One<br>Guest Speaker<br>Christopher Carter, CEO PHN North Western Melbourne |
| 14:45 – 15:05 | Afternoon Break |
| 15:05 – 15:10 | Announcements |
| 15:10 – 16:00 | Hypothetical<br>What would you do? |
| 16:00 – 16:50 | Table Activity<br>State & Territory Networking |
| 16:50 – 17:00 | End of Day One<br>Announcements and Updates |

## Guest speaker: Lynne Coulson Barr, Victorian Mental Health Complaints Commissioner

Lynne Coulson Barr is the first and current Victorian Mental Health Complaints Commissioner (MHCC), and in this presentation she outlined her role and the work of the MHCC.

As well as providing background information on the MHCC, Lynne also discussed the national, state and legal context in which her office operates. Some points that were highlighted include:

- The MHCC receives over 2,000 complaints and nearly 7,000 calls each year, providing a wealth of previously unavailable data and information
- Across 2015-17, the MHCC made around 200 recommendations for improvements to mental health services
- Complaint outcomes are achieved through a process of acknowledgement, answers, actions and apology

In addition, Lynne gave some examples of rights based complaints that the MHCC has received, including 'the right to communicate' with respect to confiscation of mobile phones, and the 'right to be safe' in the context of sexual safety in mental health units.

### Reflections

86% of Evaluation Survey respondents reported being very satisfied or satisfied with Lynne Coulson Barr's presentation.

*"Left me with a vision for New South Wales"*

*"Lynne & the MHCC are amazing"*

## Group activity: Peer to peer soapbox

Workshop participants were invited to give a short presentation on a topic of their choice, as a way to share news and opportunities of interest to their peers.

Michael Burge discussed the Mountains of Hope Peer Network (MoHPN) that he helped to establish in Toowoomba. The MoHPN aims to support the peer workforce, and workers registered with the network will have credentials and meet selection criteria.

Debbie Spink informed workshop participants that she will be speaking at an upcoming Primary Health Network (PHN) forum about co-design practices, and sought their views to take to the forum.

Ãine Tierney and David Lovegrove discussed a new report by the Mental Health Community Coalition ACT which is due mid-2018, and looks at the impact of the NDIS for people living with mental illness and psychosocial disability in the ACT.

## Reflections

71% of Evaluation Survey respondents reported being very satisfied or satisfied with the peer to peer soapbox.

*"It's good to hear about what other reps are up to"*

## The big issues (Part 1): PHNs

### Christopher Carter, CEO PHN North Western Melbourne

Christopher invited workshop participants to form three groups based on their level of engagement with Primary Health Networks (PHNs), and the groups then had the opportunity to ask him questions. The following groups were formed:

*Not currently engaged with PHNs:*

- This group asked Christopher about his organisation, and he explained that his PHN is a non-government organisation with an independent board and committees which give strategic advice. The PHN has a budget of around $50 million with around 80 staff.

*Somewhat involved with PHNs:*

- This group asked Christopher about his PHN's use of co-design and peer workers. He indicated that they are still getting established, and have begun to work with peer navigation with more to follow. He also noted how commissioning processes, consultations, co-design and community led projects could differ across states.

*Highly engaged with PHNs:*

- This group asked Christopher about the role of the Department of Health in relation to PHNs. He explained that PHNs have received a large amount of guidance material, and there have been tight timeframes with significant deliverables. Christopher indicated that the Department of Health has a critical role to play in terms of leadership in this area.

Other points raised during this session included:

- The importance of stepped care
- Delays and confusion as the NDIS rolls out
- Innovation and expansion at suicide prevention trial sites
- The role of recovery colleges
- Accountability and transparency

## Reflections

76% of Evaluation Survey respondents reported being very satisfied or satisfied with Christopher Carter's presentation.

*"A very interesting session that enlightened me about the role of PHNs and their potential as a place of development for consumer and carer involvement"*

### Hypothetical: What would you do?

Workshop participants had the opportunity to ask an expert panel hypothetical questions about what they would do in various challenging situations faced in their role representing consumers and carers. Panel members included: Lyn English, Elida Meadows, Frank Quinlan, Keiran Booth and JulieAnne Anderson.

Themes that arose during this session included:

- Working together respectfully, even where there are differences in opinion
- Being open to feedback
- Considering the bigger picture
- Honesty, empathy, trust and transparency
- Being a team player
- Not taking things personally
- The importance of lived experience
- Recognising progress that has been made
- Why self-care is essential
- Consumers and carers having a strong voice and message

## Reflections

57% of Evaluation Survey respondents reported being very satisfied or satisfied with the panel discussion.

*"Liked the point about us all working together for the greater good of raising the budget for mental health"*

## Table activity: State and territory networking

Workshop participants were invited to sit in state and territory tables, as an opportunity to network and discuss common issues. Key feedback from each table on what they would like to progress in their state or territory is listed below.

| State/Territory | Feedback |
|---|---|
| WA | Quarterly networking meetings |
| TAS | Adequately resourced consumer and carer peak bodies |
| NT | Change is happening due to persistence but is a slow process. Would like increased representation of indigenous people on the NMHCCF and National Register |
| ACT | Consumers and carers aren't feeling heard and there are not enough for all committees, which can lead to burn out. Also noted a lack of psychiatrists |
| SA | Raised concerns and uncertainty about current situation in SA |
| QLD | Peer participation network, drawing from a pool of consumers and carers |
| NSW | Website where members of both the National Register and NMHCCF can sign in and resources can be shared |
| VIC | Working with peak bodies around the election campaign, including issues regarding the NDIS and staff retention |

### Reflections

65% of Evaluation Survey respondents reported being very satisfied or satisfied with the state and territory networking.

*"Excellent opportunity for networking"*

# Day 2: Friday 25 May 2018

## Agenda

| | |
|---|---|
| 09:00 – 09:15 | **Welcome Back and Update**<br>De Backman-Hoyle, Principal, Inspired Workforce Performers® |
| 09:15 – 09:45 | **News from the Sector**<br>Selected Sector Member Updates |
| 09:45 – 10:45 | **Our Potential into Action**<br>Group Planning Activity |
| 10:45 – 11:00 | **Morning Break** |
| 11:00 – 12:00 | **Concurrent Sessions**<br>NDIS Part Two Main Room<br>Skill Session – The Anatomy of a Difficult Conversation |
| 12:00 – 12:30 | **Concurrent Sessions**<br>PHN's Part Two Main Room<br>Skill Session – Measuring Trust, BRAVING by Brene Brown |
| 12:30 – 13:30 | **Lunch** |
| 13:30 – 14:00 | **Guest Speaker**<br>Georgie Harman – CEO *beyondblue* |
| 14:00 – 15:00 | **Guest Speaker**<br>The Hon. Greg Hunt, MP – Minister for Health |
| 15:00 – 15:10 | **Table Activity**<br>What did we learn from these presentations? |
| 15:10 – 15:40 | **Investing to Save**<br>The Economic Benefits for Australia of Investment in Mental Health Reform<br>Mental Health Australia and KPMG |
| 15:40 – 15:45 | **Table Activity**<br>Discovery Walk |
| 15:45– 16:00 | **Closing Speaker & Summary Presentation**<br>Frank Quinlan & De Backman-Hoyle |
| 16:00 | **Close of Workshop** |
| | **Refreshments available in Lobby** |

## News from the sector: Selected sector member updates

Lisa Sweeney discussed the work of Australians for Mental Health, a new community led advocacy campaign seeking to have a broader dialogue about mental health in Australia. Australians for Mental Health aims to elevate the voice of the community and will undertake a range of activities including advocacy during the election.

Michelle Swann discussed Caring Fairly, a new advocacy platform with a particular focus on the dynamic between unpaid carers and workforce participation. The campaign website will be launched in mid-2018, and will include information, activities and event details.

### Reflections

66% of Evaluation Survey respondents reported being very satisfied or satisfied with the news from the sector.

## Group planning activity: Our potential into action

Workshop participants discussed their role and capabilities, and how they could best work towards their shared objectives. Key themes are reflected below:

- Uniting consumers and carers
- Expressing genuine, unedited views
- Trusting one another and being aware of different strengths
- Creating cultural and attitudinal changes through positive reinforcement, so people are more open to feedback
- Being proactive
- Good access to information – meeting opportunities, podcasts, bulletins, social media, apps, websites, legislation
- Selling the benefits of co-production
- Connecting socially with people at the margins
- Having a media strategy

### Reflections

76% of Evaluation Survey respondents reported being very satisfied or satisfied with the group planning activity.

## The big issues (Part 2): NDIS

This session explored the Psychosocial Pathway through the NDIS and was facilitated by Frank Quinlan, CEO of Mental Health Australia. The Psychosocial Pathway reflects the need for a tailored and consistent approach for consumers with psychosocial disability seeking to access the NDIS.

Mental Health Australia has conducted consultations around Australia in order to develop recommendations for the NDIA on the Psychosocial Pathway. Key themes from the consultation were the importance of support coordination, capacity building, carer support and respite and the provision of support for urgent and unplanned needs.

### Reflections

65% of Evaluation Survey respondents reported being very satisfied or satisfied with the NDIS session.

## Skill Session: The Anatomy of a Difficult Conversation

Workshop Facilitator, De Backman-Hoyle ran a skills session 'Anatomy of a Difficult Conversation'.

The session gave participants the opportunity to reflect on their current skills in dealing with a difficult conversation and offered tips on how take the initiative to handle difficult conversions more effectively.

## Guest speaker: Georgie Harman – CEO, *beyondblue*

Georgie Harman shared the background to her career and how she started working in the mental health sector. She highlighted teachable moments in her career as well as what has influenced her path. Some tips Georgie shared included:

- Not mistaking ignorance for someone deliberately wanting to do wrong
- Being aware of the different hats you wear when you're speaking
- Finding a unified voice to be heard through all the chatter
- Choosing your moments to "bang the table"

Georgie reiterated the importance of lived experience in mental health services and policy reform, and that people with lived experience need to be included in all relevant projects and decision-making.

## Reflections

86% of Evaluation Survey respondents reported being very satisfied or satisfied with the Georgie Harman's presentation.

*"Fantastic heartfelt presentation"*

*"Georgie provided very real, useful tips for advocacy work"*

*"Just an inspirational speaker who moved me substantially"*

## Guest speaker: The Hon. Greg Hunt, MP – Minister for Health

The Hon Greg Hunt MP began this session by reflecting on his own life, his mother's experience of bipolar disorder and the importance of ongoing work in mental health and suicide prevention.

Workshop participants had prepared questions for the Minister in advance, and the Minister provided the following responses at the workshop:

### Co-design and consumer and carer engagement and participation

*Research demonstrates that service providers and those with lived experience working together co-designing and evaluating services is a cost-effective and beneficial approach. What is the Government doing to assist with making co-design a standard procedure across all levels of service provision?*

- Minister Hunt highlighted the need for people with lived experience to work at a systemic level within PHNs. As an example of successful co-design, Minister Hunt reflected on the role of Jackie Crowe and her team in relation to the Head to Health website. He also gave a commitment to ensuring consumers and carers are represented in the Million Minds initiative.

*In the spirit of contemporary co-design practices, and national policy, how can the NMHCCF and National Register, through you, provide for better consumer and carer representation and co-design both directly and on AHMAC/Mental Health Principal Committee and its standing committees?*

- Minister Hunt took this opportunity to invite representatives from the NMHCCF and National Register to be part of the Million Minds steering committee, project group and expert working groups.

*Members of the NMHCCF are concerned that consumer and carer engagement and participation is not moving beyond tokenism. How do you think decision makers can demonstrate the importance of the perspectives of people with lived experience?*

- Minister Hunt emphasised the critical need for consumers and carers to be involved in co-design. He also highlighted the importance of people sharing their stories, and publically celebrating people with lived experience.

### Early intervention

*Why do we turn back patients in mental health and 'wait for it to progress' when we don't turn back patients in any other field of medicine and always aim for early intervention?*

- Minister Hunt expressed support for detection before diagnosis, and noted that the pre-condition phase is an important area for research. He said that mental health issues were the number one reason people accessed primary care, and recognised the gaps in acute recovery services.

### Implementing National Mental Health Standards and Plans, and clinical settings

*Consumers we represent nationally are experiencing the falling of average length of stays in acute clinical settings and variations in National Mental Health Standard implementation/compliance. What's the best way for the Government to increase consistent standards across all acute mental health services and provide recovery oriented services, without early discharge?*

- Minister Hunt indicated that this is an area where they must work with state and territory governments. He also reflected on the Government's work with states and territories to address psychosocial program gaps outside of the NDIS. The gap between urban and rural service availability was also noted, along with opportunities related to telehealth.

*Consumers we represent are witnessing increases in ICE and methamphetamine affected consumers within in-patient settings? What measures are currently in place to address this issue and separate ICE affected consumers from mental health consumers?*

- Minister Hunt explained that there are around 200,000 people using ice in Australia, around $700 million invested in the area of alcohol and other drugs, and around $300 million invested in ice prevention and treatment. The Government is working with states and territories in regards to residential accommodation, and encouraged consumers and carers to help bring the states together.

### Psychosocial disability and NDIS

*Regardless of the $80m that you were able to provide last year to PHNs to fill the gaps that are occurring with the transition of funding of successful mental health programs into NDIS, the gaps are not being filled and people who are not eligible for NDIS are losing or about to lose their current supports. It appears that some funding needs to be provided to analyse this issue so that we know exactly and accurately what the gaps are and how many people have lost what support. Then, further funding proposals can be accurately targeted. Could you please advise if this is going to occur?*

- Minister Hunt said that he had not considered taking an immediate survey on psychosocial services in this area, and that he thought it was a good idea and would consider it further.

*The current process for assessing the need for Carer Payment and Carer Allowance is based on tests of physical disability and it is biased against those who are family and carers of the mentally unwell. What actions can be taken and when can it be done to create a fair a realistic test of mental health related psychosocial disability?*

- Minister Hunt explained that the carers payment and allowance are intended to be about needs and requirements for support (either physical or mental). He said he would welcome a letter outlining the challenges people are experiencing so they can better understand what might need to change.

*How will the NDIA be continued to be funded and will this funding be guaranteed at an appropriate level for those with a disability into the future?*

- Minister Hunt noted that half of the funding for the NDIA came from the Medicare levy, and that the budget has since improved so there is no further need for that tax. The NDIS has now been built into the federal budget to guarantee its future.

*The constantly changing NDIA rules and processes over the three year transition period have caused significant disruption to service delivery, uncertainty for clients and ongoing business and service viability. How will this be fixed to benefit consumers, carers their families as well as the service providers who continue to provide services?*

- Minister Hunt indicated that along with the Hon Dan Tehan MP, Minister for Social Services he plans to have a roundtable conversation with consumers and carers to discuss this issue and how to address it for people both within and outside the NDIS.

### Looking to the future

If you had a magic wand, what would one thing you would do between now and the next election?

- Minister Hunt acknowledged the amount of work that has gone into de-stigmatisation and normalisation of mental illness, encouraging people to discuss it without guilt or fear. He said that the most important step is to seek help, and that anyone on a path towards or currently experiencing mental illness should be able to get help without shame.

## Table activity: What did we learn from these presentations?

Workshop participants reflected on what they had learnt, particularly in regards to the Hon Greg Hunt MP's presentation. Reflections of participants included:

- The Minister demonstrated respect to consumers and carers in his responses
- Appreciated that he acknowledged when he did not know something
- There was a strong sense of bipartisanship in this area
- Possibilities to consider going forward include contacting the Minister's advisor, as well as representatives from the opposition and state and territory governments

### Reflections

85% of Evaluation Survey respondents reported being very satisfied or satisfied with the Hon Greg Hunt MP's presentation.

"Felt this went well in developing the relationship"

## Investing to save: The economic benefits for Australia of investment in mental health reform – Mental Health Australia & KPMG

Frank Quinlan, CEO of Mental Health Australia discussed the new report by Mental Health Australia and KPMG, *Investing to save: The economic benefits of investment in mental health reform.* KPMG undertook this work on a pro bono basis, and their economic modelling has demonstrated which of a range of interventions offer the best return on investment. Mental Health Australia is now working on taking these recommendations forward in their advocacy work, and Frank invited workshop participants to join in and also use the report as a tool in their advocacy efforts.

### Reflections

62% of Evaluation Survey respondents reported being very satisfied or satisfied with the Investing to Save presentation.

# Conclusion

The 2018 Annual Issues and Opportunities Workshop provided an opportunity for members of the National Register and NMHCCF to network and learn from each other and invited guests. The theme of the workshop, 'Human Rights and Advocacy' provided a rich platform for discussion, and participants expressed a high level of satisfaction in the workshop overall. Participants will take their renewed connections and learnings forward in their ongoing national advocacy efforts.

## Reflections

100% of Evaluation Survey respondents reported being very satisfied or satisfied with the workshop overall.

*"This workshop was so awesome. I would like to affirm the working group for a job well done"*

*"Great job! It was nice to have a facilitator that understands the journey"*

*"An excellent mix of presenters and issues"*

*"This is the best workshop I have been to. Excellent work team."*

Evaluation Survey respondents were also asked to list the three most valuable things gained from their participation at the workshop. Examples included:

*"A sense of renewal after spending 2 days with my peers"*

*"Thinking practically about implementing solutions"*

*"Using rights as a focus of advocacy"*

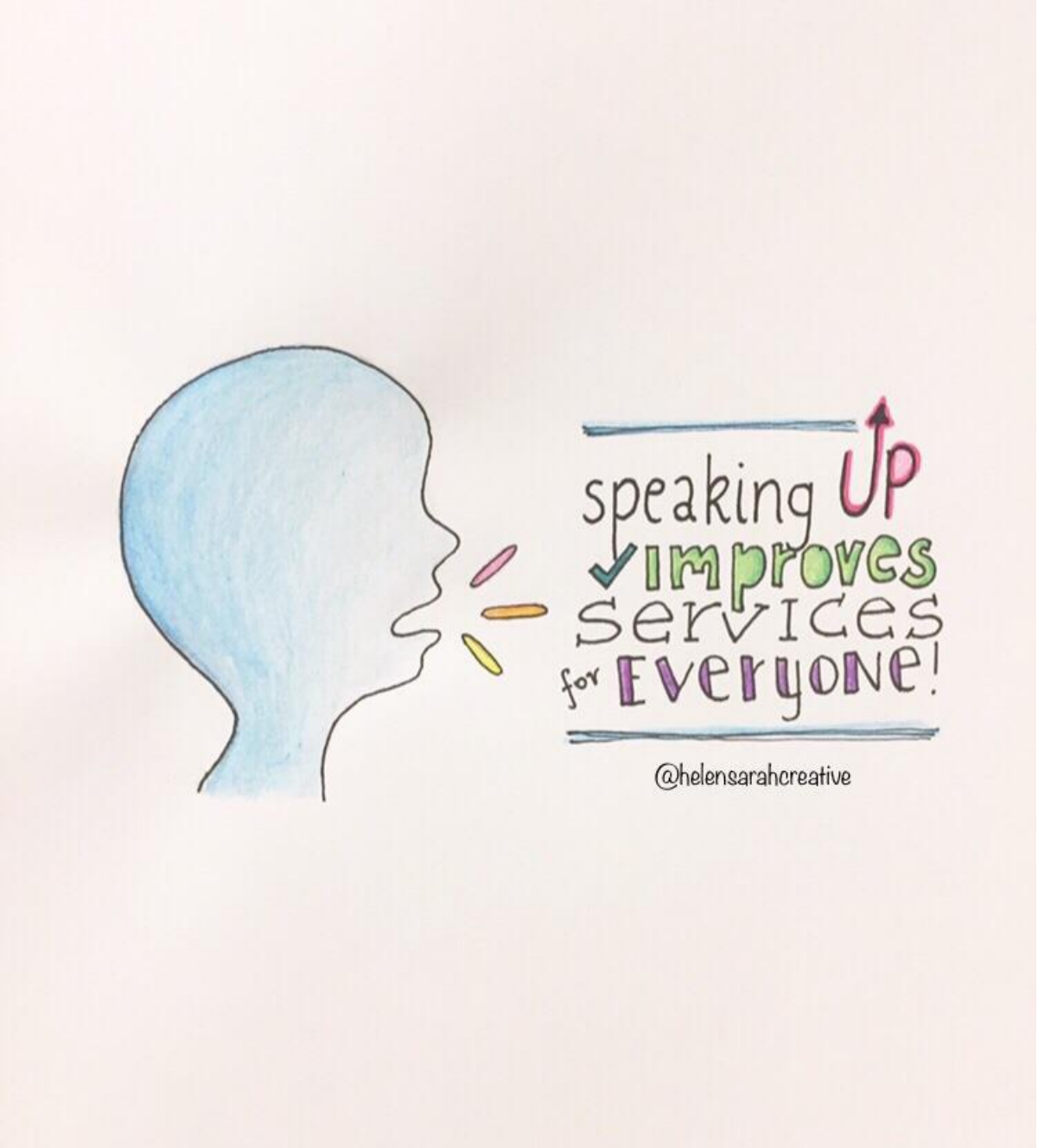
*"Connections with other members"*

*"Information on what is happening nationally"*

*"Seeing others' growth"*

*"Group strength"*

*"Continued hope"*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## More Information

For more information please contact the Consumer and Carer Team at Mental Health Australia on 02 6285 3100 or at natreg@mhaustralia.org or nmhccf@nmhccf.org.au.

## About

Mental Health Australia Ltd is the national independent peak body representing and promoting the interests of the Australian mental health sector. Our aim is to promote mentally healthy communities by building awareness of mental health issues; influencing social policy; conducting relevant research; and carrying out regular consultation to represent the best interests of our members, partners and the community.

Mental Health Australia

**Mentally healthy people,
mentally healthy communities**

Mental Health Australia is the peak independent, national representative body of the mental health sector in Australia.

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