



NEWSLETTER

*Fortnightly e-newsletter of the Mental Health Council of Australia
Volume 3 Number 3
13 September 2005*

MHCA Newsletter is published by:

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In this issue:

- **Deputy CEO's Report**
- **Other**
- **Coming Events**

▪ **Deputy CEO's Report**

Due to illness, this report is coming from the desk of the Deputy rather than the CEO. I am pleased to say that John is getting over some bad bronchitis and should be back on deck soon.

Planning for World Mental Health Day and the week's events is well advanced. The Canberra Lake Walk is the Council's marquee national event for October 10 and suitable luminaries from the world of politics, sport and the broader community have agreed to be involved. The new Chief of the Defence Forces, Angus Houston, has also flagged the ADF's willingness to be involved which is great news.

Events are being planned all across Australia. Remember to log onto the Council's website for more information about what's on in your area and elsewhere.

The Not For Service Report is now ready for launch. Printed copies of the full report (over 1000 pages) and the summary have been delivered to the Council in preparation for its release. We have also received copies of the CD-Rom version which makes navigating your way through the report very easy. The Council and the Human Rights Commission have been in close contact with the Federal Government and arrangements for the official launch of the report should be finalised very soon. It has been a long process to get to this point but I believe that the report will have the desired effect of generating some very significant and positive changes for mental health in Australia.

I recently had the pleasure of attending my first TheMHS Conference, held in Adelaide from 31 August to 2 September. The conference drew approximately 1000 delegates and offered workshops, symposia and plenary sessions covering a very wide range of issues affecting mental health. Of particular interest were the two keynote speakers. Roberto Mezzina runs the mental health service in Trieste in the very northeast of Italy. This region has a population of about 250,000 and spends 94% of its mental health budget on community services and 6% on acute inpatient beds! Quite a contrast with the Australian situation. The Trieste situation follows a philosophy of mental health care service provision which exists both in practice and in legislation throughout Italy. It epitomises the notion of supported deinstitutionalisation and coordinated community services. I have requested a copy of Roberto's slides from his presentation.

The second keynote speaker was Ron Coleman from Scotland who is a mental health trainer, author and consultant. He has drawn on his own 13 year experience in and out of the psychiatric system to develop training packages to enable voice hearers to gain prevention and resolution. His 45 minute presentation was spell-binding for its humour and its raw honesty. I hope to be able to make an audio copy available via the Council website and wholeheartedly recommend a listen.

The conference session concerning the mental health of detainees was most distressing, with all speakers confirming that the detention environment was too toxic to provide effective mental health care.

I presented a paper on behalf of the Council concerning work towards a new accountability framework for mental health in Australia. While this work has just begun, the absence of any existing national framework under the National Mental Health Strategy makes it important. This session was highlighted by the presentation from Barbara Disley, the inaugural head of the New Zealand Mental Health Commission.

At very short notice, some conference participants arranged a lunchtime meeting focusing on leadership and management in mental health, which drew a group of about 25 interested people. Professor Alan Rosen convened the meeting which agreed that this small group would stay linked via email and look for further opportunities to build leadership among consumers, carers and professionals involved in mental health.

The conference program in full and details on how to obtain copies of material presented can be found at the TheMHS website:

<http://www.themhs.org/index.aspx>

- **Other**

MHCA Board Meeting

As a reminder to all MHCA Board members, the MHCA will be holding a Board Meeting on Wednesday the 14th of September 2005 from 2pm – 4pm via teleconference.

World Mental Health Day 2005-09-13

A reminder that the Council invites you to participate in 'The Canberra Lake Walk' at 11am on Monday 10 October 2005, Reconciliation Place, Parkes.

We hope you can come along and participate in this special event to mark this occasion!

For further information and to RSVP for the Canberra Lake Walk, please contact Sue Thompson at the MHCA on 6285 3100. Please RSVP by 6 October to enable catering.

- **Coming Events**

17th International Association for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Allied Professions Congress

10-14 September 2006, Melbourne Convention Centre, Australia.

The Congress Chair invites you to consider submitting a paper presentation or poster to promote the Congress theme, ***Child and Adolescent Mental Health: Nurturing Diversities.***

For more details see: www.iacapap2006.com

The MHCA Newsletter is a forum to provide information to people interested in mental health matters in Australia. Contributions are sought on any topic relevant to the Australian mental health sector. Please contact the MHCA on 6285 3100 or admin@mhca.org.au. Some articles published within the MHCA Newsletter are provided by third parties and the contents do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the MHCA. [Home](#)