

IN THIS ISSUE

Keeping you up to date:		Schizophrenia Awareness Week	12
- From the President	2	MIFSA Support Groups	16
- From the CEO	3	For Your Information:	
MIFSA Programs:		- The 80:20 Rule	10
- Activity Programs	4	- Unlocking the Door to Health	
- Education and Therapeutic Groups	5	and Wellbeing	18
- Well Ways Programs	7	- Two Hats, One Head	19
- Respite Programs	8	Key Contacts and	
- Personal Helpers and		Membership Renewal	20
Mentors (PHaMs) Programs	10		

ISSUE 31
June / July 2011

www.mifsa.org

PM visits MIFSA

Julia Gillard sees firsthand the impact local services will have as a result of Mental Health Reform.

The Prime Minister Hon Julia Gillard, Minister for Health and Ageing Hon Nicola Roxon, Minister for Mental Health and Ageing Hon Mark Butler and Minister for Employment Participation and Childcare Hon Kate Ellis visited the Mental Illness Fellowship South Australia at Wayville on Thursday, 19 May 2011.

Individuals contacting MIFSA connect with therapeutic groups, peer work training, support groups, counselling, education programs and activity programs which are funded by the State Government. MIFSA also offers Commonwealth funded Respite Programs, Support for Day to Day Living in the Community (Activity Programs), Well Ways programs and one to one support through Personal Helpers and Mentors (PHaMs) programs.

The Prime Minister met with MIFSA participants who spoke about the many ways in which these programs have supported their recovery and carer journeys:

The Prime Minister heard how, when faced with homelessness and domestic violence, discrimination and mental illness, MIFSA programs were the one constant for Sarah each week.

Alan shared how Activity Programs offered a space where new skills could be practiced and where he has built his confidence to be himself in the broader community.

Lisa explained that medical attention helped her to get her head sorted but then she found herself with so many other areas of her life which needed support. While Lisa has been unable to access PHaMs from her postcode, Respite Programs have offered her both a one to one worker as well as a week in MIFSA's Respite House to try new activities and inspire her to achieve even more.

Continued page 3



Prime Minister Julia Gillard with Sarah



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.



MENTAL ILLNESS FELLOWSHIP SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC

ABN: 85 595 741 081

PO Box 310
MARLESTON SA 5033

Ph: (08) 8378 4100

Fax: (08) 8378 4199

Email: mifsa@mifsa.org

KEY STAFF

Chief Executive Officer:

Natasha Miliotis

Acting Operations Manager:

Amanda Porter

Programs Managers:

Ben Heyward

Lesley Currie

Mattea Malcolm

Simon McMahon

Finance Manager:

Michael Becker

Communications Officer:

Susan Wilkes

SUNFLOWER SHOPS

Coordinator:

Elsha Stolk

PATRONS

Jane Doyle

Dean Brown

MAJOR SPONSORS

ElectraNet

Foundation Shine

CONTRIBUTIONS TO MIFSA NEWS

Can be sent to the editor at:

mifsa@mifsa.org

DEADLINE

For the Aug-Sept 2011 issue of *MIFSA News*:

Friday, 1 July 2011

DISCLAIMER

Contributions to *MIFSA News* do not necessarily reflect the views of MIFSA.

From the President



Who says work on Boards can't be fun? Because of my role as President of MIFSA, I was asked recently to be one of the judges for the Schizophrenia Awareness Week Art Exhibition and it was an absolute pleasure.

What an amazing array of work. Contributors were asked to consider the theme of physical health; and in more than 200 paintings, prints and photos the number of ways people thought about how to convey that was jaw-dropping.

The day before the opening, Lou Gannon, Mark Lobert and I had the Drill Hall at the Torrens Parade Ground all to ourselves, so we could look at the exhibits and make decisions about the prize winners. Lou and Mark are professionals at this sort of thing, while I am a rank amateur; but we were all overwhelmed by the effect of so much beauty, so much personal effort and so many feelings expressed.

How to select three winners and a number of commendations? We separated and wandered and jotted notes for some time, then came together, to find to our surprise that we were unanimous about the three winners. That still seems like a minor miracle. With some of the commendations we couldn't agree, so we ended up having three or four each that the others did not have to agree on. So there you have it—the very shaky science of art judging! Ultimately art is mainly about personal preferences, and this exhibition had works to delight just about everybody.

I'm not an artist, and I take my hat off to everyone who was exhibited. Your ability to take thoughts, feelings and beliefs, express them with beauty, and have the bravery to put your work out there for all to see, is truly humbling for me. It was a rare privilege to be asked to be a judge. Thanks to MIFSA and all the artists who made this exhibition possible.

David Meldrum

Go to pages 12-14 for the Winning artworks and Commendations.





From the Chief Executive Officer

At MIFSA we talk about 'sharing the journey' – in fact it is our organisation's motto. Most of the time sharing the journey means walking alongside people as they progress their recovery and/or carer journeys.

For MIFSA sharing the journey also means lobbying, advocating and encouraging funders, policy makers, politicians and potential corporate sponsors to invest in community services which assist and support people to manage their mental health conditions.

There is just such a mix of personal, program and funder journeys behind our recent launch of three new and/or enhanced services in Port Lincoln and its surrounds. The new programs are made possible by the valuable sponsorship of ElectraNet and are being delivered through MIFSA Eyre.

In fact there are two particular journeys which finally culminated at our launch on a fine autumn day in Port Lincoln. The first journey begins in 2007 when we decided to apply for funding to deliver services on the Eyre Peninsula. In making this decision we were encouraged by our number one MIFSA goal: to reach people we haven't reached before. This goal identifies a number of target groups: people who are severely impacted by their mental illness, carers, people living in country SA, Indigenous Australians and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Having received a government grant to deliver Activity Programs on the Eyre Peninsula we established MIFSA Eyre and have worked closely with the local communities and services. While we are very pleased with the quality of the services we deliver we also know there is so much more that we can do and so many more people to reach.

That is when the second story becomes all important. In June 2009 our central office moved out of Keswick which had been our base for more than 10 years. During the last few years in Keswick the owner of the building and our landlord was ElectraNet. On moving to our new premises in Wayville we received a generous donation from ElectraNet with a warm letter from the CEO, Ian Stirling, to assist with our move. While there are many improvements which can be made when you move into a building we were much more keen to use the donation for programs or services which would be enjoyed by people living with mental illness, their families and friends. Many conversations followed as ElectraNet and MIFSA began to get to know each other.

In late 2010 MIFSA and ElectraNet formalised their partnership in a Sponsorship Agreement which over the next three years will enable the delivery of a Well Ways Snapshot program for Carers in the Eyre Peninsula and another for Carers living in the south east of South Australia.



On the Eyre Peninsula MIFSA is developing and delivering a "MIFSA 20's" group program to reach young people with mental health needs. In addition sponsorship will allow for development of MIFSA's volunteer program in regional SA which will extend the services we can deliver through the work of valued volunteers.

So, these two journeys became one on 7 April at the official launch of the new and enhanced programs in MIFSA Eyre, see next page for more information.

It is so exciting to see the valuable sponsorship from ElectraNet transform into the recovery journeys of locals who find the confidence to achieve again, who reach for new goals and support each other along this journey of life.

PM visits MIFSA

continued from page 1

Nora spoke about her needs as a Carer and how Respite Programs have been a very positive experience for her family. Nora also spoke about the need for longer term respite options so families could have a break of 5 or 6 weeks to take a holiday or attend to other needs. Helen spoke about the importance of education as well as peer support amongst Carers and how programs such as Well Ways had improved her family's as well as 100's of other families caring experience.

Afternoon Tea with the Prime Minister and party was then shared by Participants, Staff and Volunteers in the Activity Program space complete with the usual Thursday afternoon activity which includes Art and Music. The rousing words of *Help* by The Beatles was followed by the PM's choice of *Brown Eyed Girl*.

MIFSA Participants, volunteers and staff took many opportunities to share personally their experiences and appreciation for community based, mental health programs which support people in their recovery and carer journeys... the consistent message was: 'more please!'

Natasha Miliotis

Activity Programs

THREE NEW PROGRAMS FOR THE EYRE PENINSULA

In April the staff and participants of MIFSA Eyre Activity Programs in Port Lincoln hosted the launch of three new programs within its service. With support provided by our business sponsor ElectraNet, MIFSA Eyre has recently begun delivering three new programs to enhance its existing Activity Programs.

Port Lincoln put on one of its picture perfect autumn days as three staff from ElectraNet – Ian Stirling (CEO), Vicki Brown, (Executive Manager Corporate Services) and Myles Somers (Planning Approvals Manager), along with Natasha Miliotis and Mattea Malcolm from MIFSA, travelled across from Adelaide to be part of the day's events.

The launch featured a participant led tour of MIFSA's vegetable gardens, a display of MIFSA Eyre art work, a Welcome to Country by Howard Richards and speeches of thanks to the community and MIFSA partners in Port Lincoln who continue to share MIFSA's goals of providing opportunities for people living with the impact of mental illness to get back into a productive and meaningful life. We also learnt more about ElectraNet's work as well as their commitment to supporting various community initiatives that embrace community safety, education, the arts, strengthening communities, and conserving and protecting the environment. The formal part of the event culminated in a slideshow of images featuring MIFSA participants enjoying MIFSA activities, accompanied by an original piece of music written by one of MIFSA's participants and played by a volunteer and staff member on guitar. Many stayed to enjoy the bountiful morning tea which MIFSA participants, staff and volunteers had been preparing for weeks.

From my perspective as Programs Manager across MIFSA's Activity Programs, it has been heartening to witness the development of MIFSA Eyre from its early days in January 2008. The work of the team has resulted in many people finding opportunities to work towards a positive future. People have testified to growing more in their short time at MIFSA than ten years previously, to having the confidence to be with people for the first time in many months, and even to attributing their volunteer work at MIFSA to them gaining the confidence to enter the full time work force.

It is these experiences that motivate MIFSA to look for opportunities to expand its services, made possible in this case due to the generous offer of sponsorship by ElectraNet. The funding will go directly into three areas which focus on recognised areas of need on the Lower Eyre Peninsula:

- **MIFSA 20s**

Staff are working with young people experiencing mental health issues to involve them in developing a MIFSA 20s group program on the Eyre Peninsula.



- **Well Ways**

MIFSA Eyre is delivering Well Ways Snapshot program for families supporting a person with mental illness to maintain their own wellbeing while providing care. Well Ways is an evidence based, peer education program delivered by trained facilitators with lived experience of being a carer and lived experience of mental illness.

- **Volunteers**

MIFSA is building on its current work to expand its volunteer focus, which includes training and support. MIFSA Eyre volunteers are 'buddied' with a staff member to increase their experience of facilitating group activities, which increases learning opportunities as well as expand the capacity of MIFSA Eyre.

Thanks to our sponsor ElectraNet, to the community of Port Lincoln, and to the hardworking staff, volunteers and participants of MIFSA Eyre for not only the launch, but also for your ongoing commitment to the hope that we can all contribute and enjoy being part of a meaningful society.

Mattea Malcolm
Programs Manager



Activity programs incorporate Support for Day to Day Living in the Community - a structured Activity Program and are funded from various sources including HACC, SA Department of Health, Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing and through the generous support of ElectraNet in regard to MIFSA Eyre.



Panangga Activity Program

64 Elgin Avenue Christies Beach

MIFSA 20s Friday, 12 August: Ice Skating

Spaces limited so bookings are essential. Please phone MIFSA Panangga, 83825588

Relationships Australia Workshop

Friday 10 June, 1.30 – 3.30 pm: **Self Esteem/Self Compassion**
Bookings essential please phone MIFSA Panangga, 83825588

Wednesday Forums 11am-12 noon

- 1 June **Getting through winter and seasonal affective disorder.**
- 29 June: **Dr Cheng, (topic to be decided).**
- 6 July **Living with anxiety, what it is and how to manage it**
- 13 July **Drug Arm presents-Effects of Alcohol and other Drugs on medication and mental health**
- 27 July **Dr Cheng, (topic to be decided).**

Therapeutic Groups Program

MIFSA's Therapeutic Groups focus on assisting individuals to develop and maintain a key role in their recovery, build strengths and achieve the best possible quality of life. Sharing ideas and methods for managing wellbeing with others who have had similar experiences can be particularly helpful.

Emotional Wellbeing

conducted jointly by MIFSA Therapeutic Groups and Wellbeing and Mental Health (WAMH) Program, Southern Fleurieu Mental Health.

Mondays, 25 July - 29 August
10.30 am - 12.30 pm

Teralba House, 9-13 Seaview Road, Victor Harbor

- Share experiences and increase knowledge and awareness of how our emotions, thoughts and actions impact on our sense of wellbeing
- Understand the ups and downs of self esteem
- Learn strategies and techniques to reduce the impact of stress and anxiety
- Explore how our thinking affects our moods and practice ways to deal with unhelpful thinking
- Learn helpful ways to deal with unpleasant or uncomfortable emotions
- Explore ways to communicate more positively and effectively
- Get in touch with what really matters in life

To register contact Glenys 8551 0544 or Greg 8539 1300 at WAMH, Southern Fleurieu Mental Health, Victor Harbor

Alleviating Anxiety

Tuesdays, 26 July - 30 August
2 pm - 4 pm

Level 1, Education Centre Modbury Hosp. Modbury

Fridays, 29 July - 2 September
10.30 am - 12.30 pm

MIFSA Wayville Conference Room, 5 Cooke Terrace

- Better understand anxiety and stress
- Share ideas with others who have similar experiences
- Learn strategies and techniques to reduce the impact of anxiety on physical and emotional wellbeing
- Learn strategies for dealing with unhelpful or excessive worry
- Look at the links between thoughts, feelings and behaviour
- Practice relaxation and mindfulness
- Get in touch with what really matters in life

Both are two hour sessions held over 6 weeks, including a break for refreshments. No cost, but a gold coin donation would be appreciated.

For more information or register please phone Anna or Ben at MIFSA Wayville, 8378 4100 or email annab@mifsa.org

*The focus is about thriving,
not just surviving*

Education and Therapeutic Groups Programs

'Mum's the word'

I WAS PRIVILEGED TO SPEAK RECENTLY AT A MOTHER'S DAY LUNCHEON FUNDRAISING EVENT, HOSTED BY FOUNDATION SHINE.

Foundation Shine is a fundraising organisation, established to create awareness and assist organisations that are dealing with the broad issues associated with mental health and illness. The name 'Shine' comes from the idea that by helping people to overcome issues associated with mental ill health: they may be able to reach their full potential and to shine. MIFSA is very honoured and grateful to be one of the organisations that benefit from Foundation Shine's fundraising efforts.

The team is very small but hardworking and dedicated – given that each person also has a 'day job', their efforts are even more meritorious. Led by Robyn May and Sharon Middleton, several events are hosted each year, such as movie screenings, themed dinner nights, flower arranging classes and an annual Mother's Day event.

These are done on no small scale, as I found out when I spoke at the 'Mum's the Word' luncheon on 3 May. The setting was the beautiful Adelaide Pavilion in Veale Gardens and, on such a lovely day, the view through the glass wall was spectacular. Guests arrived in their finery to find that no detail had been overlooked by the committee: gorgeous floral table centrepieces, pamper bags for each person to take home, a sensational meal, complimentary massages, a shopping precinct and fashion parade (I shouted my mum a ticket as a gift and she commented, 'forget the clothes, can I purchase a body like that?!') Eve Goodings, lovely wife of media personality Graeme, was our MC and Sharon Middleton showcased her incredible singing talent.

Angela Condous, former Lady Mayoress and one of Adelaide's hardest working and most respected fundraisers, spoke openly about her journey from childhood, to becoming Lady Mayoress. She described candidly the struggles she and her husband encountered in trying to have children, and became emotional when talking about the adoption of their gorgeous baby daughter, now in her twenties and whom Angela described as 'a blessing.'

I prepared my talk along the event's 'Mum's the Word' theme. Using a visual presentation which contained some personal photos, I encouraged the audience to spare a thought for mums who may be experiencing mental illness, as their Mother's Day may not necessarily be a happy time. They may be feeling



depressed, confused, overwhelmed and inadequate. The things that usually fill a mum with joy, such as a hand drawn card, may actually fill some mums with sorrow and guilt; and they may be too frightened to tell anyone.

As I told the group, it can affect any mum. Rich and famous ones, like Brooke Shields for example. And not rich, not famous mums – like me. I related briefly some of my personal experience of perinatal anxiety; how my first two Mother's Days were very unhappy, I was too frightened to speak up but how I eventually had the courage to; which led to me getting the support I needed to recover - as other mums can, too.

I concluded by asking each person to no longer 'keep mum' when it comes to mental illness: that starting a conversation may be just the thing that helps someone – or herself – start on the recovery journey.

As I write this, it is the day after Mother's Day, and for me it was a happy day. I hope it was, and will continue to be, for you too.

For more information on Foundation Shine or to see details of upcoming events, visit www.foundationshine.org.au



Belinda Brown
Coordinator
Therapeutic Groups & Education Program

Wednesday Forums

Wednesday, 22 June
 1 pm - 2.30 pm

Responding to major disasters

Guest Speaker: Maurissa Ailion, Principal Consultant, Triumph - Human Response to Crisis

In the last two years thousands of Australians have been in need of immediate relief and support following large scale devastation from floods, cyclones and bushfires. We have also recently watched the terror of earthquakes and tsunamis.

Counsellor and consultant Maurissa Ailion, who has worked for many years in the field of trauma response, will talk about how crisis and trauma on such a grand scale is managed during and after these events.

Wednesday, 27 July
 1 pm - 2.30 pm

Your Right to Know: consumer and carer participation and Involuntary mental health care

Guest Speaker: Dr John Brayley, South Australian Office of the Public Advocate

Dr Brayley will outline key guiding principles of the Mental Health Act 2009 and talk about how rights can be implemented when a person is receiving involuntary mental health care.

For more information or to register in Forums please phone Anna or Ben at MIFSA Wayville, 8378 4100 or email annab@mifsa.org

Well Ways Programs

Roof over our Heads

Housing is an issue that frustrates many carers or people with a mental illness and causes great anxiety. The community may regard the family home as the best housing option for people with schizophrenia or other disorders, but carers and consumers sometimes disagree.

Excerpt from the magazine *Health Report*:

Overall, 41 per cent [of respondents] believe the 'family home' rather than another home owned or rented by the consumer, is the best option for, for example, people with schizophrenia. Nineteen per cent believe living in a home the consumer owns would be the best housing option. On the other hand 14 per cent say consumers should live in an institution and, indicating the uncertainty regarding this issue, 17 per cent of the respondents 'don't know' which is the most appropriate housing.

Among carers, only 28 per cent say the family home is the best place for people with schizophrenia to live ... a figure that falls to 25 per cent for consumers.

In terms of housing arrangements seen as typical for people with schizophrenia, consumers indicate a variety of options, not just the family home. Twenty-one per cent of consumers nominate public housing, and 12 per cent say a hospital or institution is typical form of housing.

'The reality is that people living with mental illnesses are living in the community more than ever before and, like all Australians, most simply want a place to call their own,' says Rob Ramjan, CEO, Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW (SFNSW).

Ramjan adds, 'There is no definite research that shows exactly where people with a mental illness are living but in New South Wales many consumers receive support from the state Department of Housing.' Ramjan notes that, 'It can be difficult to gather exact figures on housing arrangements for people with mental illness. While we know that many consumers receive support from the Department of Housing, evidence suggests that as many as 75 per cent of homeless people in Sydney have at least one mental illness. We're also concerned to note research indicating that the proportion of people in NSW prisons with 'any psychiatric disorders' is substantially higher, at 7.4 per cent, than the population in the general population, which is 22 per cent.

Learn constructive ways to manage the subject of housing and other issues that add to the stress of being a carer – join the Well Ways Programs to gain strengths to manage issues that affect you and your loved ones.

Well Ways Programs cover mental illnesses, issues around the caring role, the management of your wellbeing, and the services and supports that are out there for you and your loved ones.

Contact Maureen or Carol on 8378 4100
or email wellways@mifsa.org

Best wishes
Maureen Lewis
Well Ways Team Leader



Well Ways Programs to come

Well Ways Building a Future Programs (for family and friends) conducted over 8 consecutive weeks

Mondays, 6 pm - 9 pm commencing 6 June 2011	Grenville Hub Community Centre, Playford Blvd, Elizabeth
6pm session, to be held in June; day and venue still to be confirmed	Royal Park To register your interest phone Maureen or Carol, 8378 4100
6pm session, to be held in July; day and venue still to be confirmed	Marion/Hove area To register your interest phone Maureen or Carol, 8378 4100

Well Ways Building a Future is a program delivered in 8 modules of 3 hours each. You will:

- gain knowledge about mental illness, treatment and recovery.
- receive information about mental health services for people with mental illness and their families.
- increase confidence in dealing with the challenges created by mental illness.
- learn about behaviours associated with diagnosis and strategies to respond effectively.

Well Ways DUO Program (for family & friends on mental illness, drugs & alcohol) for 6 consecutive weeks

Wednesdays, 6 - 9 pm commencing 8 June 2011	MIFSA Conference Room 5 Cooke Terrace, Wayville
--	--

Well Ways Duo is a program delivered in 6 modules of 3 hours each. You will:

- learn the technique of problem solving that works for families of people with a dual diagnosis.
- learn about drugs and their effects, the interaction between them and mental illness.
- learn about behaviours often associated with diagnosis and strategies to respond effectively.

BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL, PHONE MIFSA 8378 4100

Well Ways Programs are funded by the Australian Government under the Mental Health Community Based Program.

Respite Programs

Recovery Story: Care Recipient

WHAT HAPPENED?

I have been in and out of hospital for the past six months because of my mental illness. At the end of 2010 it all started getting worse and worse, the voices really scared me. A lady from the MIFSA Respite Programs said that they would wait for me until I came home and then she said she would visit my home and sit with me and my husband and work together to help me.

HOW DID THIS OCCUR?

I was nervous at first and did not know exactly what was going to happen. My husband seemed relieved because he was getting some help from this as well. When I met the worker she was nice but I did not talk to her much; but she kept coming and would sit with me even if I did not want to talk.

After a while she took me to meditation. I have never done this before and it was really good. It helped me control my mind and slow down. I want to keep doing this; it was very helpful. I am starting to go to the gym again and I feel much better now.

WHO WAS INVOLVED?

Respite Program Team Leader
Respite Worker
Care Recipient
Carer / Husband

WHAT HAS CHANGED AS A RESULT?

I used to be very nervous about going out of the house but I wanted to because I was lonely here at home when the children are at school and my husband is out shopping and taking care of the children. The worker helped me feel better about going out and now I can do this much easier.

HOW DO YOU VIEW THE FUTURE?

I think that after this I will keep going to meditation and to the gym; and I really think that by being more happy I will not be going to the hospital as much anymore.



Recovery Story: Carer

WHAT HAPPENED?

I was struggling a lot at the end of last year: looking after our three daughters, doing the shopping, cooking, cleaning, taking my wife to and from hospital and talking to all the health professionals to make sure everything would go alright. A lady from the MIFSA Respite Program called me every week to see how I was going. The day after my wife left the hospital the lady from Respite came over and talked to us about the service. I was happy about how quickly it happened and how sensitive and caring the worker was.

HOW DID THIS OCCUR?

The worker was sensitive and patient. It was good to see my wife getting excited about the worker coming over, she used to get dressed up and wait for her. This gave her more responsibility in her life, something to look forward to and something to do.

WHO WAS INVOLVED?

Respite Program Team Leader
Respite Worker
Care Recipient
Carer / Husband

WHAT HAS CHANGED AS A RESULT?

I used to take my wife shopping with me and it was hard. She would become very nervous and would rush for me to get home quickly. When the worker visits my wife I can go to the shops and take my time, I do the housework, prepare food and it is much easier.

HOW DO YOU VIEW THE FUTURE?

My wife's sickness has not changed but she seems more confident and comfortable about going out herself. This will help me and make it much easier in the future to do all the things I need to do for my family.

MIFSA Respite Programs
5 Cooke Terrace, Wayville 5033
Ph: (08) 8378 4100, Fax: (08) 8378 4199
Email: respite@mifsa.org

Respite Programs are an Australian Government Initiative



Respite House

RECOVERY-BASED SERVICES

Carers Retreat

Wednesday 1 June - Friday 3 June

For CARERS.
 Program* is available for up to 7 participants who are caring for someone with a mental illness.
 The group will enjoy activities, excursions and shared meals while staying at the MIFSA Respite House.

- Visit Botanic Gardens and Art Gallery
- A day in Hahndorf to visit Tsuchi No Yado for Japanese food & art
- Relax and unwind strolling on the beach.

June-July Respite Programs

The MIFSA Respite Programs is pleased to offer the following recovery-based respite services at Respite House, 17 Davenport Tce, Seaview Downs.

Blokes' Business: Tuesday, 21 June - Friday 24 June

For CARE RECIPIENTS and CARERS.
 Program* is available for up to 7 male participants who are living with a mental illness and receive regular support from a family member or friend. Carers are also welcome to attend or can take a break from their usual caring role.
 The group will enjoy activities, excursions and shared meals while staying at the MIFSA Respite House.

- Go-karting
- African drumming
- The 'inside oil' on mens' health
- Woodwork
- Laser skirmish

**Christmas in July: Tuesday, 19 July - Friday, 22 July
 Tuesday, 26 July - Friday, 29 July**

For CARE RECIPIENTS and CARERS.
 Program* is available for up to 7 participants who are living with a mental illness and who receive regular support from a family member or friend.
 The group will enjoy recovery-based activities, excursions and shared meals while staying at the MIFSA Respite House. Carers are also welcome to attend or can take a break from their regular caring responsibilities.

- Putting up the Christmas Tree
- Christmas craft activities
- Gingerbread baking
- Casual outings
- Shared Christmas dinner

If you are interested in any of these programs please contact:
MIFSA RESPITE PROGRAMS (5 Cooke Terrace, Wayville SA 5034)
Phone: (08) 8378 4100, Fax: (08) 8378 4199, Email: respite@mifsa.org
 * Eligibility criteria applies



August Respite Programs

The MIFSA Respite Programs is pleased to offer the following recovery-based respite services at Respite House, 17 Davenport Tce, Seaview Downs.

Self Care & Relaxation: Tuesday, 2 Aug-Friday, 5 Aug

For CARE RECIPIENTS and CARERS.
 Program* is available for up to 7 participants who are living with a mental illness and who receive regular support from a family member or friend. Carers are also welcome to attend or can take a break from their regular caring responsibilities.
 The group will enjoy activities, excursions and shared meals while staying at the MIFSA Respite House.

- Bath bomb/bath salt making
- Natural Face Masks
- Relaxation Foot Spas
- Visit Himeji Garden
- Casual Outings
- Relaxation Techniques

Express Yourself: Tuesday, 9 August - Friday 12 August

For CARE RECIPIENTS and CARERS; with an arts and crafts focus.
 Program* is available for up to 7 participants who are living with a mental illness and who receive regular support from a family member or friend. Carers are also welcome to attend or can take a break from their regular caring responsibilities.
 The group will enjoy activities, excursions and shared meals while staying at the MIFSA Respite House.

- Visit to Adelaide Art Gallery
- Origami and Calligraphy at Tsuchi No Yado'
- Create your own canvas session
- Casual outings

West meets East: Tuesday, 16 Aug- Friday 19 Aug

For CARE RECIPIENTS and CARERS; with an eastern culture focus.
 Program* is available for up to 7 participants who are living with a mental illness and who receive regular support from a family member or friend.
 The group will enjoy activities, excursions and shared meals while staying at the Respite House. Carers are also welcome to attend or can take a break from their regular caring responsibilities.

- Japanese food and art
- Chinese banquet
- Tai Chi
- Indian chanting
- Casual outings

Personal Helpers and Mentors (PHaMs) Programs

Targeted Community Care (Mental Health) Forum, SYDNEY, APRIL 2011

The Department of Housing Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), organize an annual Forum for people working in the field of PHaMs, Respite and Community Education. Representing MIFSA was Amanda Porter (Program Manager) Respite, Lesley Currie (Program Manager) PHaMs, Helen McGuinness, (Carer), and Jacqui Middleton (Consumer).

The overall theme of the forum was, Partnership, Innovation and Participation, and was attended by in excess of 200 delegates from around the country. Presentation and workshops had a diversity of topics, and included topics such as Disaster response in the Community – and the role and impact on Community Service Providers such as MIFSA; the need for Performance Frameworks and Reporting across the country (statistics), Research, Workforce Capacity, Peer Work training and much more.

Amanda Porter co presented a paper with Red Cross Regional and Remote Services from WA. The papers focused on crisis management and working with vulnerable groups, and in particular practice reflections and what key factors made a difference during a person's crisis. It was important to focus on tailoring services to participant needs, and to be highly flexible and skilled in crisis intervention strategies.

Helen McGuinness and Jacqui Middleton were both Keynote speakers on the second day. Both shared their journeys with the focus on service delivery strategies and what worked for them. It is very challenging at the best of times to present an audience of 200 plus, and you could have heard a pin drop in the auditorium.

Their presentations were very well received with many in the room approaching them afterwards to give well deserved feedback on both presentations.

In addition to their keynote presentations, Helen and Jacqui participated in the final Panel session alongside Deborah Winkler for FaHCSIA, and John Malone from Aftercare. The panel endeavoured to answer questions such as: "In 10 years time when you are looking back to 2011, what was the key element that produced change in the delivery of services for people with mental illness and their families/carers?" This session stimulated much discussion about the hopes and dreams many have for service delivery now and into the future. For many on the day one of the biggest challenges was to find a way to open up the employment market to people living with mental illness, and to break down those barriers which many still face when seeking employment.

Overall the forum is an excellent opportunity for service providers, FaHCSIA, and stakeholders including participants and carers to come together and learn from each other, to share the goals for the future and to maintain the strong and current focus on community based mental health service provision. These forums are well worth attending, and create great opportunities for both learning and networking.

Lesley Currie
Programs Manager

Invitation to participate in Research Study:

'Nurses' use of empathy when working with psychiatric consumers in acute care mental health settings!

Empathy (the ability to understand another person's thoughts, feelings and experiences and/or to experience an emotional reaction) is an extremely important part of a nurse-consumer relationship. In this study researchers are interested in consumers' experiences of empathy during time spent in acute-care mental health settings.

Particular areas of interest are in the role of empathy in conflict situations. For example, disagreements with a nurse, not wanting to take prescribed medication, being secluded or restrained.

Researchers seek to develop understanding of how consumers experience empathy in an inpatient setting and what challenges exist for them to develop an empathic relationship with a nurse.

Participants will attend an interview with 1 or 2 researchers and be asked to think about and describe an experience where they felt that a nurse had taken their perspective or was empathetic in a conflict situation. You will then be asked some questions about what this was like and encouraged to discuss the issues arising from these questions in depth.

There are no right or wrong answers, and responses will be used for no other purposes except this research study. Interview time will be no more than 60 minutes.

Participation will not affect involvement in services and groups at MIFSA. Participants are free to withdraw at any time. In the unlikely event that participation causes personal distress the participant may withdraw from the project and will be provided with the opportunity to talk with the free counselling services or program staff provided through MIFSA, telephone 8378 4100.

Participants may also like to discuss concerns with a coordinator of the MIFSA program or group in which they participate, or another health professional they have contact with. Alternatively, participants can contact the Mental Health Triage Service line on 13 14 66.

Study participants will be reimbursed \$25.00 towards cost of travel to attend the interview. Participation in this research study is voluntary, and this reimbursement is not designed to encourage or persuade participation.

[continued page 16](#)



The 80:20 Rule

Why recovery from mental illness is everyone's business

When people think of recovery from an episode of illness – whether physical or mental – they often think solely in terms of hospitals, doctors and nurses. Clinical care is essential of course, but it's not the whole story, as SANE Speaker, David Braniff, explains . . .

David is a mental health worker with a PHaMs (Personal Helpers and Mentors) program on the NSW-Victoria border.

He is also a SANE Speaker, helping others in the community to understand the impact of mental illness, drawing on his own experience of living with schizophrenia . . .

I want to tell you about my own 80:20 rule with mental illness.

If you look at 100 per cent of the hardship that mental illness caused me, only around 20 per cent was caused by symptoms, that is: hearing voices, delusional thinking and the myriad of hallucinations.

The majority of the negative impact on my life – that is 80 per cent – came from the damage caused to my world, my sense of self, and my relationship to the community. My everyday life was turned upside down, and this is what caused most of the pain.

I experienced:

- fractured relationships with other people
- loneliness
- inability to relate to others
- damaged career
- being very over-weight
- low self-esteem and confidence
- social isolation
- inadequate housing
- disconnection from community
- reduced social activities
- high anxiety levels
- lack of money
- general low standing in society.

All this is what I really had to recover from. As you can imagine, recovery was a massive job. The process started ever so slowly in the year 2000 and I'm still working on it today.

Find out more

For information about PHaMs and other recovery-focused programs and resources, contact the SANE Helpline 1800 18 SANE (7263)

Contact MIFSA PHaMs sites:

Wayville - (08) 8378 4100

Reynella - (08) 8322 0140

Mount Gambier - (08) 8723 6533



Only 20 per cent of my recovery was from the symptoms of schizophrenia. Therefore a psychiatrist can only assist with this 20 per cent.

The 80:20 rule is a very common theme with people that have a mental illness. Just like me the majority of their hardship is in dealing with everyday life. This illustrates the amazing thing about mental illness and the community. Everybody in the community is in a position to help with the majority, the 80 per cent of the trouble.

We can all play a very important role in any number of ways, and I will tell you honestly that in some cases the assistance of others will be far more important than that of the treating psychiatrist. By just being your good, kind self you can make an incredible difference. Mental health workers come and go, but family, friends, and the community will always be there. We can all offer support and encouragement, and be a positive influence in the lives of people who need just a little extra help.

I find this the most exciting part about my current job as a PHaMs worker – helping others with mental illness in that other 80 per cent of their lives.

David Braniff

Used with permission from © SANE Australia and taken from SANE News 55, Spring 2010 issue. For more information go to:

www.sane.org

www.mifsa.org

www.fahcsia.gov.au

Personal Helpers and Mentors Program is an Australian government initiative that aims to provide increased opportunities for recovery for people whose lives are severely affected by mental illness.



MIFSA Art Exhibition 2011

ON TUESDAY EVENING 3 MAY WE LAUNCHED THE 2011 SCHIZOPHRENIA AWARENESS WEEK ART EXHIBITION IN THE DRILL HALL, TORRENS PARADE GROUND, JUST NORTH OF THE ADELAIDE CBD.

The 240 entries looked stunning in a great venue, for which we are grateful to the South Australian History Trust. Let me quote our president David Meldrum from his welcoming speech. 'I'm not an artist, and I take my hat off to everyone who was exhibited. Your ability to take thoughts, feelings and beliefs, express them with beauty, and have the bravery to put your work out there for all to see, is truly humbling for me. It was a rare privilege to be asked to be a judge. Thanks to MIFSA and all the artists who made this exhibition possible.'

Our concept for the Exhibition is that it be a feature event of Schizophrenia Awareness Week and for the mental health arts community to enable the exhibition and opportunity for sale of artworks created by people living with a mental illness, their carers, friends and family members. Exhibition of entries is also open to MIFSA staff, although their entries are not considered in the judging for prizes. As a sector wide event we have many partners and supporters for the Exhibition, including, MHCSA, the Mental Health Coalition of South Australia, Diamond House, Club 84, Club 68, Marra Dreaming and the Dot Painting Group, STTARS, Neami, the Migrant Resource Centre and the new Intermediate Care Centre at Glenside.

This year, as well as the Exhibition providing an endpoint, a showcase as well as learning and social interaction experiences for people living with mental illness and carers, we ran art development workshops facilitated by established and emerging artists to build on the conceptual and technical capacity of emerging artists in the mental health community.

There are many volunteers and MIFSA staff who all put in a tremendous effort to make the Exhibition happen. Sarah Cooper our Art Exhibition Coordinator and the Recovery Band deserve special mention as do our partners at *Splashout Art Studios*, Jenny Tuck and Krystyna Ciseilokiewicz, who not only raised money for MIFSA with their own gallery showing but also curated for us in a voluntary capacity.



The facilitating artists were Lou Gannon and Janet Gallagher who facilitates the MIFSA Wayville Activity Programs Art Group. Lou was also one of our judges and the co-facilitator of the Club 68 Art Group who produced the large triptych (a painting in three panels) which we gratefully borrowed as a feature exhibit.

Since MIFSA restarted the in-house SAW Art Exhibition in 2003 it has grown to become the major art event in the yearly calendar for the mental health sector. The prizes for exhibitors offer small financial assistance and recognition for their work which becomes another foundation for their recovery journey. Each year, two of the three judges are established artists, who have usually facilitated mental health services art therapy groups.

Art groups are delivered by MIFSA, other specialist community mental health services, community services and SA Health Mental Health teams. The Art groups function in mental health services as part of their programs to promote social integration, self-awareness and understanding to strengthen the recovery journey for these men and women. The groups also function for carers to build greater understanding of their care recipients and sustain their own emotional and social health.

Ben Heyward
Programs Manager and Art Exhibition Convenor





MIFSA Art Exhibition, 2011

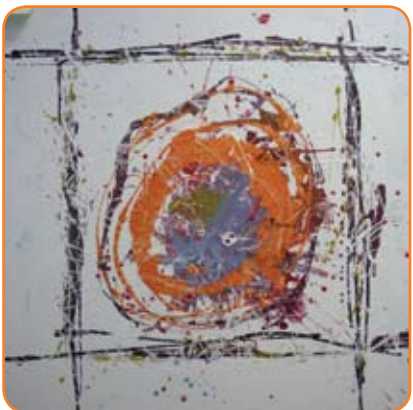
The Winners!



Raylene Snow, *Identity*



Jeanette Tierney, *Cave Cat*



Lifelinks Art Group, *Birds Nest*

The Commendations!



June Bridges, *Fink River*



Steven Bennett, *Beach Scene*



Sharyn Brady, *Out of the Blue*



Muna Rai, *Standing Tall*



John McMahon, *Jem*



Marcia Harris, *Free Spirited*



Neil Bannister, *Diagnostic Dilemma*



Rob Ingleton, *Limpopo*



Jenn Osmond-Erington, *Dots*



MIFSA Art Exhibition, 2011

Commendations!



Jeanette Glasson, *Snail's Pace*



Loique Allain, *Our Hills Hoist*



The Launch!



MIFSA Patron Jane Doyle Opens the 2011 Art Exhibition



Left and right of Natasha are: Krystyna Ciesiolkiewica and Jenny Tuck from Splashout Art Studios, joined by Jane Doyle and David Meldrum.



The Peoples' Choice Award was a draw! Joint winners are: Stephanie Jucius, *Earth Tears* (above) Susan Sunstrom, *Sunset Magic* (left)





Education Forum

More than eighty people attended the Forum held last month at the Goodwood Community Centre as part of MIFSA's Schizophrenia Awareness Week activities.

Those present listened expectantly to five enlightening speakers and four puppeteers who shared their journeys.

People from many walks of life attended including people with the lived experience of mental illness, families and friends, support workers and organisation representatives.

Wonderful and at times heartfelt stories left the audience quiet and engrossed, sometimes smiling, other times surprised, but most of all feeling respect for the ability that the speakers had in sharing and the encouraging words on how life can be fulfilling.

It was an inspiring afternoon where much learning and acceptance was shown. the following are just some of the comments heard:

this was the best forum I have been to . . . I did not understand, but now I do . . . everyone gave such positive hope . . . something to think about . . . a different way to look at things . . . the openness of the speakers was amazing, they are wonderful, I would like to be like them.

Interactive images completed the presentations.

The subjects covered included anorexia, schizophrenia, schizo-affective disorder, bipolar disorder, dual diagnosis, anxiety, delusions and perinatal depression etc. All of this and a great afternoon tea made for a special SAW Forum.

Many thanks to Geoff, Ian, Carly, Annie, Cary, Adam, Peter and Belinda

Maureen Lewis
Team Leader,
Well Ways Programs



One of the Speakers: MIFSA Counsellor, Peter Bartram

Get better by surfing the web?

Australians are increasingly turning to the internet for treatment of a wide range of health issues.

While there are many websites providing valuable health information and effective interventions, it can often be difficult to determine the quality of any particular site.

The ground breaking e-health portal Beacon aims to be a guiding light by providing information and expert ratings on a variety of online interventions and mobile apps for mental and physical health disorders.

Developed by the Centre for Mental Health Research at the Australian National University, Beacon reviews online health applications for people of all ages and is designed to have a wide appeal, providing information for both the general public and for health professionals. Sites and mobile apps are categorised, reviewed, and their effectiveness is rated by an independent panel of health experts. Ratings are made based on an evaluation of the published scientific research evidence about each intervention. These ratings are presented in the form of smiley faces, serving as a simple and intuitive guide to the effectiveness of each site.

Along with these ratings, Beacon provides a brief site overview, the link to the site, and details of any published research evidence. There are currently around 170 rated sites in 34 categories including depression, anxiety, eating disorders, phobias, smoking, alcohol use, diabetes, stress, tinnitus, physical activity, and many more. New sites, apps and categories are continually being added, so check back regularly for the latest reviews. We encourage you to visit Beacon and submit your own comments about the sites, which may then be included on the portal.

Beacon can be accessed free of charge at:
www.beacon.anu.edu.au



Care & Share Group

MEETINGS HELD AT MIFSA PANANGGA, 64 ELGIN AVE, CHRISTIES BEACH ON THE SECOND MONDAY EACH MONTH, 7 PM - 9 PM, INCLUDING PUBLIC HOLIDAYS.

Group aims are to support carers of a person with a mental illness as well as to make a difference in the mental health sector. New members are always welcome.

Coming meetings: Mondays, 13 June (Queens birthday public holiday) and 11 July 2011.

For more information or if you wish to join the group please phone MIFSA Wayville Reception, 8378 4100.

Josie Stevens
Group Facilitator

Rewire Recovery Group

A GROUP FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING ANXIETY, DEPRESSION AND/OR MANIA. GROUPS ARE HELD ON THE SECOND WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH, 1PM - 2.30 PM.

MIFSA Rewire Recovery Group follows the rehabilitation and recovery model, which focuses on supporting people experiencing depression, anxiety and/or mania to develop and maintain a key role in managing their own recovery.

Wednesday, 8 June **Emotional Wellbeing**

Increase knowledge and awareness of how our emotions, thoughts and actions impact on our sense of wellbeing. Explore helpful ways of dealing with emotions.

Wednesday, 13 July **Thinking about thinking**

Do you: catastrophise; filter out the good things; blame yourself for everything that goes wrong?
Learn how to challenge unhelpful thinking.

All sessions held at MIFSA Wayville in the Conference Room, 5 Cooke Terrace, Wayville.

Street parking is available (observe time limit signs) or under the MIFSA building; entrance off Rose Terrace.

No referral required. Newcomers welcome, carers or support workers may also attend.

Please direct all enquiries to Anna Byas, Group Coordinator/
Facilitator: annab@mifsa.org or phone 8378 4100.

Marion Carers Group

MEETINGS ARE HELD BIMONTHLY (FEBRUARY, APRIL, JUNE, AUGUST, OCTOBER, DECEMBER) ON THE SECOND MONDAY (EXCLUDING PUBLIC HOLIDAYS) AS SOCIAL GET-TOGETHERS OVER A MEAL AT THE WARRADALE HOTEL, 234 DIAGONAL ROAD; 6 PM.

Next meeting: Monday 6, June 2011; 6 pm.

Thirteen of us enjoyed a relaxing, fun night at our last meeting at the Warradale Hotel. This time I won the raffle! Someone else had better draw it next time.

See you all on 6 June at 6pm. **Please note that it is a week early due to the long weekend.** We may have some visitors from interstate??? Please let me know if you're able to join us, 8297 6974, by Friday 3 June, so that I can confirm numbers.

All welcome: carer, consumer or clinician, to join our friendly, understanding group.

Looking forward to seeing you all then.

Jeannette Walsh
Group Facilitator

Mood Disorders Carers Group

MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE FOURTH TUESDAY OF THE MONTH, AT MARJORIE BLACK HOUSE, 47 KING WILLIAM ROAD, UNLEY; 7.30 PM.

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

Coming meetings: Tuesday, 28 June and 26 July 2011

Newcomers welcome. To join this group or for more information phone MIFSA Wayville Reception, 8378 4100.

Marcia Johnson Timm
Group Facilitator

Invitation to participate in Research Study continued from page 10

Names or identifying information will be removed from the interview transcripts by a qualified transcriber (a person provided from a pool of transcribers within Flinders University who is aware of confidentiality requirements).

For recruitment or questions about the research project please contact Carly Hayman at Flinders University: phone 8210 5068 or email: carly.hayman@flinders.edu.au

All records containing personal information will remain confidential and no information that could lead to identification of participants will be released. The study will comply with government rules and guidelines and the Flinders University Human Research Ethics Committee.





Sound Minds

A GROUP SUPPORTING PEOPLE WHO HEAR VOICES; MEETS WEEKLY ON THURSDAYS, 1.30 PM – 3 PM AT MIFSA (CONFERENCE ROOM), 5 COOKE TCE, WAYVILLE.

Aims of the group:

- Bring voice hearers together in a supportive environment
- Acknowledge strengths and achievements
- Share knowledge and experiences
- Share and discover ways of managing voices
- Build hope, acceptance and new possibilities
- Enjoy ourselves and have fun.

No referral required. Enquiries to Anna Byas, Group Coordinator/Facilitator: annab@mifsa.org or 8378 4100 or Ben Swift: ben@mifsa.org

Tobacco Free!

A supportive program for tobacco smokers with mental illness

Would you like to quit or cut back tobacco?

Join a **Tobacco Free!** Support Program.



The group provides a positive and supportive place to work on smoking and is for people who are:

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

Groups are provided at venues around Adelaide, including MIFSA Wayville and MIFSA Panangga at Christies Beach.

For more information or to register interest please phone the Tobacco and Mental Illness Project on 8200 2009 or MIFSA Wayville Activity Program on 8378 4100.

In Memoriam

Thank you to those who have supported MIFSA in this way, with donations in lieu of flowers. It is through your generosity and financial support that we can continue to support people with 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.

Healthy Living Group Workshops

Staying motivated for recovery and wellness.

'Personal Development Plan to stay well'

Incorporating self management and community participation.

Wednesday, 1 June; 1 - 3 pm

Fatigue Fighting Tips

- What is fatigue and what happens to us?
- Lifestyle suggestions and psychological issues and triggers.
- Overcoming the mid afternoon energy slump.

Wednesday, 6 July; 1 - 3 pm

Seasonal Affective Disorder - Beating the Winter Blues

- What is it and how are we affected?
- What can we do to avoid or cope with the winter blues?
- Staying well and motivated using a range of strategies.

Wednesday, 3 Aug; 1 - 3 pm

Creativity to Recovery, Part 1

Guest Presenter: Renée Edwards, Southern Mental Health Services.

- What is it and how can innovation assist recovery?
- Thinking outside the square, recovery discussion.
- Arts to kite making and hobbies assisting wellness.

Workshops are held at MIFSA Wayville in the Conference Room, 5 Cooke Terrace, Wayville.

Street parking is available (observe time limit signs) or under the MIFSA building; entrance off Rose Terrace.

Staff and students are welcome to attend.

The workshops are facilitated by Dave Tapley (Consumer Consultant) from 1 pm to 2.15 pm followed by positive outlook sharing 2.30 pm to 3 pm. Held on the first Wednesday of each month; for anyone interested in the promotion of better health.

The workshops are friendly interactive groups where we share and brainstorm answers and solutions and our knowledge is enhanced by peers in the group. Join in for a chat with a healthy afternoon tea.

Group norms apply and must be respected.

Bookings and enquiries to Dave Tapley, phone 8378 2723 or email: dave.tapley@bigpond.com

Funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.

Housing SA Accommodation Advice

Housing SA provides an Outreach Service for people with mental illness.

The Outreach Service Officer meets clients fortnightly at MIFSA Wayville on Thursdays, 1 - 4 pm.

To make an appointment with the Outreach Service Officer, phone MIFSA Wayville Reception on 8378 4100.

Unlocking the door to health and wellbeing: where do we find the key?



The Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia (MIFA) is undertaking a comprehensive review of physical health challenges for people with mental illness.

A recently completed literature review and audit of physical health-related programs delivered by its members has highlighted a confronting and complex range of issues. Dr Katherine Gill, key consultant to the review, has summarised the evidence. Some key findings:

• MORTALITY

People with severe mental illness (SMI) are reported to have a life expectancy of between 10-20 years less than that of the general population. Although suicide accounts for the highest relative risk of mortality, being up to 20 times more common than in the general population, approximately three-quarters of the deaths of people with SMI are caused by physical illness, with cardiovascular disease being the most common cause of death.

• PHYSICAL ILLNESS

Thirty one per cent of people with schizophrenia and coronary heart disease (CHD) are diagnosed under the age of 55, compared with eighteen per cent of others with CHD.

Forty one per cent of people with schizophrenia and diabetes are diagnosed under the age of 55, compared with 30 per cent of others with diabetes.

twenty three per cent of people with schizophrenia and respiratory disease are diagnosed before the age of 55, compared with seventeen per cent of others with respiratory disease.

• ACCESS TO MEDICAL CARE

People with SMI have been found to receive insufficient medical assessment and treatment. It is reported that people with SMI are less likely to receive preventative medical care and screening, despite being at high risk for medical morbidity.

• SOCIAL WELL BEING

Studies show that without a strong support system, many people with SMI will not manage their illness effectively, leading to poorer outcomes and increased hospitalisations [4]. It has been found that people with mental illness are more likely to have never married, to live alone, to be unemployed and to have not completed secondary school [16]. This can lead to isolation, poverty, loss of freedom, poor social support, loss of dreams and goals [82]. When combined with the negative symptoms of the mental illness, this can contribute to a reduced motivation/ability to lead a healthy lifestyle.

A PUBLIC DEBATE

On Saturday 21 May 2011 at the Masonic Centre in Sydney a panel of experts, a studio audience and MC Julie McCrossin, explored the issues with video and audio links to audiences in all capital cities. The aim was to get people in all parts of Australia talking and thinking about the physical health of people affected by mental illness by:

- building hope for a better future by identifying practical things we can all do to improve the physical health of people with a mental illness
- enjoying a lively discussion with audience participation from around Australia and from people at home.

Go to www.mifa.org to find out more about the project as well as the public debate.

Participants and Members - Have your say!

MIFSA has been working on identifying our priority areas for our next Strategic Plan for 2012 – 2014.

The process for the development of the Plan involves gathering the views of our participants, members, volunteers, staff and other stakeholders that work closely with us.

In this issue of our newsletter you will find a Questionnaire that we would like members and participants of MIFSA to complete and return to Marguerite Tohl in the enclosed envelope (no stamp is needed). Marguerite is a Consultant working with us to develop the Plan.

The surveys are due back by 17 June 2011. If you would like to access the questionnaire electronically please go to www.mmtohl.com.au (at bottom of the home page). Then email it to marguerite@mmtohl.com.au or mail it in the envelope provided.

Your help in assisting us with how we can improve what we do in the future is important to us and very much appreciated.

Two hats, one head

by Simone Gillam - Arts and Mental Health Project Officer based at Port Lincoln

I first lived in Port Lincoln when I was in my twenties. I was the arts officer for Eyre Peninsular Cultural Trust until I left to go to university in Adelaide. Three years ago, I was back in Port Lincoln visiting friends when I saw this position advertised in the paper. Straight away I thought, 'That's my job.'

The first six months were pretty daunting. I set up the office from scratch and basically, just got out there and met as many groups as I possibly could. I more or less gate crashed them actually! Any community organisation that I heard was doing anything to do with art and I was there.

I wear dual hats: I have my arts officer hat, and my mental health hat. People have embraced what we're trying to do and local artists are putting their hands up and are comfortable to be a part. Projects range from the challenging end of mental health, where people are actually recovering from a mental illness to the rewarding end, where the natural benefits of engaging with the arts is used as a tool for prevention and early intervention. Everyone from the community is invited to join our workshops and this philosophy of social inclusion has opened more doors and led to more activity.

So for example, we had a ten-week program called Arts Journey, which was not only for people who identified with mental illness but for the broader community too. We sourced a really good local artist who had personally experienced postnatal depression and we had quite a lot of the local art group members coming along just to work with her. The program finished with an art exhibition for Mental Health Week. Some of the participants had never been to the gallery and there they were with their artwork on the walls and their friends and family present. Another project, *Buried Treasures*, taught positive parenting skills through journaling and lino printing. It was created for mothers at risk and had really strong community support.

In my role, I can assist groups plan a project, access funding, find artists, and help fill out the forms. Once they get their projects up and running, I'm in the background. I'm there for any bumps along the way but really, the group takes ownership.

A lot of my role is linking people together and identifying opportunities. For example, the other night a play called *Red Sky Morning* came through town. I don't know if you've heard of it but it has a strong mental health message.



It's about suicide in a regional setting and afterwards, I thought, 'If only I'd known about this. We should have had mental health brochures on all the seats!' So before the play hit the next town, I was able to contact Beyond Blue to get their brochures into the theatre. Being on the ground in an area, means you can pick up on even tiny opportunities. If I was trying to run this job from a laptop and an office in Adelaide, there's so much I would miss. (You'd be surprised how much business is done in Woolies on a Friday afternoon!)

Here's a good story about how my role works. About six months ago, Country Arts SA funded Alex Broun to come over and run a script writing workshop. I told everyone I knew: MIFSA (Mental Illness Fellowship South Australia), all the drama groups, writers, the staff at the local newspaper, the ABC reporter. And they all came. As a result of that, the people who came from MIFSA said they'd like to put on a mental health play. Three months later, I heard that 'Urban Myth' was in town to do a workshop with the kids at the school. I asked, 'Could you do one with MIFSA too?' They did and since then every Thursday, at the church hall, the group have been developing their own play. Recently, they had a grant approved (Arts SA) for professional workshops with 'No strings attached' theatre company and 'Urban Myth'. This will take it to the next level and there is talk they may even go on tour. So, that's the sort of thing that happens. It evolves: one little thing leads to another.

Sometimes in my role, I'm allowed to get my hands dirty. (Which is good for a frustrated artist!) This week I worked with a group and I showed them how to throw on a potter's wheel. It's probably my favourite part of the job: seeing someone discover this world for the first time.

That's where the buzz is.

Simone is an Arts and Mental Health Project Officer based in Port Lincoln. Her role is funded through a partnership between Country Arts SA and the South Australia Department of Health. Simone has been an artist, a teacher, a community arts worker, a small business owner and a yoga instructor.

Used with permission from Regional Arts Australia. An extract from *Seeded: great arts and health stories grown in regional Australia*, which was produced by Regional Arts Australia and the National Rural Health Alliance, and assisted by the Regional Arts Fund, an Australian Government initiative supporting the arts in regional, remote and very remote/isolated Australia.

MEMBERSHIP FORM/ CHANGE OF ADDRESS



Mail to : PO Box 310 Marleston 5033

- Membership Renewal
- New Membership
- Change of Address

Membership Categories

- Single \$20
- Concession/Student \$10
- Organisation \$45
- Family \$30
- Concession Family \$18
- Donation

We keep membership cost low.
Why not make a tax deductible
donation and support MIFSA.

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Dr

Address

Post Code

Email Address

Contact Telephone

Old Address (if applicable)

Membership payment by Cheque Money Order Cash Credit card

Visa Mastercard

Credit card number Expiry date /

Name on Card

Signature

Please support MIFSA to reach people we haven't reached before.

Sharing the Journey Appeal

MIFSA is a charitable, not-for-profit organisation providing services for and with people with mental illness. With donations and fundraising MIFSA is able to extend its Activity Programs, Community Education, Carer Programs, Training, Counselling, Support Groups, One-to-One Support and Respite Services to reach more people living with mental illness, their carers, families and friends.

How the funds will be used

Each year donations assist MIFSA to reach hundreds of people we haven't reached before. Through your generous donations we are able to extend our services and programs to support people to manage their mental health, to find better ways of caring; as well as to improve understanding and awareness about mental health in our communities.

Key areas of expenditure

Increase our counselling services.

Expand Well Ways education and support programs to country carers and family members.

Improve understanding and awareness throughout the community via our Education programs.

You can donate online at:

www.mifsa.org

MIFSA LOCATIONS

Wayville: 5 Cooke Terrace, Wayville 5034

Panangga: 64 Elgin Ave, Christies Beach 5165

Reynella: PO Box 255, Morphett Vale 5162

Eyre: PO Box 2292, Port Lincoln 5606

Mount Gambier: PO Box 1146, Mt Gambier 5290