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www.mifsa.org

Mental Health Week 2008

Mental Health Week is an annual event that aims to build community awareness, knowledge and understanding of mental health and reduce the stigma and discrimination associated with mental health and mental illness. Communities throughout South Australia will celebrate Mental Health Week from Sunday 5 October to Saturday 11 October with awards, events, performances, exhibitions, forums and more. All over the state communities will connect to consider what you are doing to maintain your mental health. There are many events on during Mental Health Week with a few show cased in this newsletter. To see the full range go to the Mental Health Week calendar at the Mental Health Coalition of SA website: www.mhcsa.org.au



Excerpt from World Federation of Mental Health Mental Health Day 2008 CD

WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY 10 OCTOBER 2008

Making Mental Health a Global Priority

Started as a way to raise awareness and reduce discrimination of persons with mental disorders – advocacy has continued to be the tool most used to create change in the global mental health movement. The World Federation for Mental Health has created the 2008 WMHDAY theme, Making Mental Health a Global Priority: Scaling up Services through Citizen Advocacy and Action, to help draw more attention to the need for a stronger advocacy movement with a unified method for action. By working together towards a common goal we can create a world where all people are given equal attention to all bodily ailments and disorders.

Continued page 2>



Vision & Mission

Our vision is that every person with mental illness is able to make a valued contribution to society, without stigma or discrimination, due to an increased understanding and awareness of mental illness in the community and the availability of appropriate services as required.

Our mission is to provide education, support, rehabilitation and recovery based programs in a safe, quality environment to assist people with mental illness and their natural support network living in South Australia to enjoy the best possible quality of life.



Making Mental Health a Global Priority continued

WHY ADVOCATE?

Advocacy is the most effective and least costly tool to create change. You can improve services, assist someone who is unfamiliar with the local system or be the voice for those that are too afraid to speak out, influence laws and policies in your country, and bring more attention and possibly more funding to your cause. If each of us speaks out with the same unified message, we will create a voice strong enough to demand changes. Mental health advocacy will promote human needs and rights and reduce the stigma and discrimination for those in the mental health systems. Every one of us can do something – learn about advocacy and how it can be most effective in your community and be a part of the movement!

Professor Shridhar Sharma of the WFMH says, “People tend to think that one is civilised depending upon how technologically advanced one is, but the degree to which an individual, a society or a country is civilised depends on how we look after those who cannot look after themselves.” There is no better time than now to act. The evidence is clear - there can be no health without mental health and little will change without continued action and effort. The global message is that each of us must... “Make mental health a global priority.” People-power can sometimes be stronger and more reliable than money. Implementis, an online resource for mental health advocacy, states that “it is important to focus on the messages that have the greatest urgency and importance today and to give priority to initiatives that are compatible with existing frameworks.”

10 KEY AREAS FOR ACTION:

1. We need national ownership for mental health.
2. The development of local carer/family advocacy groups must be encouraged.
3. Stigma must be addressed across all of society, not just in care.
4. Mental health needs dedicated and sustainable funding.
5. We must build capacity within existing health and social care.
6. Social inclusion and improved outcomes won't happen without significant investment in community services.
7. We need better access and information on treatment options.
8. Caregiver and patient engagement is essential for optimal care outcomes.
9. Professional training and partnerships are key.
10. Better data on severe mental illness is critical for reform.

“Advocacy is the pursuit of influencing outcomes – including public-policy and resource allocation decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions – that directly affect people’s lives. It consists of organised efforts and actions based on the reality of ‘what is’. These organised actions seek to highlight critical issues that have been ignored and submerged, to influence public attitudes, and to enact and implement laws and public policies so that visions.”



WHAT IS ADVOCACY?

Peer Advocacy

This is where service users, who have experienced similar problems of not being listened to, may help others to speak up for themselves. A peer advocate is likely to have a very good understanding of what other service users are going through.

Professional Advocacy

This can mean experts in a professional field, such as lawyers, being commissioned to speak up on behalf of an individual service user or group. They may or may not receive payment for acting as an advocate.

Collective Advocacy

This is where a group of people, sometimes from very different backgrounds, campaign on behalf of themselves or others to try and change things. This could be a national organisation or a local one focusing on either national or local issues.

WORLD FEDERATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH WWW.WFMH.ORG

Used with permission from the Mental Health Coalition of South Australia, Peak Action, Sept 2008

For a full list of Mental Health Week events go to: www.mhcsa.org.au

Go to page 9 in MIFSA News for the list of events being organised by MIFSA





Awards for Excellence in Workplace Development

MENTAL HEALTH COALITION OF SA (MHCSA) RECOGNISED FOR SECTOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT.

The Mental Health Coalition of SA won the Judges Award for their efforts in supporting workforce development and training within the mental health sector.

The SA Health and Community Services Skills Board announced the winners of the inaugural "Human Services at Work" Awards for Excellence in Workforce Development on 22 May 2008 during a gala dinner held at the National Wine Centre.

The awards recognise the achievements of organisations striving to ensure an available skilled workforce for the industry. The awards promote workforce development and are open to all organisations and agencies in the South Australian Health and Community Service industry. Award winners are those organisations or individuals that have developed and/or integrated innovative practices that strengthen their capacity and that of the sector to attract and retain an appropriately skilled workforce.

The Mental Health Coalition of SA was thrilled to receive two honours on the night:

Finalist: "Creating a Learning Culture" Category; and

Winner of the "Judges Award".

Used with permission from the Mental Health Coalition of South Australia, Peak Action, Sept 2008

MIFSA congratulates Geoff Harris and all the staff at the Mental Health Coalition of SA!

From the Executive Director

As this edition of *MIFSA News* reaches your post boxes we will be preparing for our Annual General Meeting and for the 2008 Sunflower Awards. We hope to see many of you there, or perhaps at a range of exciting events planned for Mental Health Week. Check out page 9 for a run-down of the MIFSA specific Mental Health Week activities. For the full calendar of events contact the Mental Health Coalition of South Australia or go to www.mhcsa.org.au.

Over the past few months we have been gazing into the past as well as the future! We have reflected on the achievements of the last year via our Annual Report, at the same time looking into the future as we put the finishing touches on "MIFSA 2011" - our Strategic Plan.

"MIFSA 2011" has been developed following feedback from MIFSA members, volunteers, staff, participants, Board of Management and stakeholders. This Strategic Plan will guide our work over the next three years with three goals:

- Reach people we haven't reached before;
- Build a strong MIFSA;
- Be the organisation of 1st choice in mental health.

Out of these goals come outcomes and then actions, which will focus our energy, hard work and achievements over the next few years. "MIFSA 2011" goals and outcomes include reaching more people that are unable to access services due to the severity of their mental illness and improving access to MIFSA for Indigenous people and those from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds.



Our work will include extending service delivery into country areas and delivering a broader range of programs for Carers. We plan to manage our growth proactively, ensure that MIFSA has a strong, positive, dynamic and responsive culture and we will work towards being recognised as a mental health "information gateway".

Whilst developing "MIFSA 2011" we were acutely aware that Strategic Plans can be stuffy things, often left to gather dust on CEO's bookshelves. As a MIFSA team (made up of volunteers, staff and participants) we are working together to make sure that "MIFSA 2011" is a memorable and living piece of work which results in improved services delivered *for and with* people experiencing mental illness. If you would like to get involved give us a call and stay tuned for regular updates on our progress towards 2011!

Natasha Miliotis

Key Dates:

Annual General Meeting
Thursday, 2 October

Sunflower Awards
Thursday, 2 October

Mental Health Week
5 - 11 October

Booked out!
'The Benefits of Medications!'
Tuesday, 7 October

Stall in the Mall
Thursday, 9 October

Volunteers' Acknowledgement Function
Friday, 5 December

Education Program

We have welcomed a new Community Educator, Jenny Benham. Jenny has received many 'rave reviews' and we have been overwhelmed by the positive comments received about Jenny's courage, strength and honesty. Jenny has also written many poems, which she utilises in sessions. We are so happy to have her on board, helping us with education sessions.

We will be beginning a range of 'taking the stress out of exams' sessions at some schools around Adelaide. The first 'cab off the rank' will be Charles Campbell Secondary School (CCSS) at Paradise in October. Also at the end of October, CCSS will be performing a play in which people with mental illness are depicted. The Education Program has assisted the year 11 students to develop their characters and give as accurate a portrayal as possible. For those interested in attending it will be held at the school, Campbell Road, Paradise at 7pm on Thursday 30th October.

We also have a number of sessions planned with TAFE. Salisbury and Pt Adelaide. TAFE campuses really appreciate our Community Educators and their lived experience.

We also have the last of our FREE Keswick and Panangga Education Sessions. See Wednesday Forums on page 18 for dates/times etc.

Cheers, Sophie and the Education Program
sophie@mifsa.org

Interested in being a MIFSA Community Educator?

MIFSA has a dedicated group of Community Educators who can accompany staff to present or contribute to sessions. It is an important ethos of MIFSA to have those with lived experience contribute significantly to developing and presenting educational material.

A Community Educator is someone who:

- is living well with a mental illness/disorder and/or is a carer for someone with a mental illness/disorder
- provides education through sharing his or her experience with or caring for someone who has experienced a mental illness
- offers hope, inspiration and the concept of recovery
- helps to develop and implement educational materials and resources
- promotes MIFSA, its services and programs
- works in a paid or voluntary capacity

Community Educators are paid for each hour, or part thereof, for speaking engagements. The rate of pay is based on a SACS level 3 casual rate (\$22.50 per hour). There is no minimum hours required. Reimbursement is provided to cover any costs incurred.

For more information contact Sophie or Andrew on 8221 5160.

Psychosocial Groups Program

PSYCHOSOCIAL GROUPS PROGRAM SUPPORTS THE PRINCIPLES OF REHABILITATION AND RECOVERY AND UNDERSTANDS THAT THERE IS HOPE AFTER DIAGNOSIS OF MENTAL ILLNESS.

The groups focus on building strengths and achieving the best possible quality of life. Sharing ideas and methods for managing well-being in a group with others who have similar experiences can be particularly helpful.

If you are interested in any of these programs or for more information please contact the PGP team: Ben, Anna or Paula on 8221 5160 or by email: paula@mifsa.org

Alleviating Anxiety

We will work in small groups to:

- better understand anxiety
- share ideas with others who have similar experiences
- practice reducing anxiety
- learn techniques and plan ways to gently face our fears
- explore helpful and unhelpful strategies to overcome anxiety
- identify costs and benefits to overcoming anxiety

These groups will run for 2 hours, including a break for refreshments, over six weeks.

SESSION TIMES AND VENUES:

Location	Dates and times
Level 1, Education Centre Modbury Hospital, Modbury	21 st Oct - 25 th Nov Tuesday 2pm - 4pm
Clarence Park Community Centre Black Forest	22 nd Oct - 26 th Nov Wednesday 10am - 12noon
Elizabeth House Christie Downs	22 nd Oct - 26 th Nov Wednesday 2 - 4pm
West Lakes Community Centre West Lakes	23 rd Oct - 27 th Nov Thursday 10am - 12noon
Payneham Community Centre Payneham	24 th Oct - 28 th Nov Friday 10am - 12noon
Community Campus Elizabeth Grove (Depression)	24 th Oct - 28 th Nov Friday 10am - 12noon

*The focus is about thriving,
not just surviving*



Personal Helpers and Mentors Program (PHaMs): hope and recovery

THE PERSONAL HELPERS AND MENTORS (PHAMS) PROGRAM PROVIDES INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE A SEVERE FUNCTIONAL LIMITATION AS A RESULT OF A MENTAL ILLNESS.

PHaMs workers and participants work together on goals which are meaningful to the individual. PHaMs is centred on recovery – we focus on people’s strengths rather than limitations, and together we strive to find opportunities with PHaMs participants to live a fulfilling life.

The PHaMs program has been designed by the Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) and it has been implemented all across Australia by various organisations working in mental health. Each site is staffed by at least five ‘full-time equivalent’ workers, with at least one Peer Worker on each team who has ‘lived experience’ of mental illness.

There are currently four PHaMs sites in the Adelaide metropolitan area and two more sites operating in country South Australia. MIFSA was successful in securing two PHaMs sites in November 2007 for the Adelaide western and the outer south regions. Below are the contact details for all the current PHaMs sites in South Australia.

I am a 28 year old gratefully participating in the Personal Helpers and Mentors Program (PHaMs). I have experienced depression and anxiety for the majority of my adult life. A few years ago, I finally broke down and self-medicated with drugs and alcohol to an extreme point where I underwent several months of drug and alcohol rehabilitation. I still struggled with mental illness and had a backlog of financial, legal, social, medical and housing worries. The PHaMs program and in particular my PHaMs worker, have helped me clear through this overwhelming haze of issues, which were a huge barrier for me going on to live my life and dreams.

I was guided and empowered to sort through these issues and I am now studying and have a real sense of peace knowing my life is becoming much more manageable. My PHaMs worker never judged me on my past or anything I discussed with her and I felt safe that she kept my personal information confidential. I always felt respected and there was flexibility in every decision I made, so I never felt forced or made to live up to anyone else’s expectations.

My PHaMs worker helped make the program mine and brought the best out in me. This has built my confidence and self-esteem.

It is great how there is no time limit on the support, so as my life gets more full and I cope better, I can taper off the support I need gradually. I have found this reassuring and it has helped with building courage to follow my goals and dreams. This is a truly unique service, which may have prevented me from living in isolation and despair, in a place where I would not be involved with family, friends or the larger community. I want to say thank you to the PHaMs team and that I feel so fortunate to be a participant in the PHaMs program.

RT, 28

Site	Organisation	Contact
Western metro – Port Adelaide	MIFSA	Fiona – 8221 5160
Outer South – Noarlunga	MIFSA	Emilie – 8326 7889
Marion	UnitingCare Wesley Port Adelaide	Grenville – 8276 3600
Elizabeth	Anglicare	Sherrilyn – 8209 5722
Mid-North – Port Pirie	Red Cross	Lyn – 8633 8100
North & Far West Country – Whyalla	Mission Australia	Kathryn – 8645 3399

A few months ago, FaHCSIA announced another round of funding for new PHaMs sites and they invited interested organisations to tender for them. The new PHaMs sites in SA will be in the following locations:

Unley/Mitcham // Eastern Metro // Northern Metro // Port Pirie // Country South-East // Murray Bridge

Also, the capacity of the Noarlunga site will be doubled. If you live in these areas, stay tuned: the successful organisations will be announced in November 2008 and the service delivery should start shortly after that.

All these new developments are very exciting. We are looking forward to the PHaMs program being implemented widely across the state and reaching more participants. If you would like to know more about the program, do not hesitate to contact me or your local PHaMs team.

Emilie Gagnon-Milot
Team Leader PHaMs Outer South
(08) 8326 7889
emilie@mifsasouth.org

Respite Program

THE MIFSA RESPITE PROGRAM IS FUNDED BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT UNDER THE MENTAL HEALTH RESPITE PROGRAM.

The Respite Program has recently taken on a number of new staff and we would like to take this opportunity to welcome them to the Program. Recently we successfully filled the position of Respite Coordinator and welcome Vivienne Dunn to the Program. Vivienne previously worked in the public Mental Health Services for 16 years and brings a vast amount of knowledge and experience to the team. Currently there are 6 Respite Workers providing 1 to 1 Respite services and 3 new Respite Workers have recently been recruited, with further interviews being held. In future articles, we will be asking Respite Workers to introduce themselves and share their experiences. We are very excited with the growth of the Respite team and the diverse range of experience, skills and personalities within the Respite Program. This enables us to better match skills and personalities to those of Care Recipients, in an effort to ensure respite is a positive, enjoyable and productive experience for all involved.

We are continuing to receive applications for Respite Workers through our open recruitment campaign to increase our casual Respite Worker pool. We are looking for people to work with Participants across the whole metropolitan area – particularly in the outer southern and outer northern suburbs.

One of the aims of the Respite Program is to identify “hidden” Carers – people who would not normally identify themselves as Carers. During a recent respite assessment (where the needs of all participants is considered), it was identified that the brother of the Care Recipient was in fact providing support for the Carer – in this instance, his elderly frail mother from a CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) background. As a result, the Respite Plan and Assessment was completed and the Respite Program was able to arrange for the brother to receive aged care respite services for his mother through the Commonwealth Carer Respite Centre, while she received mental health respite services through MIFSA to support her in caring for the Care Recipient. This is a great example of how respite has partnered with a whole support network to address the needs of all persons involved.

If you are interested in further information about the MIFSA Respite Program, please contact us.

Marie Choi and
Amanda Porter
Team Leaders,
Respite Program
respite@mifsa.org

The following flyer has been placed at Keswick, Panangga and at training institutions throughout the metropolitan area:



 mifsa

-  Do you experience difficulties with your mental health?
-  Does a family member, friend or neighbour care for you by offering their support and assistance?
-  Do you sometimes worry about the person who gives their care and support?
-  Would you like information about services which can assist you and the person who gives care and support?

Contact the MIFSA Respite Program:
Ph: 8221 5160
respite@mifsa.org

The MIFSA Respite Program is funded by the Australian Government under the Mental Health Respite Program.

Media Release

HELPING MORE DISABLED AUSTRALIANS INTO WORK

The Rudd Government today announced that one of the most significant barriers for people receiving a Disability Support Pension who wish to find employment will be removed.

From September 2008, DSP recipients who wish to find employment will undertake a simpler assessment process or a ‘pre-employment referral’ which will only collect information to determine the most appropriate employment services for the individual.

Currently, DSP recipients who want to look for work automatically have their benefit reviewed which can result in a reduction of their payments. There are currently more than 700,000 DSP recipients who are not required to undertake any activity.

Minister for Employment Participation, Brendan O’Connor, said the potential loss of benefits was one of the single biggest disincentives for DSP recipients who of their own accord want to find work.

“People with disabilities who want to work should be encouraged and supported to join in the workforce as much as they are able,” Mr O’Connor said.

“However the Government has consistently heard from people who receive a Disability Support Pension, disability advocates and employment and Job Capacity Assessment providers while there are people who wish to work they are afraid of losing access to their benefits.

“This is why the Government is acting to remove this major obstacle to employment for people on DSP.

“The Government recognises as well as financial benefits of employment there are significant social benefits of more people taking an active role in their communities.”

Minister for Human Services, Senator Joe Ludwig said the simpler ‘pre-employment referral’ Job Capacity Assessment would only collect information required for the job seeker to determine the most appropriate service.

Media Release continued

“The simpler referral will allow the Job Capacity Assessor to identify which employment service providers are best suited to assist someone with disability back into the workforce without conducting a review of the person’s DSP entitlement,” Senator Ludwig said.

“It is common sense to help recipients of DSP who voluntarily want to find work. This change means people can get help without losing their DSP.”

Today’s announcement is part of a broader Government strategy to encourage more people with disability and/or mental illness to participate in employment.

Mr O’Connor and Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children’s Services, Bill Shorten, will hand down a National Mental Health and Disability Employment Strategy before the end of the year.

“This strategy will outline clear and practical steps the Government can put in place to overcome the barriers which make it harder for people with disability and mental illness to gain and keep work,” Mr Shorten said.

“The Rudd Government wants to encourage more people who are disabled or have a mental illness to be actively employed.”

The Government this week ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, making Australia one of the first Western countries to ratify the Convention.

Australia joins 29 other countries around the world in a move that aims to promote a global community in which all people with a disability are equal and active citizens.

See page 8 for a response from MIFSA’s Peer Work Project Team

The Wellness Guide: a resource to support the recovery journey

A Guide developed by people with a mental illness, carers and mental health professionals.

Information on care planning and recovery process, and advice on establishing and maintaining mental well-being (342 pages).

Available at:
www.wsahs.nsw.gov.au/documents/WellnessGuide.pdf

Well Ways Programs

A PROGRAM FOR CARERS, FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF PEOPLE WITH A MENTAL ILLNESS.

‘WELL WAYS ON THE MOVE’

‘Well Ways Building a Future.’ The original Well Ways Program has been reborn as ‘Well Ways Building a Future’. Why, you may ask? The suite of Well Ways Programs designed by MIF VIC and evaluated by the La Trobe University meet differing needs of participants and have varying time-frames. The ‘Well Ways Building a Future’ Program will remain an initial eight week program with four follow ups over twelve months. A short version is currently being trialed, with different aims and outcomes from the original program. Well Ways Duo is another new program being introduced.

‘Well Ways DUO’ will be introduced to Adelaide in 2009. Two Well Ways Facilitators have been trained in this new program and are ready to go. ‘Well Ways DUO’ focusses on mental illness and substance abuse and is not relevant for all family and friends supporting someone with a mental illness. People will be guided into the ‘best’ program for their needs.

All this activity promises a busy 2009. With new Well Ways programs on offer we will do our best to bring programs to your area, at times that suit you. So, make contact! Book into a Well Ways program or let us know your preferences and we will endeavour to oblige.

To all family and friends supporting a person with a mental illness please get out and enjoy Mental Health Week and Carers Week - both being celebrated in October.

Regards to all,
 Maureen Lewis – Well Ways Coordinator
mlewis@mifsa.org

Well Ways: building a future

‘Well Ways Building a Future’ Program consists of a block of 8 weekly sessions followed by 4 sessions held over the next 12 months

LOCATION	DATE COMMENCING
Reedbeds Community Centre, Fitch Road FULHAM	Commencing 13th October 6pm-9pm
Sunset Rock Uniting Church, 34 Spencer Street STIRLING	Starting soon, date to be advised

Carer Facilitators who conduct the programs are trained and qualified by Mental Illness Fellowship Victoria
 Contact **Maureen Lewis, Well Ways Coordinator** on **8221 5160** or email: mlewis@mifsa.org

Hi Ho, Hi Ho – It's off to work we go!

RAISE YOUR GLASSES – THE CONSUMER VOICE HAS BEEN HEARD!

You may remember from our last issue that MIFSA's Peer Work Project (PWP) was involved in a submission to the Australian Government around barriers to employment faced by consumers ('Using Your Peer Voice', Aug/Sept 2008 *MIFSA News*, p8). Two of the key issues addressed by the submission were:

- **Financial Issues**

"For many who are in receipt of Government payments (eg Disability Support Pension - DSP), there is a fear of... losing the benefits that go with it, such as being able to access affordable medication".

- **Flexible, suitable employment options**

"Many consumers have expressed concern regarding... work being conducive to recovery".

Thanks to the media release, see page 6, consumers who genuinely want to work can now breathe a little easier.

From September this year, those in receipt of the DSP who wish to gain employment have been reassured by the Government that they will not need to fear an assessment designed to revoke their DSP and place them on another allowance (eg New Start Allowance). Rather, those who express a desire to actively seek employment will be reviewed in a process that will collect information only – information that will be used to determine the best possible job support service(s) for that individual's particular needs and will assist those agencies in supporting the job seeker to find suitable, sustainable employment.

This is great news. Not only will the safety net of the DSP remain in place but individuals receiving this benefit will be seen as an individual with needs unique to them – not as one of a generic group of people with "disabilities". Employment support can be tailored to suit each person's individual strengths, needs and situations.

In itself, this is exciting! But the impact of this change will be wider reaching still. It will play a part in debunking some very common societal misconceptions about people with mental illnesses and employment:

1. MYTH: Mental illness is the same as intellectual disability.

Facts: these are two distinct disorders. The changes to the DSP will mean each person's illness and relevant needs will be addressed on an individual basis in order to determine the most appropriate service(s) for that person's situation.

2. MYTH: Recovery from mental illness is not possible.

Facts: Long-term studies have shown that the majority of people with a mental illness show genuine improvement over time and lead stable, productive lives.

3. MYTH: Staff with a mental illness tend to be second-rate workers.

Facts: Studies have shown that there are no differences in productivity between consumers and other employees. In fact, employers reported that consumers tended to have better than average attendance records and are as good as or better than other employees when it comes to motivation and job retention.

4. MYTH: People with psychiatric disabilities cannot tolerate stress on the job.

Facts: Stress can exacerbate the symptoms of people with various medical conditions, not just mental illness. Furthermore, the source of personal and job-related stress varies substantially between individuals. All jobs carry a degree of stress – productivity is maximised when there is a good match between the employee's needs and working conditions, whether or not the individual has a mental illness. By better matching consumers to employment support services, we hope that this will in turn lead to a



greater number of consumers achieving employment which meets their needs and works towards maintaining recovery. (Adapted from Let's Get to Work: A National Mental Health Employment Strategy for Australia Nov. 2007 Attachment A, p68).

The Peer Work Project (PWP) team are thrilled about these changes. There are so many trainees I have met through the 'Introduction to Peer Work' course who have been desperate to work but were worried about losing the safety-net of the DSP and, more importantly, the benefit of concessions. Hopefully this media release will put some fears to rest and allow those of you who really want to work to explore the endless world of possibilities that await you.

To find out how the PWP can support you in your endeavours towards employment in Peer Work and related roles (eg Consumer Consultant, Consumer Specialist, etc), please call Dei, Liza or myself on (08) 8221 5160.

I'd like to leave you with this thought: 'people with a disability are an untapped pool of talent and life experience...' (ACE Media Release, Doors Open Once Again To Jobseekers With Disability 2008). If you're thinking about work, why not start with a list of your talents and life experiences? I bet you'll be surprised.

Belinda Brown
Training Coordinator, PWP
belinda@mifsa.org



mental health week activities

Mental Health Week: Sunday 5th - Saturday 11th October, 2008

MIFSA Program

get involved and join the fun!

Tuesday 7th October, 9am-12pm



Launch of Mental Health Week, Adelaide Festival Centre Terrace

Official Launch of Mental Health Week in South Australia.

The Margaret Tobin Awards are presented by Dr Jane Lomax-Smith, with entertainment by Chris Finnen and a delicious morning tea prepared by MIFSA for assembled guests. Information on Mental Health in South Australia will also be on display.

Tuesday 7th October, 1:30pm-4pm



Education Forum: 'The Benefits of Medication', Mental Health Resource Centre

Do you need more information on medication and its effects on mental illness? An invitation is extended to the community, especially to family and friends of people with a mental illness. Presented by Dr Harry Hustig, respected national & international speaker and researcher. Includes a personal journey by a guest speaker from MIFSA.

BOOKED OUT!

RSVP essential (limited seating), phone MIFSA on 8221 5160. THIS FORUM IS NOW FULL

Wednesday 8th October, 10am-4pm



Open Day at Keswick Activity Centre, Mental Health Resource Centre

On Wednesday 8th October from 10am to 4pm MIFSA Keswick Activity Programs will open the Keswick Activity Centre for service providers, consumers, carers and members of the community to get a taste of the many exciting projects happening within the service. Come and try woodwork, craft, art and games. Enjoy lunch (\$2.50), and meet participants and staff who will be on hand to share their experiences and let you know how you can get involved.

Wednesday 8th October, 10-2pm



Eyre Activity Centre, Baptist Church Hall

Plans are underway as MIFSA Eyre staff and participants work together for a "Come and try, see, hear and eat" event in Port Lincoln. There is much excitement as participants get ready to play music, tell personal stories of recovery, display their art and cook a BBQ. Please call Shane on 0488 794 272 for further details.

Thursday 9th October, 10am-4pm



Open Day at Panangga Activity Centre, 64 Elgin Avenue Christies Beach

MIFSA's Activity Programs will open the Panangga Activity Centre for service providers, consumers, carers and members of the community to get a taste of the many exciting projects happening within the service. Come and try woodwork, craft, art and games. Enjoy a free BBQ lunch at 12noon, and meet participants and staff who will be on hand to share their experiences and let you know how you can get involved.

Thursday 9th October, all day



Stall in the Mall, Rundle Mall Adelaide

MIFSA will join other service providers in Rundle Mall with a fully interactive display of the many exciting programs within the Activity Programs at Panangga (Christies Beach) and Keswick.

For more information about activities planned during Mental Health Week go to: www.mhcsa.org.au

12th National Volunteering Conference

As you know, one of my Communication Officer hats involves facilitating volunteering at MIFSA. In this capacity I was lucky enough to attend the 12th National Volunteering Conference in September. To my delight, it was held at the Radisson Resort in the Gold Coast, Queensland. I had never been there so I got to enjoy many new sights, including an amazing view from my 19th Floor hotel room. I stayed at the Crowne Plaza in Surfers Paradise and was able look directly north at the buildings scraping the sky (and twinkling brightly at night), west to the hinterlands and east over the Pacific Ocean. Coming from Adelaide, it was unusual to see the sun rising from the sea and setting over the hills!

“Catch the new waves” was the theme of the conference and it was a stimulating and action packed few days which I shared with 530 delegates from all over Australia. International speakers included Mr Bruno Ayres who is the Chief Networking Officer and creator of Volunteer-to-Volunteer (V2V), a social network for volunteers in Brazil; and from across the Tasman, Professor Margaret Tennant, Dean, Graduate Research School, Massey University, New Zealand.

Apart from excellent and relevant keynote speakers at the plenary sessions; the conference content was divided into three streams:

1. The shift in the way people are volunteering
2. Flexibility in management
3. The changing demographic in volunteering

It was all very interesting, especially hearing about younger volunteers (the Generation X and Y people), their vision for Australia and their perspective on volunteering. The delegates and presenters came from all corners of Australia from a variety of organisations and agencies large and small: metropolitan and rural; federal and state government; the business sector and not for profit community based organisations. It is comforting to know that we as a nation have opportunities like this to listen to what each other is doing, pool our ideas and share information. No need to reinvent the wheel if someone is doing something really well already!

More volunteers required to assist in promoting MIFSA at the **disABILITY Expo 2008**

As Communications Officer, Susan Wilkes will be facilitating MIFSA's participation in the disABILITY Expo. If you would like to assist by offering some time during the day (duration of your choice), by staffing the MIFSA stall and promoting MIFSA programs and services, please contact Susan on 8221 5160 or at susanw@mifsa.org for more information or to offer your assistance.



There was huge emphasis on the value of volunteering at a community, local, state and national level. The Reverend Tim Costello referred to Australia as a “nation of volunteers” and emphasised (as did all) that volunteers are the key to a healthy society and that we should build upon our social capital. There is a national push towards best practice models for volunteer management and the sector now has at a Federal level and for the first time, a parliamentary secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector, Senator Ursula Stephens (see article on page 11).

I returned with new connections, excitement about possibilities and lots to think about, including the issues facing volunteers and the voluntary sector. If anyone would like to know more about the conference, then please contact me or go to www.volunteeringaustralia.org where a number of the papers presented are able to be viewed or downloaded.

Susan Wilkes
Communications Officer
susanw@mifsa.org

disABILITY Expo 2008

Friday 24th October, 10am - 5pm

at the Adelaide Showground, Jubilee Pavillion

Attractions include:

- Over 120 stalls full of information located indoors and on the ground floor with Pathways from school - including further education, employment assistance and day options
- FREE entertainment, workshops, community recreation
- Sporting clinics and a huge range of disability products and aids
- The Adelaide United soccer players available for autographs and free give aways

Free admission
 Free parking

The Expo is about the health and wellbeing of people of all ages, including people with a disability, parents, caregivers and general community.



Bright Future for Volunteering in Australia

PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY FOR THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR, SENATOR URSULA STEPHENS, LAST WEEK ADDRESSED THE VOLUNTEERING AUSTRALIA CONFERENCE ON THE GOLD COAST, REAFFIRMING THE RUDD GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO SUPPORTING AND PROMOTING VOLUNTEERING.

More than 500 people attended the three day Volunteering Australia Conference, which had the theme 'Catch the new Waves'. Senator Stephens outlined the Federal Government's priorities in enabling new waves of social innovation in Australia, through a National Strategy for Volunteering. "I am currently engaged in developing a national strategy to find ways the Government can help volunteering to flourish," she said. "The year 2011 will mark the tenth anniversary of the United Nations International Year for Volunteers in 2001, and we will join countries around the world in developing fresh ideas and proposals for volunteering to celebrate this occasion.

The Senator also announced \$64,000 in new funding for GoVolunteer, This is a terrific online tool for those in the non-profit sector, individuals and business to register and find volunteering opportunities nationally. "This new funding is another positive step towards finding innovative ways to promote volunteering, and is especially helpful for corporate partners who are keen to find meaningful opportunities to contribute to their community through corporate volunteering program." The Senator praised the work of volunteers, saying they are a significant part of the Government's Social Inclusion agenda.

This announcement builds on the Rudd Government's strong support for volunteering, including the three-year \$64 million Volunteer Grants Program, which is allowing community organisations to reimburse their fuel costs and helping them to pay for equipment. The Government has also commissioned the Productivity Commission to construct a new tool to measure the contribution of the non-profit sector to communities and the economy, and is working with the States and Territories to address regulatory burdens on the sector.

Used with permission from Volunteering SA ebulletin, 10th September, e-news@volunteeringsa.org.au
www.volunteeringsa.org.au

Volunteer work at MIFSA

Looking for voluntary work? Enjoy meeting people? Committed to supporting MIFSA? MIFSA provides its services ONLY through the generous and enthusiastic support of volunteers. To discuss options please contact Susan Wilkes, phone 8221 5160 or email susanw@mifsa.org

Celebrating our Volunteers

Volunteers offer MIFSA three precious gifts: their time, energy and talents. In turn we strive to offer exciting programs where volunteers work. We look for opportunities where volunteers can develop new skills and share their existing talents.

MIFSA volunteers are involved in the full range of education, support, information and rehabilitation and recovery-based programs in our organisation. For example, Support Group leaders facilitate regionally based support groups, Librarians maintain the MIFSA library, Activity Centres volunteers participate in the accredited food service and assist in the delivery of activity programs. Administration volunteers assist with general office duties, the MIFSA News team volunteers prepare newsletters for posting, Fundraising volunteers assist through Badge Day collections, while a growing number of Volunteers have participated in Advisory Groups to provide systems advocacy.

Volunteers enrich MIFSA programs with their wide range of skills and experiences whilst supporting MIFSA to maintain and expand services to people with a mental illness, their families and the community. MIFSA is greatly dependent on its teams of volunteers for the services they provide, in fact more than 140 volunteers give MIFSA approximately 20,000 hours each year!

Each year MIFSA also celebrates with a Volunteers Function to celebrate the work of volunteers and acknowledge their hard work and contributions. Without the dedication and passion of our teams of fantastic volunteers we would not be able to deliver the full range of MIFSA services, nor reach more than 35,000 people each year.

Thank you to all our volunteers, thank you for your work and for your energy.

We hope you are all able to attend your special night!

Volunteers Function

Friday, 5th December, 6pm - 8pm

Invitations will be posted to all current MIFSA Volunteers; we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible.





Nominees to Board of Management: Profiles

PAT MCLEOD

My interest and specialisation is in psychosocial rehabilitation, especially vocational rehabilitation.

I have completed a Masters of Applied Science by Research looking at the issue of managing mental illness at work. I have worked in vocational rehabilitation since 1989. This has frequently involved collaboration with employers, medical personnel and community agencies in order to assist individuals to achieve their goals.

My connections are primarily within the Commonwealth Government sector, particularly in relation to employment assistance programs.

I am keen to offer my extensive experience in the Commonwealth sector – and more particularly my passion for enabling people who experience mental illness to participate in society in the way they would choose. I believe that organisations such as MIFSA are a critical player in the mental health field.

LISA MURPHY

I am an enrolled nurse and currently studying to become a registered nurse. I have had experience in nursing people dealing with the challenges mental illness provides.

I also have 'lived experience' with mental illness, and it is through this I was first exposed to the wonderful organisation of MIFSA, and joined in April this year. Since joining I have become an active member participating in many activities. I am a member of the 'MIFSA RECOVERY!' Band (I am honoured that the name I suggested for the band was used).

I hold the position of Secretary on the 'Chutzpah' committee and I will be acting as a 'MIFSA Ambassador' during Mental Health Week. I will be at the Stall in the Mall and Keswick Open Day to assist people as needed. I will be responsible for providing information, and showing the MIFSA facilities. I also represented the points of view of the MIFSA consumer recently when the MIFA consultant visited SA to gather information for the development of their strategic plan.

I have been invited to participate as a committee member for the Sunflower awards this year, and happily accepted the opportunity. I am an active member of the 'MIFSA Crew' and I provide support with required tasks, this could be administrative, in the kitchen or shopping. I will commence 'peer worker' training in October and I am hopeful of obtaining a role with MIFSA, should the opportunity arise.

Life changing is the only way I can describe my experience with MIFSA and its amazing staff. From the first time I stepped through the front door, I have felt welcomed and at home. I believe in everything that MIFSA stands for. I believe my lived experience, my network of MIFSA friends, family, nursing experience and enthusiasm will be an asset should I be successful in my nomination for the Board.



NEVILLE RICE - TREASURER

It is my privilege currently to serve on your Board as the MIFSA Treasurer, and I look forward to your support in my re-election to the Board.

I am currently employed as an ICT professional with South Australia's Department of Treasury and Finance. Prior to this, I served in other ICT positions where I acquired a strong strategic, accounting, banking and financial background. I served on the Board of the Mood Disorders Association prior to the organisation merging with the Mental Illness Fellowship of South Australia.

Jenny and I are also carers; therefore we both have a keen interest in mental illness. We are also members of Carers SA and of the Christadelphian CareGroup SA (where I also serve as Treasurer, managing the necessary interactions with the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs, and the Australian Taxation Office for GST lodgements and other matters).

I serve on a number of management committees, and have also served as treasurer on a school canteen committee.

DR ELI RAFALOWICZ

I have been a MIFSA Board member for three years. I have been very supportive of the growth and development of MIFSA, and have tried to contribute as best I could. I have worked in public mental health services for many years and have strived for the best opportunities for people living with mental illness.

I am a strong supporter of consumer driven and community based mental health services and have advocated for consumers and carers involvement in service development and evaluation.

I have worked as a clinician-psychiatrist and manager in public mental health services for more than 20 years, and have also experienced the system as a carer so I have some understanding of the issues from that perspective. My job is as Executive Director, Mental Health, Southern Adelaide Health Service, but I am currently acting as Executive Director Mental Health, for Central Northern Adelaide Health Services.



Pathways to Recovery Project

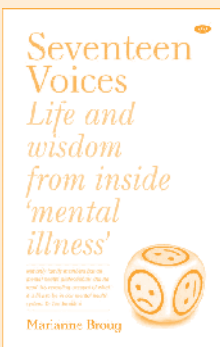
The Consumers Forum/Workshops day event titled "Recovery and Staying Focused" held at the Playford Civic Centre SA on Tuesday July 1st organised by Sue Williams from the Australian Mental Health Consumer Network was extremely successful. The event attracted around 90 consumer, carers, support workers and health service providers from metropolitan Adelaide, rural and remote SA and even from interstate.

Much discussion occurred around the topic of "Recovery" its definition and how the process occurs. Many people agreed that consumers often recover more quickly when a holistic approach is used with a merge of medical and psychosocial interventions which need to be effectively coordinated to suit the individual and that the individual must engage in the process. Hope was identified as a key ingredient for recovery. It was very evident that the majority of the audience and participants were extremely pleased with the event and want more similar events.

The '23 Big Issues Workshop' and the associated national evaluation survey were discussed. The discussion certainly indicated that action is needed for a better mental health service and many issues originally raised in the year 2000 are still unresolved. It was made very clear that many consumers and carers want help but just can't get an appropriate service.

New in the Library:

Seventeen Voices: Life and wisdom from inside 'mental illness'



Who are the real experts when it comes to 'mental illness'? Where other books tend to look at 'mental illness' from the outside in, and how suffering can be overcome, *Seventeen Voices: Life and wisdom from inside 'mental illness'* distills the wisdom and understanding gained from the sufferer's personal insight and experience.

Marianne Broug conducted candid interviews with 17 sufferers of 'mental illness', ranging in age from 20 to 74. Their stories cover topics such as the nature of 'mental illness', suicide, self-harm, trauma, violence, alcoholism, various forms of therapy and drug use, side effects, homelessness and Aboriginality.

People living with mental illness are in so many ways forced to live 'hidden' lives because of the discomfort of others. This only adds to their suffering and also stigma. *Seventeen Voices: Life and wisdom from inside 'mental illness'* aims to make that suffering more visible and also more understood. Unlike text books it shows the very human face of 'mental illness'. Depression is currently the leading cause of non-fatal disability in Australia, but only three per cent of the population identifies it as a major health problem. On average, one in five Australians will experience some form of mental illness each year.

"Not only family members but all mental health professionals should read this revealing account of what it is like to be in our mental health system," says Dr Jon Jureidini, Head, Dept Psychological Medicine, Women's and Children's Hospital, Adelaide. ISBN 9781862548015 RRP \$34.95
www.wakefieldpress.com.au



Stigma came out on top as requiring the most action, with people suggesting greater education to the public on the subject of mental illness and that more information resources should be readily available in such places as GP clinics, chemist shops and libraries. The public need to be told that one in five will experience a mental illness and that one in four families are affected by a family member with mental illness.

Other key issues highlighted were:

- Lack of effective partnerships between service providers
- Rural and remote people being extremely disadvantaged by lack of services
- People need to be extremely unwell to access appropriate and timely help from services
- Lack of information given to people about their illness and legal rights
- Medications causing unwanted side effects
- Lack of suitable access to psychiatrists
- Lack of worthwhile and appropriate rehabilitation
- Lack of continuity of care with insufficient or no support when returning home from hospital
- Lack of supports for carers
- Lack of choice, safety and support regarding accommodation for people with a mental illness.

In general if a recovery orientated system is to be effective then issues such as the above need immediate attention from service providers with the backing of the government in order to allow an obstacle free pathway to supporting recovery.

Dave Tapley, Consumer and Carer Spokesperson

Used with permission from the Mental Health Coalition of South Australia, Peak Action, Sept 2008
www.mhcsa.org.au

The next edition of *MIFSA News* will feature an article from Sue Williams, the organiser and driving force behind the Forum.



Mental Health Outcomes

IT'S ABOUT YOU!

A session for Consumers and Carers of SA Mental Health Services:
10th October 2008, 9:30am to 2:30pm
(morning tea and lunch provided)

Location: The Chifley Hotel
226 South Terrace Adelaide
Free car parking is available

A personal view from a Consumer Consultant, Tania Lewis:

"What's in it for me? Opportunities for Routine Outcome measures to optimise my outcomes."

Consumers and Carers will have the opportunity to participate in discussion on Mental Health Outcome measures.

What makes the information meaningful for you?

What does the future hold?

Any queries and to RSVP, please email Bev Malone by 26/09/2008 bev.malone@health.sa.gov.au (please specify any dietary requirements).

Do you have a complaint about SA health services or community services?

The Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner (hccsc) is:

- independent and deals with complaints about public, private and non government services;
- can assist you to resolve your complaint;
- may investigate your complaint.

SOME EXAMPLES OF HEALTH SERVICES:

hospitals, health clinics and alternative therapists.

SOME EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY SERVICES:

disability, child protection services, counsellors and other support services.

hccsc services are free

Enquiry Service:

Monday to Thursday 10am to 4pm
8226 8666, 1800 232 007 (country callers)
for more information go to: www.hccsc.sa.gov.au

If you have a group or membership that would be interested in having someone come and talk to you about your rights under the Health and Community Services Complaints Act contact Andrea, phone 8226 8633.

Mental Health Forum

FOR CONSUMERS AND CARERS IN THE SOUTHERN MENTAL HEALTH REGION

Thursday 23rd October; 11:30am - 2:45pm

- A chance to find out about who we are and what we aim to do
- To achieve a better mental health service for all
- Find out how you can be involved
- An opportunity to talk with consumers and carers about their role as active participants

Venue: Clark Function Room, Glandore Community Centre, 25 Naldera St Glandore

Free entry, healthy lunch included; **free Car Parking**

Public Transport details:

Near Bus Routes 241, 242: Stop 10, Winifred Street, Glandore
720, 721, 725: Stop 9, South Road, Glandore

Tram Stop 8, Beckman Street, Glandore

Emerson Train Station

RSVP to June Yeow by Thursday 16th October, ph 8204 5904 or email: june.yeow@fmc.sa.gov.au

Please advise of any special dietary needs etc

Sponsored by Southern Mental Health Regional Consumer and Carer Advisory Group, incorporating Inner Southern CCAG, Noarlunga CCAG, Mental Health Services for Older People CCAG and Statewide Gambling Therapy Services CCAG.

Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of SA (DACSSA)

(DACSSA) is a Commonwealth funded disability advocacy service which assists people with disabilities, including mental health problems, to gain access to their rights and have a voice.

DACSSA provides a broad range of advocacy services to assist people with disabilities to address their grievances and complaints in all areas of life.

DACSSA provides individual advocacy, which acts on the expressed wishes of clients. Only if people cannot express their wish will **DACSSA** Advocates act in the best interest of clients. People with disabilities are in the driver's seat, and it is **DACSSA's** foremost task to enable people with disabilities to have their own voice.

All services are provided in a manner that makes them accessible and approachable.

All clients' privacy and confidentiality is assured. Clients are given full information, which is easily understood, about the process of actioning their complaint and about potential outcomes.

**To contact DACSSA phone 8234 5699 TTY: 8234 2229
Fax: 8234 6044 Toll Free: SA Country Callers: 1800 088 325
Email: drigney@dacssa.org.au www.dacssa.org.au**



Author seeks your help

SONYA MELBOURNE, WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE AUSTRALIAN BIPOLAR SCHIZOAFFECTIVE NETWORK, IS CURRENTLY DEVELOPING A BOOK THAT WILL BE TITLED, *INSPIRED*.

Sonya would like to talk with people who have been diagnosed with bipolar disorder, schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder, who have achieved happiness and success in their lives. She intends to gather content for the book through confidential interviews – either in person or by telephone - with volunteers who are willing to share their stories of triumph and success, for the benefit of others. To assure privacy, no real names will be used unless expressly requested by the contributor.

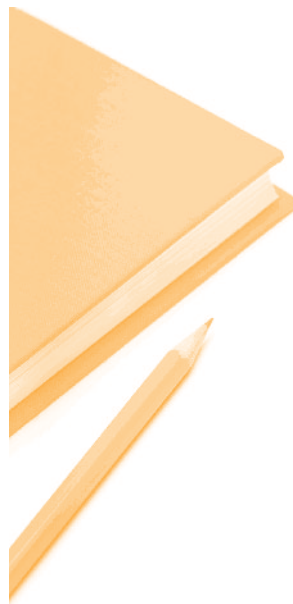
The interview questions include:

- When and how the individual first became aware of their condition;
- What the individual experienced – in all aspects of their lives – in relation to their condition;
- Strategies or events that assisted them to achieve a level of recovery or wellness;
- How life has changed through achieving wellness, with emphasis on achievements; and
- Advice / wisdom / messages to share with others who are currently struggling with the same illness.

Approval of final copy will be sought from individual participants before any material is used for publication.

Inspired will be a compilation of true stories of those diagnosed with bipolar disorder, schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder, who have achieved happiness and success in their lives. In short, *Inspired* is to be about the triumph of the human spirit; a powerful source of inspiration and a genuine message of hope to sufferers the world over, that wellness and recovery are possible.

Sonya Melbourne can be contacted by:
phone: (07) 3220 3088 or mobile: 0419 748 616
email: smelbourne@astorlevin.com
post: GPO Box 3241 Brisbane QLD 4001



Help via the Internet for people with bipolar disorder

RESEARCHERS AT UNIVERSITY OF NSW ARE CURRENTLY RECRUITING PEOPLE WITH BIPOLAR DISORDER THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA TO PARTICIPATE IN AN INNOVATIVE ONLINE STUDY DESIGNED TO HELP THEM TAKE CONTROL AND STAY WELL.

To be eligible for the online program, people need to:

- have been diagnosed with bipolar within the last 12 months;
- have a treating physician or clinical psychologist;
- have a valid email address and access to a computer and the internet;
- be able to undertake eight 30min weekly online sessions and complete four questionnaires over eight months;
- be aged over 18 and live in Australia.

WHAT IS INVOLVED?

You will be offered one of three programs that involve online education about bipolar disorder. In addition, one of the programs includes email support from an 'Informed Supporter' (a person with bipolar disorder who is effectively managing his/her condition) who will provide information and practical advice about bipolar disorder. To take part in the program, you must be prepared to complete four questionnaires during eight months and continue to see your managing health professional.

For further information contact: onlineprograms@unsw.edu.au

taken from Mental Health Council of Australia enews, 19/8/2008

Housing SA Accommodation Advice

At MIFSA at Keswick fortnightly on Thursdays, 1-4pm

Housing SA provides an Outreach Service for people with mental illness. To make an appointment with the Outreach Service Officer, phone Cecile or Carol on 8221 5166.



Marion Support Group

MEETINGS ARE HELD BIMONTHLY (FEBRUARY, APRIL, JUNE, AUGUST, OCTOBER, DECEMBER) ON THE SECOND TUESDAY AS SOCIAL GET-TOGETHERS OVER A MEAL AT THE MARION HOTEL, MARION ROAD; FROM 6:15PM

Next meeting: Tuesday 14th October @ 6:15pm

Please join us at the Marion Hotel for an evening of 'keep in touch' and recall the events of the past two months. Everyone welcome. Please phone Narelle, 8278 5796 to secure your spot at the table. Bookings essential.

Cheers and regards to you all,
Narelle Gordon

Mood Disorders Carers Group

MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE FOURTH TUESDAY OF THE MONTH, AT MARJORIE BLACK HOUSE, 47 KING WILLIAM ROAD, UNLEY; 7:30PM

Offering help and support to those in the role of caring for people with bipolar affective disorder and depression.

Coming Meetings:
Tuesdays 28th October and 25th November 2008

Newcomers welcome; to join this group please phone MIFSA on 8221 5160

Group Convenor: Marcia Johnson Timm

My 25 year old daughter was diagnosed with bi polar a couple of years ago. As a Mother I have never felt more inadequate in all my life. I have devoted years to keeping her safe and now I had met my match. This is something I could not fix and I felt helpless.

I have come to a different place now and realised that she has been chosen to handle this because she is so strong.

She is my inspiration, her determination and courage inspires me.

It is no accident that the black dog chooses to visit the most creative, artistic, determined and inspiring amongst us.

Love and light to you Lisa.

Shelly Murphy

Black dog

The black dog of depression crept into your room last night, stole the smile from your mouth and the twinkle from your eyes momentarily.

Teeth bared, eyes glowing in the dark, mocking me. Once, I would have felt a failure; no salve to apply to your wounds. But I have stopped flailing about like a drowning man, fighting an un-winnable battle.

I am wiser now, and with that comes peace.

Black dog's visit is a temporary shadow, that vanishes as your smile returns.

Black dog is cunning, but he is no match for you.

Your determination, your strength, sends him off, tail between his legs. I could not be prouder.

Your inner light is almost blinding.

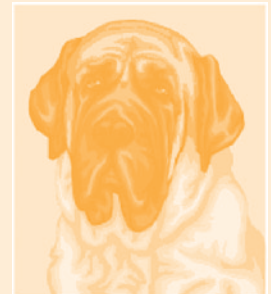
Perhaps the black dog can not help himself and needs to bask in it awhile.

I do not blame him; you are a gift to me.

So black dog, come sit with me awhile, while she sleeps.

Rest those weary bones, but don't get too comfortable, because you will soon be on your way.

© Shelley Murphy, 2008



Bread tags fundraiser

THE TALLY OF BREAD TAGS COLLECTED BY OUR MEMBERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC, BOTH IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA AND INTERSTATE, IS NOW OVER 1500KG.

Thank you all for a fantastic effort!

Our thanks also to the efforts of our volunteers in picking up, weighing and bagging the bread tags – your efforts are greatly appreciated.

Since the last *MIFSA News*, bread tags collections large and small, from near and far, have been received from:

D&P Harrison from Batemans Bay NSW
Quilters on the Square Quilting Group
Carolyn Cordon, Mallala Community
Regen Opportunity Shop, St Agnes
Christadelphian Hall, Adelaide
Dr Arnold's patients, Fulham
TAFESA Pt Augusta Campus
District Council of Kimba
Lynn Davy

Thank you all, and the many anonymous donors who leave bread tags at our Sunflower Shops, the Collection Bins, Panangga and the RAH Hospital Kiosk. Your support is appreciated.

Delivery Points for Bread Tags:

Sunflower Shops at Christie Downs, Goodwood or Seacombe Gardens – see addresses above.

Sunflower Shops Collection Bins at:

- Sixth Ave Shopping Centre, Cnr Sixth Ave & Stephens Tce St Peters
- Woolworth's Plus, 272 Shepherds Hill Rd, Eden Hills
- Mental Health Resource Centre, 1 Richmond Road, Keswick
- Panangga Activity Centre, 64 Elgin Avenue, Christies Beach

In Memoriam

Thank you to those who have supported MIFSA in this way with their donations in lieu of flowers. It is through your generosity and financial support we can continue to help both people with mental illness and their carers. MIFSA gratefully accepts memorial gifts to help its work. Donations are promptly acknowledged to the bereaved and the donor.

MIFSA's Sunflower Shops are located at:



CHRISTIES DOWNS

Shop 4, Flaxmill Shopping Centre, 303 Flaxmill Road
Phone 8236 2456

GOODWOOD

145 Goodwood Road (*just south of the Capri Theatre*)
Phone 8272 7162

SEACOMBE GARDENS

577 Morphett Road
Phone 8298 3051

FOUNDATION SHINE
INCORPORATED

Fund Raising for MIFSA!

Foundation Shine Incorporated has been formed recently by Robyn May and Sharon Middleton to assist organisations dealing with the broad issues associated with mental health.

All proceeds from Foundation Shine's inaugural fundraising event will be directed to the Mental Illness Fellowship South Australia.

The event will be held at the Adelaide Entertainment Centre on the 7th of October 2008, commencing at 7 pm with pre-dinner drinks sponsored by Access Capital with a spectacular fashion parade hitting the cat walk at 7:15 p.m. sharp, featuring hats from Studio Hats and Jewellery from Ninnis designs.

Following on from this a 3 x course dinner will be served with beer, soft drink and wines supplied through the generosity of Kingston Estates.

Whilst this is happening, throughout the night guests can inspect the display of classic cars, Australia 1 super truck and stretch hummer supplied by Hummer S.A.

Entertainment will continue throughout the evening with a silent auction and main auction taking place. A lucky cash draw will be run and hats, jewellery and hot rod gear will be available for sale on trading stands.

MIFSA extends its gratitude to Foundation Shine for their generosity and amazing energy!! Look out for an update of this event in the next edition of *MIFSA News*.



Financial Counselling



EVERY TUESDAY 11AM TO 1PM AT MIFSA, KESWICK

Are you worried about your finances? Do you have debts that you are finding difficult to manage? Are you finding it very hard to stretch your money each fortnight to just pay for essentials? Then I may be able to help.

I am Rosalyn Williams and I have been providing financial counselling services each Tuesday at Keswick this year. I am a qualified financial counsellor from UnitingCare Wesley Bowden. I have been very happy to assist many people at MIFSA, in ways that have included:

- Having debts written off because of wrong conduct by certain retailers or credit providers
- Negotiating variations to credit arrangements due to special circumstances
- Assisting access to superannuation on grounds of hardship
- Negotiating final settlements on debts
- Preparing money plans to help people budget

Often financial problems are directly linked with mental illness. I have negotiated on behalf of people who have incurred debt when in psychotic or manic phases. I also see debt worries aggravating conditions of depression and anxiety. I can negotiate with creditors on your behalf and help to uphold your rights.

Gaining control over your finances relieves a lot of stress. Financial counselling services are FREE.

I consult at MIFSA (1 Richmond Road, Keswick) every Tuesday between 10am and 1pm. If you would like an appointment, then phone MIFSA Reception on 8221 5160 to make an appointment.

Roslyn Williams

Wednesday Forums

At Keswick Activity Centre, MHRC Bldg, 1 Richmond Rd Keswick:
1-3pm
 15th October, Depression **Facilitator**
 Sophie Angell

At Panangga Activity Centre, 64 Elgin Ave Christies Beach:
11am - 12noon
 29th October Q&A - Mental Health **Facilitator**
 12th November Emotional Wellbeing MIFSA Education Team
 26th November Topic TBA Dr Georgina Cheng

Activity Program Centre Update

The range of Activity Programs available for participants to engage in and to enjoy is extensive. The choice ranges from established programs like woodwork, music, bowling and swimming to new programs which are due to roll out shortly.

One new addition is the fishing program. This will be run from Keswick by Brenton Hooper. Brenton has some 15 years experience in the fishing industry and is keen to share fishing secrets with would-be anglers and those who regularly feed the fish instead of catching them! Anglers will also be able to enjoy fishing at various surf and jetty locations around the peninsular, as well as fishing the Port River and even dangling line for carp in the Torrens.

So whether you are a beginner or the type of angler who would give Rex Hunt serious competition, come along and check out the new fishing program. Book a spot quickly as places are limited and it will be a very popular program. The program starts Friday 26th September at 10am.

Keep your eye out also for the flyers for the Mental Health Week activities including the Keswick and Panangga Activity Centre's Open Days and the Stall in the Mall. We are looking to make both events interactive with art and craft projects as well as some fun activities like hand tennis and dry land simulated fishing. MIFSA Crew and Chutzpah members will be on hand as ambassadors to guide and welcome visitors to the centre for the Open Day at Keswick and the Stall in the Mall.

Come and try some programs, be active, join in the fun and games and put the "I" into participate.

Suzi Howard
Keswick Activity Centre Coordinator
suzhoward@mifsa.org

Tobacco & Mental Illness Project

Be Smoke Free!

WOULD YOU LIKE TO QUIT OR CUT BACK TOBACCO?

Come and join a group support program. The group is for people who are:

- Just thinking about quitting
- Wanting to cut back
- Really keen to stop smoking

New Group starting early 2009

For more information or to register, please contact Carol at MIFSA on 8221 5160 or phone the Be Smoke Free! team on 8200 2009.



Marking out what needs to be done

THIS IS THE FIRST IN A SERIES OF INTERVIEWS WITH MIFSA CREW MEMBERS. THE CREW ARE THE SOMETIMES INVISIBLE PEOPLE WHO FIX, MOVE AND UPGRADE THINGS AROUND THE BUILDING AND GENERALLY KEEP THINGS GOING WITHOUT MAKING A BIG FUSS. CAN THEY FIX IT? YES THEY CAN!

Name – Mark aka ‘The Sheriff’ Roberts

Ice Cream Flavour – Chocolate

Birthday – 10 January

Drives – Ford Laser

Music – rock ‘n roll, Coldplay is good

Important Stuff – Crows

The Crew – Mark stresses again and again that the crew are volunteers. They donate their time to performing the myriad of maintenance tasks around the place and basically, “fixing broken stuff”. The crew also includes several kitchen volunteers who keep everyone well fed, and usually manage a smile or bit of banter for each person who comes past.

Mark talks with evident satisfaction about getting to play with power tools, paint or move things, as he puts it, “whatever needs doing”. Being part of the crew ensures a good, friendly working environment, crew members support each other and have a laugh together and Mark feels they are also well supported and appreciated by staff.

Mark is encouraging about people joining MIFSA Crew as, “there’s always room for somebody else.” It seems the work never stops. After volunteering with the crew for six months Mark feels it is now opening possible pathways to paid work. “I’m happy,” he states simply, and there is a wealth of confidence and achievement behind the short statement.

The Person – In general Mark comes across as a man of few words, stating things simply and sticking to the point. It is clear he prefers to do things than discuss them and he seems reluctant to talk up what he does, repeatedly shrugging and making light of doing what “needs to be done.” Clearly, and luckily for the maintenance of the place, Mark is a ‘doing’ rather than a ‘talking person’.

Some details do come out. Mark has always been an Adelaide boy, and has lived his sometimes rocky life entirely in Adelaide. He was a concrete pump operator, which was hard work, and has tried many other jobs over the years.

MIFSA Chutzpah!

For those with the energy and enthusiasm to try new and exciting things, “MIFSA Chutzpah!” is a group that encourages and facilitates entrepreneurial ideas, and develops project-based activities to benefit the participants as well as the wider community.

So come and join us if you want to do something different, have ideas or like being with those who push the limits!!! This group will connect with Panangga and Keswick sites.

Contact Suzi for details on 8221 5160



Mark speaks of his work at MIFSA:

“I always look out for things to do. This means the position fits me well: volunteering to do maintenance.”

Mark is happy for other people to have meetings and make decisions on stuff, he simply gets on with the job: “I see and know what needs doing,” he insists. He says that the outcome of other people’s decisions is sometimes getting the crew to do some work and he is very happy to be part of that very real end of things. “Beats sitting down on your bum” he tells me frankly and it seems to me that sums up the mentality of volunteering extremely well.

Mark is also part of the woodwork group and any time he is at MIFSA he likes to keep busy. “You’re sitting, having a smoke, chewing the fat and you might notice a bin that’s full. No point waiting for it to empty itself because it won’t happen,” Mark tells me. I feel slightly shamed that perhaps I had thought a lot of the small practical things like bins “just happen”. With the MIFSA Crew supporting us all there is little call to wonder because quite often the job is done before any of us have noticed.

Stef Rozitis, member of the Churtzpah Editorial Team

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Keswick: 8410 5249
Panangga: 8186 6482

MEMBERSHIP FORM/ CHANGE OF ADDRESS



Mail to : PO Box 310 Marleston 5033

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DEADLINE For articles letters and
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