

IN THIS ISSUE

Keeping you up to date:

- From the President	2	Collective Voice Working Group	13
- From the CEO	3	Volunteers Page	14
MIFSA Programs:		For Your Interest:	
- Activity Programs	4	MIFSA Support Groups	16
- Education and Therapeutic Groups	5	- Focus on Physical Health Too	18
- Well Ways Programs	7	- Have Your Say CVWG	19
- Respite Programs	8	Membership Renewal	20
- Personal Helpers and Mentors (PHaMs) Programs	10		

ISSUE 32
August / September 2011

www.mifsa.org

MIFSA AND THE INQUIRY INTO MENTAL HEALTH AND WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION

On a chilly grey morning in early June a small group of us, Lisa, Sarah, Natasha, Dei, and Fiona, met on the steps of Parliament House to speak at an inquiry into Mental Health and Workforce Participation.

With a quick last minute pow wow, some introductions and compliments on each other's attire, we headed in. After being scanned and badged in the foyer, we were dispatched up the lift to the former Snooker room. We sat on chairs lining the room, waiting eagerly for the Members of Parliament to finish a hasty lunch. The Committee had just returned from a meeting at MIFSA Panangga where they met with a number of MIFSA participants who shared their personal journeys. We amused ourselves by reading the results of the Snooker championships over the past 50 years emblazoned on plaques along the walls.

The Committee of about 6 then seated themselves around a very large wooden table. Sarah, Natasha and Fiona kicked off first, introducing MIFSA, and the PHaMs program. We spoke about the various barriers to employment and study, and also made suggestions as to how the Government could help to reduce these challenges and barriers.

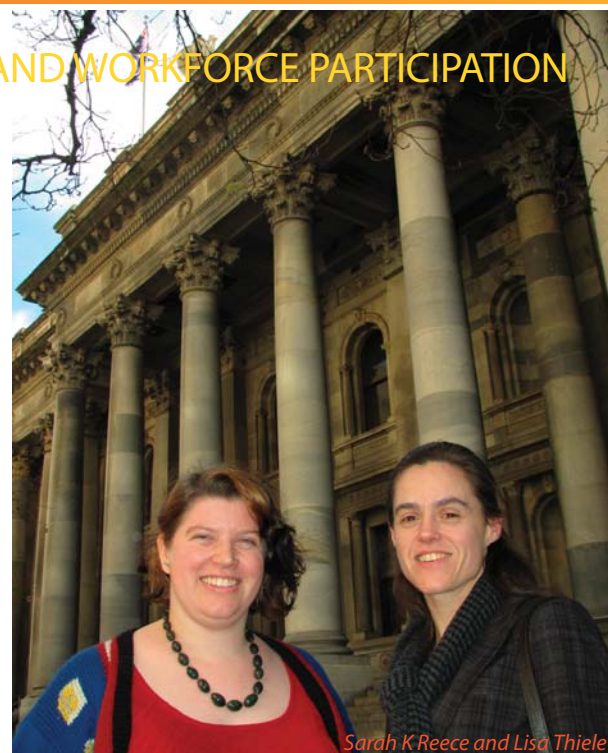
I, Sarah, spoke about my personal experiences struggling to find work or engage in study while managing a mental illness. I was quite intimidated by the formal process and environment! I had prepared my thoughts on paper beforehand and concentrated on reading them calmly and slowly, and not crying! It was quite confronting to list what I felt were my failures, however the members of the Inquiry seemed very interested in our personal experiences rather than just statistics. In fact, one member of the Inquiry briefly approached me immediately afterwards to share that she could relate to the struggles I'd had at uni and to encourage me to keep pursuing my goals.

Dei and Lisa spoke next about the Peer Work Project. I, Lisa, shared how it took me 20 years to regain the ability to engage in work and study, and what I would have found helpful to allow this to happen sooner. I explained how the Peer Work Project was one of my turning points, helping me to accept my illness, overcome my own self-stigma and discover that my experiences could be used to help others.

The members of the Inquiry Committee asked great questions and invited us to send in any further suggestions or comments. With the public hearing concluded, we found ourselves back on the steps of Parliament House, quickly sharing notes and brainstorming further practical suggestions to send in to the Inquiry.

We made a time to meet again to draft further input, with ideas such as creating a helpline for employers to receive support in employing people with a mental illness, suggesting the Government require more service models to include peer workers (building on the success of PHaMs) and encouraging the Government to take an active role in modelling the employment of people with a mental illness within its own departments.

continued page 5



Sarah K Reece and Lisa Thiele



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

Operations Manager:

Amanda Porter

Programs Managers:

Ben Heyward

Lesley Currie

Mattea Malcolm

Simon McMahon

Finance Manager:

Michael Becker

WEBSITE

www.mifsa.org

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 Sept-Oct 2011 issue of *MIFSA News*:

Thursday, 1 September 2011

DISCLAIMER

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

From the President



Recently I went to Melbourne to attend the FaHCSIA-funded peer support worker forum. About 150 peer workers came from all around Australia, along with some PHaMs (Personal Helpers and Mentors) staff and several speakers including myself.

It was striking to engage with the range of talented people who we would never have seen in our workforce a few years ago. As a speaker I had gathered information from around the member organisations of MIFA, including MIFSA, to find that there are now about 100 designated positions for peer workers in virtually every type of program we offer.

It got me thinking about what defines us as different from most clinical services. I think there are three critical characteristics.

- We believe in the '80/20' rule—that is, about 80% of the services that a person with severe mental illness needs are not what are generally seen as health services. Housing, social life, employment, family support, social security and more are the stuff of recovery. About 20% are health/medical in nature, to do with treatment of the illness itself, and of course they are also vital
- We believe that if you are not trying to work with the whole family you are not doing your job right
- We believe that every program will work better if it is heavily peer-influenced.

Yes, peer influence is central, so I was able to say that MIFSA and other MIFA members are 'up to their necks in peer work and loving it', because it is true. But it was also good to be able to remind the audience that this is where we came in 30 years ago— in those days the peers were mainly carers, with increasing numbers of consumers not far behind—and most were volunteers. MIFSA has always been heavily peer-influenced, from the Board membership, to volunteers, to increasing numbers of staff, from our earliest days.

Of course Well Ways and PHaMs and other services didn't exist until a few years ago and neither did the Peer Work Project that we run jointly with Baptist Care SA. So this is a much more developed area of what we do now, but I like to remember that this business of 'lived experience', 'sharing the journey' and what we now call peer work is absolutely consistent with what the Schizophrenia Fellowship and the Mood Disorders Association set out to achieve all those years ago.

David Meldrum



From the Chief Executive Officer

If there was to be a theme for the last few months it would be "feedback". It is true that the giving and receiving of feedback is a regular activity in any organisation. It just seems that over May and June there has been so much feedback and in many varied forms.

A visit to MIFSA by our Prime Minister, an Inquiry into Workforce Participation for people with mental illness, MIFSA's Strategic Planning process, an accreditation process for MIFSA Panangga, staff surveys and even the ongoing and essential receiving of complaints as well as compliments, each involve the giving and receiving of feedback.

At MIFSA we welcome all forms of input as they assist us to improve what we do, how we do it and what we would like to see in the broader mental health community.

I hope you enjoy a number of the articles in this issue of the MIFSA News which report on initiatives, forums, inquiries and conferences which MIFSA has been involved in over the past few months.

Thank you to the many members who have recently completed Strategic Planning surveys, for more information see the article below. Your feedback is very valuable and is guiding the direction that MIFSA will take in the future. Stay tuned for more feedback in coming MIFSA News issues.

What gives me most pleasure about the feedback we receive is that it involves all parts of the "MIFSA Team": our valued volunteers, participants who connect with our programs, our staff, MIFSA members and our Board of Management.

When we combine this MIFSA Team feedback with input from our organisational partners and stakeholders we have all the building blocks we need to continue to develop and grow this vital and dynamic organisation. Thank you all.

Natasha Miliotis



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

of the Mental Illness Fellowship South Australia will be held on Monday the 17th of October, 6pm at MIFSA Wayville, corner of Rose Terrace and Cooke Terrace. Please note that we have parking undercroft, alternatively there is street parking subject to time restrictions.

If you would like to nominate to become a MIFSA Board of Management member, please phone 8378 4100 for a nomination form, or go to www.mifsa.org to download.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INPUT TO MIFSA'S STRATEGIC PLAN!

In the last newsletter participants, members and carers were invited to complete a Questionnaire to provide input into the development of MIFSA's next Strategic Plan.

Marguerite Tohl, the Consultant who has been helping us with the process received 53 Questionnaires and was very pleased with the information provided.

This means that we have now received input from approximately 150 participants, members, volunteers, staff, Board Members and other stakeholders that work closely with MIFSA.

I would like to thank everyone who has given their time and provided important and valuable input into the process.

Our next step is for the Management Team to work with Marguerite over the next few months to draft the Strategic Plan for the Boards consideration.

I feel confident that we will come up with some exciting directions for MIFSA for the next three years.

Natasha



Activity Programs



Wayville Activity Program and SAPOL Cadets visit Urimbirra

MIFSA Wayville Activity Program participants and SAPOL Cadets recently enjoyed an outing to the Urimbirra Wildlife Park at Victor Harbor. The purpose of the outing is for participants to increase awareness about how people live well with mental health issues, as well as an opportunity to informally “educate SAPOL Cadets about how they would like to be treated when encountering Police.” Participants find that they can “tell their own Mental Health recovery story” in a supported and safe environment/space.

Urimbirra Wildlife Park is a wonderful setting for a community education outing. Participants and Cadets enjoy a natural development of rapport whilst interacting with the abundant wildlife. This then provides a very informal and relaxing environment to discuss personal recovery journeys.

The Police Cadets stated that they gained valuable first hand insight about mental health issues from talking with the participants and will take this experience into their working lives as South Australian Police Officers. The participants involved in this outing enjoyed the opportunity to chat with the Police Cadets and to help reduce stigma about mental health in the community.

Feedback from the outing included:

“After spending time with people living with mental illness it just makes you realize that they really are no different from those who don’t have a mental illness”.

“Talking to individuals made me realize we cannot put labels on mental illness as people’s experiences vary so much”.

“The SAPOL excursions are very enjoyable...Keep doing it in the future”.

“It is good to get the Police Cadets involved in the mental health consumer’s conversations”.

“ I was happy that I was able to talk to the Police Cadets about when they (Police) took me back to hospital. The Police Cadets were very supportive about going to MIFSA”.

Helen Huffa (Coordinator, Wayville Activity Program)

As a recent new staff member to the Wayville Activity Programs, I would like to share my journey so far ...

When I turned up for my first day in March this year, I was welcomed by the warm friendly smiles of MIFSA staff and quickly felt accepted as part of the Activity Programs team. The last few months have been a wonderful time of learning and personal growth for me as I have gotten a feel for my new role. It has been a pleasure getting to know participants and hearing about their recovery journeys, each and every one of them a unique story with its own challenges and joys.

Early on, I was involved in the Schizophrenia Awareness Week Art Exhibition Committee and what an exciting event it was! I developed a new appreciation of art as I stood back and admired the talent hanging on the walls of the exhibition hall. Seeing the Recovery Band perform at the launch night has been one of the highlights of my time at MIFSA so far. They did such an amazing job despite some challenges that the group faced leading up to the performance. Afterwards, there were so many different emotions, but among them was a sense of pride and accomplishment.

I have enjoyed hearing from participants about the value they get from activities. One of the comments I hear a lot is that people really like getting out and about into the community. Participants both old and new enjoy coming along to the fishing group where they can spend time outdoors, relax, enjoy the company of others, and maybe even catch some fish! One participant (pictured) smiled away as he held up a fish that somebody caught on his first time out with the fishing group...it was a bit of a small one which got thrown back only to find itself in the belly of a hungry pelican.

Another project that I have been involved in is getting the “Cultural Adventure” activity up and running in June with input from Wayville participants. With an art and culture focus, participants have enjoyed a visit to Tandanya, the National Aboriginal Arts Institute, and the Jam Factory, where they viewed galleries of contemporary art and watched the glass-blowing in action. It was fantastic seeing participants getting excited as they put forward ideas for excursions (such as the Migration Museum, Art Galleries, Aviation Museum, and Hahndorf), with participants then researching costs, and helping to design promotional fliers.

It is also wonderful to see more and more opportunities for participants to get involved and have input into Wayville Activity Programs. Through the monthly Participant Meetings, participants are researching new opportunities and putting together proposals for potential activities. I look forward to seeing what the future of Wayville Activity Programs has to offer.

What a magnificent introduction to my role as a Coordinator!

Jasmine Bugg (Coordinator, Wayville Activity Program)

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.



SOAR ICAN Inner Southern Adelaide Alternative Pathways to Education Project



MIFSA's Education Awareness and Training team has joined in partnership with SYC, Service to Youth Council, to develop and deliver mental health awareness and education training to Year 7 students in transition to Year 8 in Inner Southern metropolitan Adelaide. The Project, named SOAR, will also work with each school's teaching teams, school counsellors, peer mentors/buddies and families to support and increase young people's optimism and resilience as well as their social, emotional and cognitive well-being. SOAR complements the KidsMatter program which the Commonwealth is rolling out in primary schools across Australia.

SOAR, is a pilot under the Department of Education's ICAN program of support for students at risk. It will deliver workshops to Year 7s, teachers and parents in three primary schools over terms 3 and 4 this year then a second round of workshops to Year 8 students, teachers, Yr 11 peer support students and parents at Hamilton Secondary College in Terms 1 and 2 of 2012.

SOAR takes a whole of class approach to working with young people. The outcome of SOAR will be a Project Manual which is intended for appropriately experienced and trained Care Group teachers or School Counsellors to deliver the Workshops in other high schools and their feeder primary schools as future Alternative Education Pathways projects.

MIFSA's Education Program, principally Robyn Miller and Ben Swift and members of the community educator team, will work with John Morton from SYC to deliver the workshops and provide support for teachers, parents and students.

This new program of school based pro-active mental health and well being project activities which SYC and MIFSA are developing complements the KidsMatter program that Mental Health Minister Mark Butler recently announced the Government would greatly expand over the next 3 years.

The Gillard Government will target the expansion of KidsMatter to schools in lower socio-economic areas to improve the social and emotional wellbeing of Australian children from disadvantaged backgrounds. The plan is to deliver on the 2010 election commitment to roll the program out to an extra 1,700 schools over the next three years. The initiative will support resilience and emotional wellbeing for more than 340,000 Australian children.

Speaking at the Australian Primary Principals Association national conference in Adelaide, Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, Mark Butler said, "KidsMatter is a key part of our commitment to improving emotional and social wellbeing for Australian children. Supporting good social and emotional wellbeing as children are growing up ensures they understand that good mental health is just as important as good physical health"

"The evidence is clear that one quarter of all mental disorders emerge before the age of 12 so it's important we help children build resilience early in life and give them the tools to manage their future".

continued page 6

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

Tuesdays, 18 Oct - 22 Nov 2 pm - 4 pm	Level 1, Education Centre Modbury Hosp. Modbury
Fridays, 21 Oct - 25 Nov 10.30 am - 12.30 pm	MIFSA Wayville Conference Room, 5 Cooke Terrace

- 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

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*

continued from page 1

In addition, encouraging doctors to direct people to local resources such as MIFSA, and to include this in Mental Health Care Plans.

The Inquiry continue travelling all around Australia gathering information and suggestions, from which they will make recommendations to the Government about ways to help people with mental illnesses to get back into study and work.

Lisa Thiele and Sarah K Reece

Education and Therapeutic Groups Programs

RECOVERY IN ACTION: ENHANCING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

In June this year, Sarah Reece and Ben Swift from the Education and Therapeutic Groups programs had the opportunity to present at the South Australian Mental Health: Sharing Excellence 2011 conference. MIFSA was well represented at this conference with presentations by Emilie Gagnon-Milot (Personal Helpers and Mentors Program) and Dei Griffith (Tobacco and Mental Illness Project and Peer Work Project) amongst the offerings. Sarah and Ben's session was well received and as a result, some exciting opportunities have arisen to share this perspective with other mental health services.

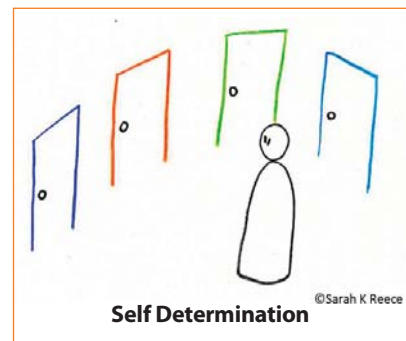
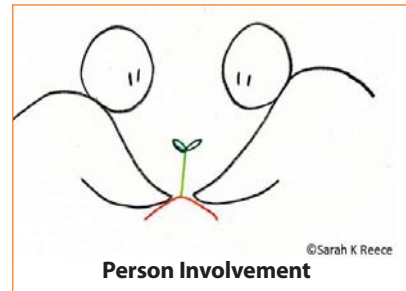
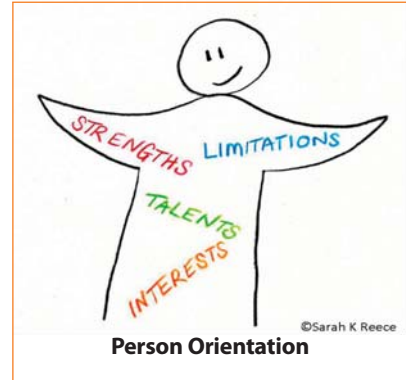
In the presentation (Recovery In Action: Consumer Lead Service Development) Sarah shared her experience of becoming a consumer of mental health services and detailed some of the frustrations which the role has brought. Sarah was then able to describe how her involvement with MIFSA has opened doors to be part of creating a service rather than being more of a passive recipient of a service and how this development has formed a part of her ongoing recovery. Ben explored how working from the foundation of four key recovery values (Person Orientation, Person Involvement, Self Determination and Growth Potential) enabled this development, along with how this process has benefited him, both personally and professionally, MIFSA and the mental health sector at large.

Sarah and Ben were pleased with how the presentation was received with a lot of support and encouragement from the audience. Following the presentation both Sarah and Ben were approached by several people asking if they would be willing to present this talk for other mental health services. One of these discussions has already borne fruit, with Sarah and Ben being invited to Glenside Hospital to deliver this talk for the staff and consumers of "The Birches", Glenside's extended care facility. The presentation was delivered as part of a workshop exploring how the recovery perspective might inform the work which occurs at "The Birches" in order to further support growth and development of those utilising the service.

In the session, the four identified recovery values were presented as providing a guide for the ways a service can be delivered. When the recovery values are utilised at every level, when attitudes, interactions, discussions and decision making are all informed by these values, the recovery possibilities are enhanced for those engaged with that service. Following the presentation, the staff and consumers at "The Birches" were then able to take these ideas and explore how they could inform and enhance their models of care, a process which we understand has been very positive.

The Education and Therapeutic Groups team have appreciated the opportunity to be involved with how mental health services can be supported to grow and develop, and are looking forward to working with "The Birches" as this process continues.

Education and Therapeutic Groups Team



continued from page 5

"KidsMatter is an initiative which can benefit all schools. However we know that children from disadvantaged backgrounds can have additional needs which is why we are targeting the expansion of the program at schools in lower socio-economic areas. We want all Australian children to start life with a strong foundation that they can build on through adolescence and into adulthood," Mr Butler said.

An independent evaluation of KidsMatter carried out in 2009 by researchers at Flinders University in South Australia found that many students with social and emotional challenges had improved their mental health outcomes over the course of the pilot. Schools and teachers will be provided with free support to assist in the implementation of the program and a nationwide calendar of training events and telephone and online support is currently being developed. Further information on how Australia primary schools can become involved in the KidsMatter Primary initiative is available at www.kidsmatterprimary.edu.au

Wednesday Forums

Wednesday 24 August, 1 - 2.30 pm
Cognitive Behaviour Therapy for Psychosis
Assoc Prof Sharon Lawn, Senior Lecturer, Flinders University
Faculty of Health Sciences

Wednesday 28 Sept, 1 - 2.30 pm
Diet-related chronic disease in people with mental illness
Alison Martin, Research Fellow, Flinders University
Human Behaviour and Health Research Unit

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

Invitation

To All Artists & Photographers

Be part of the "Celebration of Life" Exhibition
to be held in Mental Health Week

Supported by Families of the Well Ways Programs

Enrolment Forms available at MIFSA
or email wellways@mifsa.org



WANTED

Donations (or a loan) of
picture frames (backing not required)
and wall mirrors (with chain etc)
Note – do not have to be in good condition

Needed for the Carer
'Celebration of Life Exhibition'

Direct to Carol or Maureen

Well Ways Programs

Well Ways Programs



well ways helping families & friends find better ways

Well Ways Programs to come

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

Mondays, 9.30am-12.30 pm commencing 1 Aug 2011	MIFSA 5 Cooke Terrace, Wayville
6-9pm session, week of 15 August - day and venue to be confirmed	Glenelg/Marion To register your interest phone Maureen or Carol, 8378 4100
Wednesdays, 6-9pm commencing 14 Sept 2011	MIFSA 5 Cooke Terrace, Wayville
6-9pm session, week of 3 October - day and venue to be confirmed	Modbury
Wednesdays, 6-9pm commencing 12 Oct 2011	Christies Beach

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

Tuesdays, 6-9 pm commencing 23 Aug 2011	Christies Beach
--	-----------------

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.

Well Ways Snapshot for carers and families in country South Australia delivered as a 2 module program

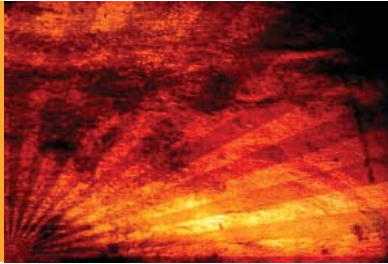
Mon-Tues 8 & 9 Aug 2011	Stewart Roadhouse Restaurant 13-15 Alfred Terrace Streaky Bay
-------------------------	--

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



I found my situation overwhelming, my responsibilities too difficult and my life felt dead ...

I took months to consider my options and kept coming back to the same solution. I decided that my kids and the few friends I had left would be better off without me, and that if I was dead I would no longer be able to feel the pain. I took an overdose. I was found the next morning and taken to hospital where I stayed for a week. I still didn't care about anything. A friend of mine works in mental health and she put me in touch with a respite worker from a community based service. The respite worker tried to prize out of me activities that might interest me. The only thing I could think of was art. A couple of days later she told me she had found a respite program through MIFSA, it was an art week held at MIFSA's respite house. I was reluctant to spend time with people, but she encouraged me to give it a try.

On the day, I met a mini bus at Panangga and we collected people from Wayville, then we made our way back to the respite house. I felt very self-conscious and quiet. At the respite house we unloaded our bags and found our rooms. The bedrooms are lovely and light with separate decks to each one. The bathrooms were very clean and much like you would find in a nice new house. The kitchen is modern and very large, and it looks onto the living room. There is a lovely big widescreen TV, and large dining table. Outside, the garden is neat and tidy with plants in the borders and an area to smoke.

We were responsible for our own meals, which gave us the opportunity to get to know one another. I made a very good friend at the art week. We understood each other's problems and disorders, so it wasn't a problem when I got anxious in the city, we just dealt with it. This was a great experience in acceptance.

One outing was to see Hans Heysen's house and art studio. I loved it there, it was so peaceful. The gardens were overflowing with plants and my friend and I took photos of some to draw later. I would never have gone to the art gallery in Adelaide or Hans Heysen's home on my own. It made me realize there were things that gave me pleasure, and they were affordable and accessible.

The staff at the respite house were wonderful. Each shift change I was nervous, in case the next people didn't like me. But all of the staff were so kind and down to earth. They were as patient as you could get and so open to talking about anything from the weather right down to people's problems such as abuse and health issues. Although they didn't give any answers, they were so validating.

On the final day a local artist and art teacher visited to show us how to "create a canvas". We all looked at what we were supposed to paint and thought "Not a chance." But within a couple of hours we each had a painting to take home that we thought was good. And that was when the penny dropped. I am not that bad at art. Luckily for me the art teacher also teaches at MIFSA's activity programs so I made plans to go there for the lesson every week. After a couple of weeks I came home with another good painting. I have been enjoying this art class for a few months now. I actually have my own artwork on my walls.

My confidence has grown because I discovered something I can say I am good at. From there I have had the courage to try out other new activities.

I am working on my mind by doing DBT therapy, now I go to a spiritualist church every Monday. I have even enrolled to begin a diploma in September. My life has drastically improved over the past 6 months. I still have problems, but I am coping and I find joy in small things like painting, my pets, my kids and my plans for my future.

None of this would have happened so easily if I had been left to my own devices on returning from hospital. I needed someone to guide me, which my first respite worker did. I needed a place to go to learn what I liked, for free, with no expectations, and MIFSA has provided that in so many ways.

There are several influences that have brought me to where I am now, and one of those was definitely MIFSA. So thank you MIFSA for coaxing me back into the real world again!

Respite Programs are an Australian Government Initiative

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



Respite House

RECOVERY-BASED SERVICES

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: Tues 2 Aug - Fri 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: Tues 9 Aug - Fri 12 Aug

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: Tues 16 Aug - Fri 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

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

Aug - September Respite Programs

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

Create the Life You Want: Tues 23 Aug - Fri 26 Aug

For CARE RECIPIENTS and CARERS.

Program* is available for up to 7 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.

- Reflection
- Goal Setting
- Mindfulness
- Casual Outings

Aussie Adventure: Tues 6 Sept - Fri 9 Sept

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.

- Dolphin Cruise
- Tandanya
- Cleland Wildlife Park

Food for Thought: Tues 13 Sept - Fri 16 Sept

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.

- Dolphin Cruise
- Tandanya
- Cleland Wildlife Park

My Life: Tues 20 Sept - Fri 23 Sept

For CARE RECIPIENTS and CARERS.

- Introduction to Tai Chi
- Meal, plan, budget & shop - emotional wellbeing

Carers Pamper Week
Tuesday 27 - Friday 30 September

MIFSA Engages Aboriginal Broker to Reach People We Have Not Reached Before



It is with some excitement that PHaMs West can announce that Brian Butler (AM) has agreed to help link Aboriginal participants with the services offered by MIFSA.

Whilst this will occur initially with PHaMs in the Western Suburbs, Brian has both State and National networks and will spread the word of recovery and hope to a very broad audience. Brian Butler is a product of the Stolen Generation, and a lifelong advocate for the human rights of Australia's first nations Aboriginal peoples. Brian has a number of firsts on his list of achievements including;

- Founding member and chairman of Secretariat National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care Inc
- Foundation member and chairman of South Australian Aboriginal Housing Board
- Zone Commissioner of ATSI, for South Australia
- Aboriginal Advocate for South Australia in the Aged Rights Advocacy Service
- Elected Director to the recently formed National Aboriginal Congress

Brian subscribes to zero tolerance to racism, and believes early childhood education is paramount for the success in all children reaching their full potential. Brian fights for justice for the aged Aboriginal community and a return of total respect to Elders. His concept of reconciliation is that Aboriginal

groups and individuals must deal with differences amongst each other and then work towards creating harmony with the outside world. Brian works tirelessly for his community, and this now includes linking Aboriginal people living with mental illness to programs such as PHaMs, at a local, state and National level.

If you would like to meet or talk with Brian contact Fiona Johnson, PHaMs West Team Leader or email: Fiona@mifsa.org

PHaMs Participate in Reconciliation Week Event

The Personal Helpers and Mentors (PHaMs) team in Reynella this year participated in the Reconciliation Week event held in Noarlunga, with Bianca on the organizing committee working alongside the ATSI Health Team at Southern Primary Health.

Reconciliation Week this year focused on the theme of 'let's talk recognition' with a variety of stalls displaying information from many community service providers including MIFSA, Nunkuwarrin Yunti, Centrelink, Second Story and Earth Medicine Australia. The MIFSA stall generated a substantial amount of interest from attendees. Performances included the Swamp River band, Aboriginal dance group Taikaturrna and Bianca's American Tribal Style bellydance troupe, Ruby Dhatura.

The Southern Aboriginal Women Elders also had a weaving display, as well as a variety of art and audiovisual displays. This year there was a particular focus on children's activities and entertainment such as face painting and Funky Fit Kids. Children also participated in a yellow brick road where they collected a variety of goodies from stall holders along the way. With over 600 attendees accounted for, the day was a great success for all those involved.

Elisabeth Fagan-Schmidt
PHaMs Team Leader



Peer Forum is a Winner with Peer Support Workers

A National Peer Support Worker Forum was held in Melbourne on 20 & 21 June 2011. To the best of my knowledge this was a first and fully funded by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA).

Held at the Novotel on Collins St Melbourne the Forum covered a range of issues which primarily included the Personal Helpers and Mentors (PHaMs) peer support worker role and organisational issues. The Forum provided an excellent opportunity for peer support workers to network with colleagues and learn about each other's practices which support people with mental illness, their families and carers to participate socially and economically.

Forum participants had the opportunity to:

- Network with colleagues and FaHCSIA staff;
- Explore different examples of innovative practice across organisations;
- Explore the roles and responsibilities of peer workers across organisations, resilience and self care, and what professional identity means for peer support workers; and
- Share ideas on ways to raise the profile of peer support workers across the mental health sector, including possibilities for strengthening partnerships between the clinical/medical sector, with other Targeted Community Care services, and with agencies such as housing, justice and child protection.

A number of workers from MIFSA attended the forum, and here are some of their comments:

It was a great opportunity to attend the Peer Support Worker (PSW) Forum. It was like an adventure for me and pushed me beyond my comfort zone via catching taxis, planes and buses to and from the venue. The accommodation and food was of an outstanding quality. The main presenters, Mary O'Hagan and Janet Meagher, kept us both informed and entertained with their witty styles. Helen Glover, another presenter, along with Janet Meagher, encouraged us to professionalize the PSW role. We were encouraged to start by reading literature written by and about PSWs and our roles. Our very own Sarah Reece presented and got a standing ovation from the audience! Presentations included overheads of artwork, poetry and a dance performance! It was definitely a memorable break from the usual workday back at MIFSA.

Claire Campbell (PHaMs Inner North)

What I liked about the conference was that I got to meet other peer support workers, from around Australia, who have had a lived experience and are using it to support participants in a way that only peer support workers can. I found listening to the guest speakers, such as Helen Glover and Mary O'Hagan, to be both very informative and entertaining, and the conference was also an opportunity for everyone to share their personal lived experience. The message I took away from the conference was that there is more work needed to convince the general public of the huge resource that is 'lived experience', the value of this resource and the potential to recruit many willing people out there who have the desire to use this 'hard-earned' resource to support others toward a happier and more productive future.

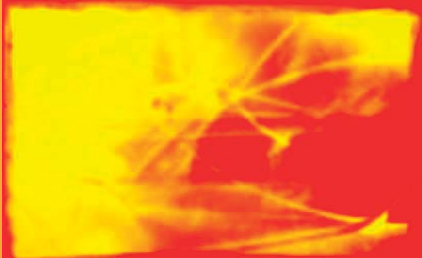
David Kozlovic (PHaMs Unley/Mitcham)

The FaHCSIA Peer Worker Forum provided a unique opportunity for peer workers from across the country to come together and share knowledge, experiences and resources. The forum provided an opportunity to network with others from across the country and gain insight into the current landscape of peer work within Australia. It was fantastic to have the opportunity to see the diversity of approaches employed by those with lived experience, ranging from the sharing of lived experience and hope, through to the use of the didgeridoo as tool for healing within the Keedac PHaMs. I came away equipped with new skills and ideas for building upon the resources of peer workers and for overcoming the many, often unique challenges facing individuals within the role.

Cary Nayda (PHaMs West)



Peer Forum cont



The forum was well run and informative. The key note speakers offered inspiring and powerful presentations. There was a sense that 'it is time' for Peer workers to be participating right across all levels of clinical and community care. It is a workforce that is relevant and essential to the recovery journey. There was discussion around accreditation for a peer work course and the requirements needed for this.

Some of the standout presenters were:

Mary O'Hagen —an international consultant from New Zealand in Mental Health and Peer Support who utilises her own experience of severe mental distress and having to use mental health services for several years as a young woman. She initiated the user/survival movement in New Zealand in the mid 1980's. She became mental health commissioner in New Zealand 2000—2007. As an international consultant she specializes in peer support, recovery based services, human rights and leadership of people with mental illness.

Helen Glover uses her own professional background as well as her lived experience of her own recovery from mental illness to expand and challenge the concepts of recovery orientated practice within the mental health sector. She has been an early champion of peer delivered and operated programs both within this country and overseas. She works with organizations, workers and people with lived experience, so the concept of recovery is clearly understood, embraced and utilized as a central focus within service environments.

Keedac PHaMs in Western Australia: a presentation by the Aboriginal community was inspirational. All the workers are peer workers and come from the community. The use of music and lived experience have been very powerful tools used in the support given to community members.

Our own David Meldrum, Dei Griffith and Sarah Reece gave presentations. Sarah's moving account of her own recovery journey shown with beautiful images she created won the hearts of the audience and gave her the only standing ovation through the 2 days. David shared the work that MIFA is doing across Australia through the 20 PHaMs programs and other services, commenting how many of their programs were run by volunteers in the 80's and now are funded broadly by the government. Recovery focused NGO's with whole of family approaches and strongly peer-influenced in all aspects of their work are here to stay. Dei helped facilitate a workshop around research methodologies for peer work.

Janet Meagher another presenter and a person living with schizophrenia is a mental health advocate who over three decades has worked to improve and effect change especially in the status and rights of people who experience mental distress. Her finishing quote of Martin Luther King, Jr. was a poignant reminder to us all. "History will have to record that the greatest tragedy of this period of social transition was not the strident clamor of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people."

Elisabeth Fagan-Schmidt (PHaMs Team Leader Outer South)

Despite being stranded in Melbourne due to volcanic ash clouds for an extra day and having to drive 400km + home to Mt Gambier, Ingrid and I were exposed to some wonderful speakers and moving stories.

The forum reinforced for me the need to further define the Peer worker role within the Targeted Community Programs. It is still evident and was certainly highlighted by the evaluation of the programs that the understanding of the peer worker role varies across organisations.

The Forum highlighted that indeed the Peer Worker role is more than just having a lived experience and is definitely more than just being able to share parts of your story to provide hope for others. It is clear that we now need to proceed to the next level and look for and develop the specialized skills that are unique to Peer Workers.



Collective Voice Working Group Update

THE COLLECTIVE VOICE WORKING GROUP EXISTS TO MEET MIFSA'S COMMITMENT TO SYSTEMS ADVOCACY FOR IMPROVEMENTS IN THE MENTAL HEALTH SECTOR. THIS UPDATE SHARES THE PROGRESSION OF THE INITIATIVES IDENTIFIED BY THE COLLECTIVE VOICE OF MIFSA EARLIER THIS YEAR.

Discussion took place also regarding the need for ongoing specific training for Peer Workers and the need for perhaps a Senior Peer Work leader within organizations who could assist with problem solving, workforce issues and debriefing from a Peer perspective. From the discussion it was very clear that Peer Workers sometimes experience some challenges that are very unique to their role and it can be difficult to manage these within teams without perhaps the expertise of a Senior Peer Worker to assist in the discussion. Some of these challenges were challenging other team members to think from the consumer perspective in advocating for their participants, not being watched by other team members for signs of being unwell, not being treated as the "weaker" member within teams, not being challenged by other members for practices that are clearly related to the skills of the Peer Worker.

Heather (PHaMs – Country South East)

It's fair to say that the Peer Work forum was an enormous success from those that attended. The opportunity to share a collective lived experience was moving and intrinsically motivating. One of the most inspiring thought provoking sessions was almost at the end of the conference and that was an interpretive dance by Inner South Community Health Service called Ecstasy, Emptiness and Equilibrium which through dance showed the journey of a person with a psychotic illness receiving enhanced support to achieve their dreams and manage their illness. This presentation had many in the room in tears as it was so poignant.

All in all the forum was a success in its networking and sharing as well as highlighting how much more we can all achieve by having Peer Workers.

Ingrid (PHaMs Country South East)

Find out more by contacting:

MIFSA PHaMs sites:
Wayville - (08) 8378 4100
Reynella - (08) 8322 0140
Mount Gambier - (08) 8723 6533

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.

COUNTRY: Clinical Support Services

The voice of consumers and carers in Country regions was very clear from the responses to the survey sent out earlier this year: improve access to clinical services!

We are pleased to report that improvements are on the way in the South East Country region. On May 10, the Federal Government made an announcement to fund \$26.7 million to improve a range of services including mental health at the Mount Gambier Hospital. Local paper, 'The Border Watch', reported that the injection of funds will expand acute care services, including cancer and intermediate care beds, mental health services, palliative care, general medicine and rehabilitation/geriatric services.

This is great news for the region as access to acute mental health beds has been an ongoing issue and the intermediate care service is currently a home based service. The challenge now will be to ensure that there is local input into the design and implementation of these services to ensure that access and transition processes are seamless and that mental health receives its share of the committed funding.

MIFSA Collective Voice Working Group welcomes the opportunity to assist mental health consumers and carers in the South East and other country areas and to celebrate the successes in lives of those living with mental illness that injection of funds and services may bring and also to provide a process to listen and relay any concerns if they arise.

Heather Nowak

CONSUMER: Cost of Living

Following feedback from consumers in our initial survey, the cost of living was highlighted as a major factor affecting their standard of living. MIFSA has used this information to contribute to the 'Daily Bread, Income and Living with Mental Illness' submission, mentioned below as well as in grant applications.

An initiative undertaken by the Collective Voice Working Group has been to create a list of local and regional financial counseling services available to individuals. This list is available to MIFSA staff and all those contacting MIFSA requiring referrals through to these services.

Dei Griffith

continued page 19



Goodbye & good luck Susan!



Susan Wilkes, MIFSA's Communications Officer has accepted a position in Melbourne working for a firm who provide a range of quality legal clerking services for a large group of barristers on their list.



While this is a return to a previous career in law and we are very excited for her, Susan will be sorely missed for her work at MIFSA, particularly with our Volunteer Program.

MIFSA's CEO, Natasha Miliotis says that Susan will be missed by many, as her ability to connect with all people was widely appreciated. "Susan was an excellent representative of MIFSA, able to live and breathe our values, vision and mission and well versed in our policies, procedures and culture" says Natasha. "Her strategic input at a corporate governance level was also highly valued".

In Susan's words: "Seven years ago I returned to Adelaide and began a journey of healing from an episode of post natal illness. MIFSA has been integral to my recovery; initially accepting me as an admin volunteer in June 2006, employing me at the Front Desk and then as the Communications Officer. I have so enjoyed all of my roles and most especially my relationships with participants, volunteers, members, colleagues and peers; also my contact with the general public and other service providers."

"It is the people that make MIFSA what it is and I have been privileged over the last 5 years to share my work environment with so many diverse, talented and absolutely amazing people. Such stories you have! I have witnessed the work that you do. I have seen lives changed because of the support and education you give and I am so proud for you all. It is such important and necessary work. Keep it up, I will be cheering for you from the Big Smoke. Please don't feel left out Business Services people for how could we do without you!!"

Susan Wilkes was also a valued Board member from October 2007. The following words are Susan's from an email sent to her fellow Board members: "As those entrusted with the privilege and responsibility for

this wonderfully special and vital organisation, I wish you all the wisdom, vision and resources necessary for MIFSA to continue to thrive. This organisation has the capacity to influence government decisions around mental health and wellbeing; to educate; to innovate and to daily enhance the lives of people impacted by mental illness."

Susan's warmth, her caring, sharp intellect and ever engaging smile will be missed by all. Thank you Susan for your many and various contributions to MIFSA over the years.

Goodbye and good luck Susan – we miss you already!

Volunteer Parking attendants required

AT MIFSA WAYVILLE DURING SHOW WEEK

Due to MIFSA's proximity to the Royal Adelaide Show Grounds, the first week of September is quite a hectic experience; but also a potentially lucrative one!

For the last two years MIFSA volunteers have showed their skills in managing the car park to protect our spaces from rogue parkers during working days but also ensured that MIFSA business continued without too much disruption. MIFSA Show Week Volunteers then open up the car park after hours and both weekends charging for parking spaces, which results in fantastic fundraising!

If you are able to help out this year and would like to be considered for the roster for any time you have available between Friday 2 September to Saturday 10 September please contact the **Volunteer and Events Coordinator at MIFSA Wayville on 8378 4100.**

MIFSA Sunflower Shops locations:



CHRISTIE DOWNS Shop 4 Flaxmill Shopping Centre, 303 Flaxmill Road; phone 8236 2456

GOODWOOD 145 Goodwood Road (near Capri Theatre); phone 8272 7162

SEACOMBE GARDENS 577 Morphett Road; phone 8298 3051

SUNFLOWER SHOP COLLECTION BINS LOCATIONS:

- Sixth Avenue Shopping Centre, Cnr Sixth Avenue and Stephens Terrace, St Peters
- Woolworth's Plus, 272 Shepherds Hill Road Eden Hills

SHOPS COORDINATOR Elsha, 0409 697 432



My Greatest Support and Champion

A Tribute to my late husband Bill Timm

by Marcia Johnson Timm

"I was formally diagnosed with Bipolar Affective Disorder at age 49, however I had my first full-blown manic episode when I was 25. I became a master deceiver during my early days of employment; however all that came unwoven during the stressful Mt. St. Helen's eruption in which I played a key role. It was only much later that I realised that acceptance of my illness and desire to manage it gave meaning to an otherwise chaotic life."

Those words written by Bill in an article for a mental health conference were very true.

Bill was a passionate man who had a real "presence" about him. After meeting him, most people would remember a tall man, who charmed them and was passionate in what he was talking about. He was intelligent and had a wide range of interests. He could talk and did talk on many subjects with an American twang.

Bill had many troubles to cope with and did this with courage and strength. For a long time he lived with mood changes and mental health problems which affected his work at times and our relationship.

Two years ago Bill wrote an article for a magazine about his work life:

"How I got to where I got." A Review in Retirement of a Worklife with BiPolar.

How I obtained employment success and a meaningful life with a major mental illness:

1. Sincere desire to management my illness
2. Realistic goals
3. Honesty about my illness
4. Consultation with employers (working in partnership)

Re-evaluating my work goals into realistic goals which were attainable in the context of my illness was one of the keys to my success. I specialised in what I knew I could do well instead of trying to reach for success in areas which were not "natural" for me and could cause stress.

Being honest and sincere with my employers helped us to work in partnership for my success.

As you can see Bill had great insight into his mental illness. After he accepted his illness, he approached his BiPolar with great gusto and put his wonderful management skills to the greatest challenge he had ever had...and with success! With insight, management and consistent psychiatric treatment he improved and stabilised and life became easier for us both.

This condition also led me to begin the Mood Disorder Carers Group. I have been leader of this group since 1993 and have coordinated its activities. In this work, Bill was my greatest support and champion. He loved the carers and wished he could be part of the group. Occasionally he was my guest speaker giving the carers hope that their consumer could follow his enlightened path. He loved to read my monthly letters and give feedback. He did this until he passed away on May 18th 2011.

I hope this insight into his "larger than life" presence is a source of encouragement to those mental health consumers who don't believe in themselves enough to tackle their illness. It takes courage and perseverance but it can happen. Face it, understand it, accept it, treat it and learn to live your own special and successful life as Bill did.

*Marcia Johnson Timm
Group Facilitator*

"During my time with MDA, for a period I sat in on many Board meetings during the period when Bill was a very valued member of the MDA Board. I always found Bill such a gracious gentleman who was regarded with such respect from all on the Board who had the privilege to be associated with him. Marcia both you and Bill have contributed so much to the area of mental health. The work you have done has helped so many people who were or still are travelling difficult journeys. You are both to be commended for your contributions. I know Bill will never be forgotten for his role and I feel that due to your dedication you will continue your important role."

*Carol Fuller
Mood Disorders Association (MDA) Office Manager
MDA and MIFSA merged in April 2006.*





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, 8 August and 12 September 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.

August 10	Values as your compass
Set goals you never quite achieve? Lack direction in life? Get in touch with what really matters to you and use your values to set your course.	

September 14	Action: How activity can help low mood
Planning purposeful and meaningful activities that generate a sense of enjoyment, achievement or closeness to others can lift you out of a low mood.	

October 12	Dealing with painful or unpleasant thoughts
Sick of being pushed around by your mind chatter? Learn how to unhook from Negative Unhelpful Thoughts (NUTs!!)	

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 8, August 2011; 6 pm.

Twenty people were at our June meeting, including Narelle and Ken. Both looked well and were in fine form, so I guess Victoria is treating them well. Everyone seemed to have an enjoyable night, mingling, chatting and dining.

I'll be thinking of you, Michelle on 11 July with that final assignment finished. We are all very proud of you and what you have achieved over the years of study, often under very trying circumstances.

Hoping to see you all again on 8 August at the same time and same place: 6pm at the Warradale Hotel. Everyone welcome; new people especially. Please contact me on 8297 6974 by 3 August if you are planning to join us.

Jeannette Walsh
Group Facilitator



You are invited to Foundation Shine Inc High Tea

Lenzerheide Restaurant

Thursday 13th October at 12.00pm

Enjoy a delicious, delectable High Tea lunch, shop in our "Mini Shopping Mall" and share a wonderful afternoon of fun with your friends, at the same time raising much needed funds and awareness for Mental Health.

Cost \$55 per head

Please call Robyn on 0418848319 if you would like to come along.



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

NO CHARGE FOR MOBILE PHONE CALLS TO LIFELINE FROM ANYWHERE IN AUSTRALIA

Mobile phone calls to Lifeline made from anywhere in Australia will be free of charge from 1 July under an agreement made between the three major phone carriers.

Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, Mark Butler, and the Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, Senator Stephen Conroy welcomed the agreement as an important means of helping people who are in crisis.

The Gillard Labor Government is providing \$18.2 million over three years to Lifeline to boost the capacity of the organisation to respond to more calls and to support free calls from mobiles.

“Lifeline is the national provider of telephone-based support for people who are in crisis, offering 24 hour support to people who may be experiencing suicidal thoughts and making it more accessible to anyone in a crisis situation is extremely important,” Minister Butler announced during a visit to Lifeline Adelaide in July.

“Each year, more than 114,000 calls to Lifeline’s national crisis line are made from mobiles and more than 40 calls every day come from people at high risk of suicide. The costs associated with what is often a lengthy phone call may have been a disincentive for people who are seeking crisis care. This measure will remove cost as a barrier to seeking help and ensure more people can access the support that they need” stated Minister Butler.

Lifeline’s national crisis line 13 11 14

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, 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.

Tuesday, 6 Sept; 10am-5 pm

Creativity to Recovery, Part 2

Linked in with major TheMHS Conference, to be held at Adelaide Convention Centre

- Resilience, creativity and connection
- Registration and entry fee apply
- Limited sponsorships available

Wednesday, 5 Oct; 1 - 3 pm

Creativity to Recovery, Part 3

- Innovation for everyday wellbeing activities
- Recovery discussion
- Consumer participation

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

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.



'FOCUS ON PHYSICAL HEALTH TOO'

I had the privilege to be part of the Symposium in Sydney during Schizophrenia Awareness Week. The throng of people who had a personal interest in mental health issues, listened to key eminent speakers including Professor Tim Lambert on 'Importance of Physical Health', Professor Philip Mitchell on 'Update on Bi-Polar disorder Treatment and Causes', Dr Katherine Gill on 'Mental Health Sport Network', Jan Plain the Dietician Macquarie Hospital and others who gave stirring comments on research and mental health outcomes in Australia.

Physical Health and Mental Health

The message was strong regarding the connection between mental health and physical health issues and the role we all need to take in changing the current trends. All of us need to be proactive to gain the attention of the professionals to attend to the physical health of their patients when they are engaging with the individual regarding their mental health issues.

The general health of all community members should be treated equally and the needs of people with mental illness and their physical health should not be underestimated by us or the professionals. We all have a duty of care to have better physical outcomes.

A few key facts

People with severe mental illness 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 mental illness are caused by physical illness, with cardiovascular disease being the most common cause of death.

- 31% of people with schizophrenia and coronary heart disease (CHD) are diagnosed under the age of 55, compared with 18% of others with CHD.
- 41% of people with schizophrenia and diabetes are diagnosed under the age of 55, compared with 30% of others with diabetes.
- 23% of people with schizophrenia and respiratory disease are diagnosed before the age of 55, compared with 17% of others with respiratory disease.

People with mental illness have been found to receive insufficient medical assessment and treatment

It is reported that people with mental illness are less likely to receive preventative medical care and screening, despite being at high risk for medical morbidity including weight issues, extreme high levels of smokers, high levels of sugar intake from soft drinks and inappropriate eating habits – the issues of CHD, Diabetes and lung disease etc.

Without a strong support system, many people with mental illness will not or cannot manage their physical health effectively, leading to poorer outcomes and increased hospitalisations.

Many are isolated, experience poverty, have restricted freedom, poor social supports, loss of dreams and goals, all causing additional stress. When combined with the negative symptoms of the mental illness, this can contribute to a reduced motivation and ability to lead a healthy lifestyle.

What can we all do about this?

Advocate for equal access to good physical health outcomes for all people. Encourage smokers to attend 'Tobacco Free' programs in their local area. Try and encourage those with mental illness to seek support of a PHaMs worker or attend 'healthy eating' classes. Insist the GP takes into account physical health issues as well as mental health issues.

Becoming an empowered health consumer has great rewards as declared by one of the speakers from Western Australia. You can reduce frequency and severity of mental illness, the side effects of medication and early onset of illness.

People need to be well informed about their illness and be assertive in seeking the help they desire to address their physical health symptoms and in finding a good GP – ask for recommendations. After all, it is your health we are talking about.

The Symposium ended with a Forum which linked live with five MIFA sites throughout Australia. The discussions reinforced the importance of being proactive about good physical and mental health outcomes, being educated and informed and maintaining a good level of fitness and good eating habits. There was a recognition that encouraging and supporting people with a mental illness is best for the community, the individual as well as their support networks including the family. This was a great day.

Maureen Lewis

Well Ways Team Leader



Collective Voice Working Group Update

continued from page 13

CONSUMER: Cost of Living

Last year the Collective Voice Working Group provided feedback to the National Advisory Council on Mental Health (NACMH) for the submission titled '*Daily Bread, Income and Living with Mental Illness*' on behalf of MIFSA participants. This feedback was quoted in the final submission presented to Minister Butler recently. The advisory committee met on 26 June 2011 where they were informed that Minister Butler was intending to release the report shortly.

Amanda Porter

CARER: Carer Allowance

Discussions with Carers SA recently highlighted that responsibility for payments available to Carers belonged to both federal government (pensions and allowances and state government (concessions).

Work towards improvements in concessions at the state level have been undertaken by SACOSS and MIFSA supports their initiatives through our membership of their organisation.

Carers Australia, advocating at the national level in relation to Carer Allowance to ensure it meets the needs of mental health carers, has advised:

- The checklist for Carer Allowance is physical based
- There is a push for psychiatric disability recognition

We have passed this information to MIFA to consider action from their members in support of Carers Australia at the national level as it affects Carers across Australia. We recommended that MIFA consider making a Federal budget submission to address this issue.

Amanda Porter

CARER: Community Support Services

In our investigation to date of the key area for improvement in Community Support Services to assist Carers, we have been able to determine:

Why Community Support Services are not meeting Carers needs:

- Supports are often for a limited time and not the duration of the illness, often also subject to limited funding
- There is not enough direction or assistance to connect with further supports for Carers
- Carers often feel they are fighting the medical system and instead want to be part of a collaborative approach
- Many Carers are unable to leave the house and in turn may have difficulty connecting to Support Services from home

Where Carers find out about Community Support Services:

Our Well Ways Carer Education Program participants share with their facilitators that often Community Support Services are found when a Carer is desperate for support, frustrated with the medical system or dealing with a crisis themselves and that generally they located MIFSA through the White Pages and local newspapers.

The types of improvements in Community Support Services that would assist Carers:

Carers felt that a *Mental Health Services Directory for Carers* which could be available at the first point of contact (e.g. GP's and Emergency Departments) would help them to know where they could go for support. This type of directory could also contain a range of information to show the connectedness between services, 'How to work with the Medical System' and also resources and services available in the community.

The Collective Voice Working Group is continuing to connect with MIFSA's Well Ways and Respite Programs and will seek opportunities to work in partnership with other Community Support Services in the future to discuss the potential of such a resource being developed.

Susie Born

HAVE YOUR SAY! COLLECTIVE VOICE

Have Your Say! Collective Voice - we extend an opportunity to our members, participants, staff and volunteers to contribute to a "collective voice" by providing information about areas where you would like to see improvements in the mental health sector. Have your say by completing a Have Your Say! Collective Voice form which is available from any MIFSA site.

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