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[www.mifsa.org](http://www.mifsa.org)

## Personal help on the road to recovery

**IN LATE FEBRUARY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED THAT IT WILL DOUBLE THE REACH OF THE PERSONAL HELPERS AND MENTORS PROGRAM (PHAMS), EXPANDING THE NUMBER OF SITES FROM 76 TO 155 TO DELIVER MORE SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH A SEVERE MENTAL ILLNESS.**

A further 39 non-government organisations have been selected to deliver the program in 79 sites at a cost of almost \$100 million. This will create approximately 400 full-time equivalent positions across the country.

Mental illness can have a devastating effect on people's lives leaving them feeling isolated, vulnerable and at risk of drug and alcohol misuse. The program targets those most in need – people who cannot manage their daily activities or live independently because they have a severe mental illness.

Personal helpers and mentors work one-on-one with participants helping them achieve their goals – for example, how to manage every day tasks such as housekeeping. They also work on improving relationships with family and friends and becoming more involved in community life, and make sure that participants are connected with essential clinical and support services.

By building confidence and increasing connections within the community, personal helpers and mentors can help overcome crippling social isolation.

People can refer themselves to the program, or their families and carers can encourage them to join or they can be referred to the program by a local health or community organisation. So far more than 3,400 people have joined the program. It is expected that new services will begin from April 2009.

The (Australian) Government has committed \$284.8 million from 2006-2011 for the program, with 76 sites currently operating around the country – 41 in metropolitan areas and 35 in rural, regional and remote locations. See page 4 for the full list.

*Continued page 4 >*



## 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.



## MIFSA's profile in

**ANDREINA HOULAHAN, THE BRANCH MANAGER OF BANK SA IN TOORAK GARDENS CONTACTED MIFSA TO SEE IF WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN PREPARING A DISPLAY FOR THEIR BRANCH.**

Andreina was excited about the idea of showcasing the work of MIFSA and highlighting mental health as a community issue.

Andreina explained that a key aim of the Bank SA Marketing Plan is to "give back to the community and to the environment". At a branch meeting the team discussed where to focus their attention given the community brief of their marketing plan.



## Schizophrenia Awareness Week Events:

### Art Exhibition

Arts Access SA Gallery, 106 Currie Street Adelaide

18th to 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2009; 12noon – 5pm

LAUNCH: 20<sup>th</sup> May 2009, 6pm-9pm

Please RSVP if attending the launch, contact Suzie or Marion at MIFSA, phone 8221 5160

### Education Forum

Are you trying to understand psychotic symptoms of mental illness or schizophrenia?

An Invitation is extended to the community, including family and friends of people with a mental illness to attend:

#### What are the signs and can we help?

Learn all about diagnosis and treatments enabling you to be more supportive and understanding.

Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> May; 1:30pm – 4pm (with a cuppa break)

At Marjorie Black House, 47 King William Road, Unley

Presentation by respected national and international speaker and psychiatrist, plus a personal journey given by a MIFSA guest speaker

**Please RSVP** – very important – limited seating available. Please phone MIFSA Reception, 8221 5160



## the community

The Toorak Gardens Bank SA Branch is located in close proximity to the Glenside Campus. Linda suggested that, "mental health would be a good focus as it does not get much exposure and is 'not popular' due to mental illness often being treated as 'taboo'. The team felt that focusing on this area could offer benefit to the mental health community."

Andreina had previously spoken with staff from the Glenside Campus for suggestions of a group that would benefit from a display at the Bank, and MIFSA had been suggested. "The Toorak Gardens State Bank would like to continue to have some working relationship with MIFSA," Andreina said, as finishing touches were made to the display. The display will showcase the work of MIFSA until mid May and features some paintings and woodwork as well.

## From the President

The news that MIFSA has been successful in gaining funds for three more PHaMs programs is more fully covered by Natasha – as it should be because she and her team did all the hard work to get this result. However, I can't let this moment go by without reflecting on how pleased your Board members are with the skill and commitment of the MIFSA staff group that produces new opportunities like this.



At each Board meeting we hear about at least one program from a program leader, and it is always an eye-opening, affirming experience. Often an emotional one, as we hear about some of the remarkable, brave journeys towards recovery by participants. Many readers will no doubt be familiar with new announcements, revised strategic plans and optimistic summaries of progress from their organisations. Sometimes it can be hard to pick the reality from the 'spin'. Not so in MIFSA. Each program is right on track towards our key goals, doing what we all want, delivering better services.

I like to think that success breeds success, and that these stories are also getting through to the Governments that fund us. Natasha and her team write a great funding submission. But I think our reputation now goes before us; as a very well managed specialist mental health service, that is driven from the bottom up by consumers and carers, and keeps delivering on its promises. For your Board members, it's an honour and a privilege to play a small part in making it happen.

David Meldrum

## From the Chief Executive Officer

**TO 'REACH PEOPLE WE HAVEN'T REACHED BEFORE' IS ONE OF THREE GOALS IN 'MIFSA 2011' – OUR STRATEGIC PLAN.**

'MIFSA 2011' has been developed following your feedback as MIFSA members as well as input from volunteers, staff, Board of Management and stakeholders.



One of the ways we are reaching people we haven't reached before is by developing new programs as well as strengthening or increasing the reach of our existing MIFSA programs. In the last few months we have sought funding for just these reasons. My report for this edition of *MIFSA News* is an update on some of the progress we have made with submissions for funding.

Before the first update, a little context: as a charitable organisation MIFSA is able to generate what I affectionately refer to as "MIFSA money". These funds come from donations, bequests, fundraising and the hard work of our valued Sunflower Shops Volunteers.

'MIFSA money' is very valuable as it allows us to fund programs where funding is not available from the Government or from other sources. "MIFSA money" allows us to respond to the needs of people living with mental illness and their families and friends by delivering important services and programs which we would otherwise be unable to deliver. In the coming year I will share some of our plans to increase our fundraising successes.

Our most successful fundraising venture is undoubtedly our MIFSA Sunflower Shops. The Sunflower Shops depend on the hard work, dedication and efforts of our valued Sunflower Shops volunteers. For example, a Volunteer on any given day will spend up to four hours ironing clothes prior to display and sale. The task is continuous, very labour intensive and for our "more senior" Volunteers, physically demanding.

It is fantastic to share the news that MIFSA has been successful in its application for funding through the Volunteer Support Fund 2008-09. The grant has purchased three commercial steamers which will assist Sunflower Shop Volunteers in pressing recycled clothes. We thank the SA Government, Office of Volunteers' Volunteers Support Fund for this grant.

We hope that the commercial steamers will improve the job satisfaction and workload of the fantastic team of Shops Volunteers by providing tools that will save time and effort. In turn better presentation of clothing is likely to further improve return on sales which are used to enhance and extend MIFSA's range of services.

*Continued page 17>*

## Personal Helpers and Mentors (PHaMs) Program

### ROUND 3

As you can see from the Australian Government media release on the front page (and the box below) – MIFSA is celebrating the success of receiving funding to deliver three more PHaMs Programs.

Behind the scenes, this means the development of three new teams to deliver this exciting Program to support participants in their recovery journeys. Many resources will be dedicated to this development – the most valuable of which will be the sharing of knowledge, skills and experience by our existing PHaMs teams who have successfully implemented, promoted and are continuing to develop the PHaMs Programs across two regions.

**Unley/Mitcham PHaMs:** This team will be supported by the current Western PHaMs Team and will initially be based at Keswick until the move to new premises at Wayville.

**Outer Southern PHaMs:** This team will receive support from the current Southern PHaMs Team and will initially be co-located at Panangga.

**South East Country PHaMs:** The development of this new regional team based in Mount Gambier has already begun and is receiving additional support from MIFSA Programs with knowledge and connections in the region, including the Education Program and Well Ways Program.

By the time this edition is printed, it is anticipated that recruitment will have occurred for most of the staffing of these new teams and that we will be working towards delivering services to support people living with mental illness in the very near future.

Amanda Porter  
Programs Manager  
amanda@mifsa.org

## Personal Helpers and Mentors Program

### ROUND 1

Elizabeth: **Anglicare**

North and Far West Country: **Mission Australia**

### ROUND 2

Mid-North Country Region: **Australian Red Cross**

Western Metropolitan Area: **Mental Illness Fellowship of South Australia**

Southern Metropolitan Marion sub: **UnitingCare Wesley Port Adelaide**

Outer Southern Metropolitan Area: **Mental Illness Fellowship of South Australia**

### ROUND 3

Eastern Metropolitan Area: **Mind Australia**

Murray Bridge: Catholic Church Endowment Society (**Centacare**)

Northern Metropolitan Area: Catholic Church Endowment Society (**Centacare**)

Outer Southern Metropolitan Area: **Mental Illness Fellowship of South Australia**

Port Pirie: **UnitingCare Wesley Port Pirie**

South East of South Australia: **Mental Illness Fellowship of South Australia**

Southern Metro Area – Unley/Mitcham: **Mental Illness Fellowship South Australia**

## Personal Helpers? Mentors? Huh?

### THE PERSPECTIVE OF A NEW PHAMS WORKER

PHaMs. What an acronym! It stands for Personal Helpers and Mentors. I first saw this program advertised on an eye-catching poster at Panangga Activity Centre. At the time, I was studying music at TAFE and doing some sessional work at the centre. Though I was only spending 3 hours a week at Panangga, involved in the bushwalking program or teaching relaxation, the centre had a certain charm which worked its magic on me.

The notion of the Personal Helpers and Mentors program also charmed me. Wow! A government health initiative that has its sights set in a very useful place... on the people! After 15 years in the acute health sector as a nurse, I was very excited to hear of such a program. To understand what the PHaMs program is about, we must first ask what a mentor does.

There are old sayings by sages more wise than I about mentoring.

*'A true teacher is one who does oneself out of a job.'*  
or  
*'Give a man a fish and he lives for a day, teach him how to fish and he lives forever.'*

These little aphorisms, I believe, underscore the concept of mentoring. A mentor works humbly with others to empower them to move forward. By the benefit of the mentor's life learnings (which may not be read in books), knowledge is passed on through relationship. We do ourselves out of a job, because, hopefully, one day, the person will not need us anymore.

### How does this translate to the 'in-my-newbie's-opinion' fantastic PHaMs Program?

PHaMs workers come to the program with their own set of life experience and educational knowledge. We also take a strength-based approach to recovery. We come with eyes to see the diamonds in a mound of stones; we help participants see their own diamonds. What a privilege we have! So, what happens then? We understand that each participant is different and that they have different needs, goals, strengths and dreams. We work together, and within the participant's own timeframe, we have victories, setbacks, and some more victories.

*Continued page 18>*

## Education Program

### HI EVERYONE,

We are constantly receiving feedback on our Education sessions and most feedback is the same: Community Educators bring sessions to life. People appreciate hearing stories from someone who has actually experienced an illness. It makes the session more real, and easier to understand. Hence, I'm bringing you the story of a relatively new Community Educator Jenny Benham.

*"Hi, I'm Jenny and I have only recently become an active member of the Community Education Team but I have been caught in the spiral of Mental Illness for the majority of my life. I was diagnosed with Chronic Schizophrenia 28 years ago. This was as much a shock to me as it was to everyone who knew me. I knew I heard voices: Demons,*

*Spirits, and saw images that I can now recognise as bizarre, but this had been my normality as far back as I can recall. I believed that everyone had these experiences but they were to be held within because to share them would bring disaster. So I suppressed my desire to express myself and in hindsight I would say I separated my functional world from the terrors of darkness.*

*I was a Registered Nurse working in a Paediatric Psychiatric Unit. Even though I was working with psychiatric patients I did not connect any of my experiences with theirs. They had an illness, they were unwell. I did not see myself in that light. I did not believe I had hallucinations for hallucinations were a sign of illness. They were not based in reality, and as 'out there' as my experiences may have seemed to me they were my reality.*

*As I said I was diagnosed 28 years ago and as a result of this I have been through many and varied forms of treatment, including massive doses of what are now seen as very primitive medications, ECT, psychotherapy, groups based on behaviour management, and now more acceptable combination of antipsychotics and antidepressants. In spite of this I still have Voices but there is one major change – I no longer live my life at the mercy of these experiences. I no longer spend the entirety of my life suffering from schizophrenia BUT live with it. This does not mean my path is smooth for it is often rocky, and I get caught up in the spiral of illness once again. When I'm stable I accept that I do have an illness. When I dip I struggle to hold this insight but I know that with guidance and support it's possible to fight my way through the fog no matter how dense and find a place to settle, even if only for a while.*

*In closing, what I'm trying to convey is that the Community Education Program offers everyone involved an opportunity to share, experience and learn from each other in a safe and friendly environment. I do not see my role as an educator to lecture but to open up and share."*  
Jenny Benham

Also, big congratulations to our three radio stars, Danny, Danya and Anna who made their 92.7 FRESH FM debut on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2009. Nathan Wildy from Fresh came to MIFSA and recorded some great interviews with some participants from the Activity Centres. Then on the Wednesday night Robyn Miller and myself were live on air discussing various issues that were raised from the interviews. Danny, Danya and Anna did such a great job, they spoke so well, we appreciated their honesty and the hope they provided. Please say CONGRATULATIONS to Danny, Danya and Anna if you see them around MIFSA. Thank you so much guys, you were wonderful!

Cheers,  
Sophie and the Education Team  
[sophie@mifsa.org](mailto:sophie@mifsa.org)

## Mental Health TV – A World First

A new internet channel, Mentallympians.tv, was launched at the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual International Initiative for Mental Health Leadership in Brisbane last month.

The brainchild of Keith Mahar, a Canadian-born Australian mental health advocate who has been involved in local, national and international mental health initiatives, mentallympians.tv is a world first new community media initiative giving people with a mental illness the chance to watch and create multi-media content worldwide.

By hosting a broad range of internet content: stories, film, research and other material, Mentallympians.tv aims to raise awareness of recovery, inspire hope and reduce self-stigma and social isolation. People can watch material, interact with peers and post their own stories to demonstrate the resilience, creativity, intelligence and humanity possessed by people with mental illness.

The word 'mentallympian' is a strength-based term created by Keith Mahar to define anyone who voluntarily competes against stigma, prejudice and/or discrimination by disclosing that she or he has personally experienced mental illness.

The Mental Health Council of Australia (MHCA) welcomes this creative approach to promoting awareness of recovery. Keith Mahar, whose former corporate broadcasting career in Canada was ended by symptoms of severe mental illness, has created a world first website which is all about mental health recovery and resilience. To view, go to: [www.mentallympians.tv](http://www.mentallympians.tv)

Simon Tatz, 02 6285 3100  
Communications Director  
Mental Health Council of Australia  
[www.mhca.org.au](http://www.mhca.org.au)



## Well Ways Programs – Helping families and friends find better ways

THE YEAR HAS STARTED WELL AND 'WELL WAYS BUILDING A FUTURE' PROGRAMS ARE RUNNING IN VARIOUS VENUES ACROSS METROPOLITAN ADELAIDE INCLUDING MORPHETT VALE, DAVOREN PARK, CITY ADELAIDE, MODBURY NORTH AND KESWICK.

A highlight has been delivering for the first time a 'Well Ways Building a Future' program to the Greek Community. Our number of MIFSA Well Ways 'Building a Future' Facilitators has also grown with training taking place in Melbourne by Mental Illness Fellowship Victoria.

In April MIFSA will be delivering the first Well Ways DUO program at Keswick. The need for a program incorporating mental health issues and substance use is very much needed in the community. This will be followed by a second program starting in May. We have trained three more Facilitators to deliver this particular program – Well Ways DUO.

The quarterly follow up sessions which were held early in March at Marion and Walkerville are a great success as the meals are scrumptious and the company is always great. Everyone enjoyed the education component 'advanced effective communications' and enjoyed the company of the other families attending, some of whom have become very good friends.

Please check the dates and venues of both of these fabulous Well Ways Programs coming in the next few months. Bookings are essential.

Hope to talk to you soon on any matter about the Well Ways Programs.

Cheers  
Maureen Lewis  
Well Ways Coordinator  
mlewis@mifsa.org



### PLEASE NOTE:

To all who wish to gain a better understanding of psychotic illness – if you would like to increase your understanding of schizophrenia and the symptoms displayed by some who may have a diagnosed psychotic illness, please book your seat at the Education Session to be held during Schizophrenia Awareness Week (details on page 2).

**Well Ways: Building a Future Program, 2009**

LOCATION	DATE COMMENCING
KESWICK, MIFSA Conference Room	Tuesday, 7 April; 12-3pm
PORT ADELAIDE, Bower Cottages	Monday, 27 April; 12:30pm
HENLEY BEACH, Community Centre	Tuesday, 26 May; 6-9pm

**BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL, phone 8221 5160**

**Well Ways DUO program**

LOCATION	DATE COMMENCING
KESWICK, MIFSA Conference Centre	Tuesday, 26 May; 6-9pm

**BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL, phone 8221 5160**

**Volunteer work at MIFSA**

Looking for voluntary work? Enjoy meeting people? Committed to supporting MIFSA? MIFSA provides its range of services through the generous and enthusiastic support of volunteers.

If you would like to learn more, please contact Susan Wilkes on 8221 5160 or email susanw@mifsa.org

**Mental Illness Fact Sheets Series**  
Updated Fact Sheets Now Available  
For order forms or to place orders please phone MIFSA, 8221 5160

**Cost:** All prices include GST

Full Series (1 copy of each 30 sheets)	\$20.00
Bulk Packs (100 copies of one title)	\$30.00

Individual Fact Sheets can be purchased at 70c ea

**Postage and handling:**

1 Full Series	\$7.00
1 Bulk Pack	\$10.00
2 or more Packs (up to 20kg in weight, within SA)	\$15.00



## Peer Worker Project – Physical Health Workshop

THE PEER WORKER PROJECT TEAM FROM MIFSA AND BAPTIST CARE (SA) ARE ALWAYS ON THE LOOK OUT FOR WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING THAT WILL BENEFIT PEOPLE WHO ARE LOOKING TO BE PEER WORKERS OR ARE ALREADY EMPLOYED.

In late 2008, we met with the HealthRight Project (WA) and struck a deal whereby we shared Training Packages – they are now conducting the Introduction to Peer Work in WA and in turn, we have taken on running their 'Physical Health Workshop' for consumers in SA.

The current training trend in health is leaning towards supporting primary health care providers (eg GPs) to educate and promote self-management strategies for holistic wellbeing in patients that hopefully will prevent their conditions becoming acute and requiring specialist/other care.

Building on this, the HealthRight Project recognised the correlation between physical and mental health. A high percentage of consumers have unaddressed physical health issues that can exacerbate their mental illness. A vicious cycle!

The workshop is designed to create awareness in consumers of this relationship and offer strategies to implement changes towards better health and wellbeing. I believe it is a perfect opportunity for Peer Workers to gain awareness and strategies to use in the workplace.

We are delivering this interactive workshop in two x 2 ½ hour sessions, the first covering medical issues (medication effects, and barriers to health care) and the second looking at lifestyle issues (smoking, alcohol, nutrition, physical activity).

All participants receive training notes and related resources to take home. A guest speaker may be invited (subject to availability) to talk in the second session. In March, we have Colin Gray from Colin S Gray Physiotherapy, Magill, who will be discussing Physiotherapy and Mental Health.

Attendance at this session is strictly by RSVP only as places are limited. All details are provided on the invitation flyer that will be mailed out in the weeks prior to the session. Our March group is full but check your email and letterboxes for future workshop details.

After the workshop, I would encourage participants to get involved with the 'Healthy Living Group Workshops' that Dave Tapley will be running from MIFSA – see the adjacent advertisement.

Stay healthy!

Belinda Brown  
Training Coordinator, Peer Work Project  
belinda@mifsa.org  
www.peerwork.org.au

## Healthy Living Group Workshops

STAYING MOTIVATED FOR RECOVERY AND WELLNESS

### 'Personal Development Plan to stay well'

A Peer led project: placing the consumer in the 'drivers seat'.

**Wednesday, 1<sup>st</sup> April; 1pm – MIFSA Conference Room, 1 Richmond Road Keswick**

This workshop is about diet and nutrition. We will explore and use our knowledge of healthy eating at affordable prices:

- what should we eat and drink to stay healthy?
- do we need supplements?
- how do we know if we are doing the right thing?

**Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> May; 1pm – MIFSA Conference Room, Keswick**

This workshop is about fatigue fighting tips. We will explore and brainstorm as a group:

- what is fatigue and what happens to us?
- lifestyle suggestions and psychological issues and triggers
- overcoming the mid afternoon energy slump.

The workshops are facilitated by Dave Tapley from 1pm to 2:15pm, followed by positive outlook sharing 2:30pm to 3pm on the first Wednesday of the month in the Conference Room for anyone interested in the promotion of better health.

Future topics on the first Wednesday of the month will include:

- getting well and staying well
- personal responsibility and overcoming addictions
- taking responsibility for your health
- measuring your continued sustainable wellness / self assessment
- confident and comfortable communication.

For further enquires contact Dave Tapley, email: [dave.tapley@bigpond.com](mailto:dave.tapley@bigpond.com) or phone 8378 2723

If you or someone you know is between 5 and 25 years and has mental health or other concerns Kids Helpline is available 24/7 to help.

Call 1800 55 1800 for help or visit: [www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au)

## Practical information for people who hear voices

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE IS ADAPTED FROM "INTERVOICE ONLINE", AN INTERNET SITE CREATED BY AND FOR VOICE HEARERS ([WWW.INTERVOICEONLINE.ORG](http://WWW.INTERVOICEONLINE.ORG)). IT CONTAINS USEFUL INFORMATION, LINKS AND NETWORKS RELATING TO VOICE HEARING EXPERIENCE.

Voice hearers can find themselves experiencing an overwhelming world and their power of reason may be virtually extinguished, making it impossible to go about their lives. Open discussion with others offers a means of helping them to accept their voices. Communication between voice hearers gives people the opportunity to share experiences and to learn from one another.

Voice hearers say it is important to discuss voices. In the process, it is possible to learn to recognise their games and tricks, as well as their pleasant aspects, and to identify patterns which are specific to given situations. This can help you to be better prepared for future onset of voices. Voice hearers may think they are alone in hearing voices. This makes the experience unpleasant and produces feelings of shame or the fear of going mad. Anxiety often leads to the avoidance of situations which might trigger the hearing of voices, and this seriously blocks self development. Anxiety severely restricts freedom of movement and strategies of avoidance often seem to exacerbate the problem.

Voice hearers seek explanations to account for their voices. A personal approach to understanding can be helpful and there are many disparate perspectives used by voice hearers. An explanatory theory is essential to the development of a coping strategy. Unless some meaning is attributed to the voices, it is difficult to begin to organise a relationship with them in order to reduce anxiety. Perspectives that discourage voice hearers from seeking mastery of the voices tend to yield the least positive results.

In the process of developing your own point of view and taking responsibility for oneself, the essential first step is acceptance of the voices as belonging to me. This is one of the most important and difficult steps to take.

Voices can express what the voice hearers are feeling or thinking, for instance aggression or fear about an event or relationship. When voices offer information in this way, the challenge posed by their presence is less significant than the reason for the feeling. When the voices express such views, it can be valuable to discuss the messages with someone you trust.

When you hear voices that are malicious it is difficult to accept the existence of a positive, helpful dimension to the experience. Contact with other voice hearers can lead to the discovery that positive voices exist, and the realisation that these can be detected, as a result of acceptance of your negative feelings. Imposing a structure on the relationship with the voices helps minimise feelings of powerlessness. It is valuable to see that you can set your own limits and restrain the voices from excessive intrusion on your life.



Sharing experiences enables voice hearers to get to know what medicines others are using, how useful these are, and what their side effects may be. It is important, for example, to know whether a particular medicine is helpful in reducing the hearing of voices or easing anxiety and confusion.

Sharing knowledge about voices with family and friends can be helpful. If family and friends can accept the voices they can be more supportive, this can make voice hearers' lives easier, improving their confidence in social situations.

Voice hearers who have learned to adjust to their experiences report that the process has contributed to their personal growth. Personal growth can be defined as recognising what you need in order to live a fulfilled life, and knowing how to achieve this aim.

Communicating about voices has its disadvantages, voice hearers can feel very vulnerable, some voice hearers find great difficulty in opening up about their experiences, though it can be easier with other voice hearers. Another drawback is that the voices may occasionally become temporarily more acute. Even so, the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. Finally, it is most important to be fully aware of the wide variety of individual situations and circumstances. The best advice is to try to increase the voice hearers influence over their voices, rather than intensifying their powerlessness.

MIFSA's Therapeutic Groups Program will be jointly hosting a Voice Hearers' Group information session with Uniting Care Wesley Port Adelaide (Marion) on Tuesday March 31st. If you are interested in coming along, to find out more please contact Anna on 8221 5160 or at [annab@mifsa.org](mailto:annab@mifsa.org)



## Therapeutic Groups

**SUPPORT THE PRINCIPLES OF REHABILITATION AND RECOVERY AND UNDERSTAND THAT THERE IS HOPE AFTER DIAGNOSIS OF MENTAL ILLNESS.**

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

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

*The focus is about thriving, not just surviving*

## 2009 Voice Hearers' Groups starting in Adelaide, April 2009

**AN ACCEPTANCE APPROACH TO VOICE HEARING**

MIFSA and Uniting Care Wesley Port Adelaide (Marion) will be facilitating groups in metropolitan Adelaide for people who hear voices.

These groups will operate according to the Hearing Voices Network Australia (HVNA) Key Principles:

- Accepting that hearing voices is a valid experience
- Respecting each person's interpretation and beliefs about their experiences
- Fostering and enabling safety and wellbeing of all
- Promoting hope
- Helping consumers to know that they are not alone
- Believing in each person's capacity to take control of their experience and recover
- Encouraging people to come together and feel safe in sharing their experiences and coping strategies
- Fostering and supporting consumer independence and empowerment

If you are interested in being involved, contact Anna at: annab@mifsa.org or phone 8221 5160

Funded by SA Dept of Health and Commonwealth Dept of Health and Ageing; Support for Day to Day Living in the Community – a Structured Activity Program

## 2009 Therapeutic Groups program

Session/Venue	Dates/Times
<b>Managing Mania</b> Level 1 Education Ctr Modbury Hospital	Tuesdays, 5 <sup>th</sup> May – 9 <sup>th</sup> June; 2pm-4pm
Clarence Park Community Centre 72 East Ave Black Forest	Thursdays, 7 <sup>th</sup> May – 11 <sup>th</sup> June; 10am-12noon
<b>Alleviating Anxiety</b> held at above venues	Week beginning 10 <sup>th</sup> August to week ending 18 <sup>th</sup> September
<b>Psychosis</b> held at above venues	Week beginning 2 <sup>nd</sup> November to week ending 11 <sup>th</sup> December
<b>Sessions below to be held at: Community Campus, Elizabeth Grove; Friday 10am-12pm</b>	
<b>Building Self Esteem</b> Community Campus Gunther St Elizabeth Gr	Fridays, 8 <sup>th</sup> May – 12 <sup>th</sup> June; 10am-12noon
<b>Alleviating Anxiety</b>	Week beginning 10 <sup>th</sup> August to week ending 18 <sup>th</sup> September
<b>Communicating Effectively</b>	Week beginning 2 <sup>nd</sup> November to week ending 11 <sup>th</sup> December

### Aims – Managing Mania:

- better understand depression and mania
- share ideas with others who have similar experiences
- get to know and understand your moods
- explore helpful and unhelpful coping strategies
- practice Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy techniques
- identify early warning signs and strategies to manage health
- develop plans to manage crises.

### Aims – Building Self Esteem:

- better understand the ups and downs of self-esteem
- practice strategies to counteract your inner critic
- explore ways to communicate effectively
- learn to challenge unhelpful thinking
- examine ways to break problem patterns and do things differently
- think positively about our achievements and abilities.

# Happy 1st Birthday to the MIFSA Respite Program!

IT SEEMS LIKE ONLY LAST MONTH WE WERE INTRODUCING OURSELVES AND THE RESPITE PROGRAM TO YOU ALL IN THE *MIFSA NEWS* AND NOW THE PROGRAM IS 1 YEAR OLD!

In honour of this anniversary we, together with the Program Coordinators – Vivienne and Tamara, recently took the opportunity to dedicate time to a Respite Program Planning Day. We looked back over the past 12 months, recognised achievements, discussed what worked well and what didn't, and then focussed on the development of the Program for the coming year.

We identified many of the reasons we feel are behind the success of the Respite Program and would like to share some of these with you:

- Development of a program based on the needs of Carers while maintaining a compassionate and respectful approach to the needs of Care Recipients
- Developing and maintaining effective working relationships with the teams at the metropolitan Commonwealth Carer Respite Centres who broker our respite services
- Integration and Connections with other MIFSA Programs, particularly:
  - Well Ways for providing us with a forum to talk to Carers who generously shared their thoughts about respite services and what they would like to see developed
  - Peer Work Project for their dedication to employment opportunities for Participants of the Peer Work course – many of whom have utilised the skills gained from this training to become confident, capable and enthusiastic Respite Workers
  - Personal Helpers and Mentors Programs (PHaMs) for working in partnership and for their ongoing support of many Participants.

- Recruitment, training and support of 15 Respite Workers who not only provide Carers with a break from their caring responsibilities, but are also dedicated to offering incredible support, guidance and motivation to Care Recipients living with mental illness.

We also identified some key areas of development for the coming months, including:

1. Retaining the Program's focus on supporting Carers to take a break
2. Supporting Respite Workers to maintain a Recovery focus when working together with Care Recipients
3. Building our profile among networks (particularly Carer networks) and promoting the Program widely across the metropolitan area
4. Evaluating Carer and Care Recipient experiences of respite services
5. Offering training and further developing the skills of all Program staff.

We would like to say a big THANK YOU to everyone who has supported the Respite Program and its development over the past year. We look forward to continuing to work with you in delivering appropriate, effective and flexible respite services in the future.

Amanda Porter  
Programs Manager

Marie Choi  
Respite Program Team Leader

*Respite Program participants attending the recent Body, Mind and Spirit Retreat held at Stockport*



## New Steam for Shop Volunteers!

**MIFSA WAS SUCCESSFUL IN OBTAINING A GRANT FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA, OFFICE FOR VOLUNTEERS!**

An application was made for monies from the Volunteer Support Fund in order to purchase steam cleaners for our Sunflower Opportunity Shops. In December last year we were given \$2,900.00 and were able to purchase three commercial Propress Steamers; one for each shop.

Prior to the arrival of the steam cleaners, volunteers would work tirelessly sorting and ironing clothes preparatory to display and sale. The steamers have revolutionised this – clothes are now easily and quickly steamed free of wrinkles and none of our volunteers need to slave away ironing anymore! In fact, we hear from a reliable source that a volunteer at our Christies Beach shop affectionately known as Mr Buzz is becoming more and more adept at this. His steamed clothes positively sparkle!

A big thank you to the Office of Volunteers for saving our shop volunteers so much time and effort!

As always, a big thank you to our shop volunteers for their hard work and commitment.



Above, Volunteers, Jade White (left) and Lorraine Porter from Goodwood Sunflower Shop



Above, Volunteer, Jill Southaland from Seacombe Gardens Sunflower Shop

## MIFSA welcomes new Volunteers from James Nash House!

**MIFSA IS DELIGHTED TO WELCOME PATIENTS AND STAFF FROM JAMES NASH HOUSE AS OUR NEWEST VOLUNTEERS!**

MIFSA was contacted by Occupational Therapy staff from James Nash House on behalf of patients who were looking to become more involved with the wider community and who wanted to contribute by volunteering in some way.

As a result of this, patients from James Nash House commenced a pilot volunteering project in February. Each Wednesday staff and patients will join together for morning tea and whilst chatting, will “quality control” sort, weigh and package bread tags for MIFSA.

Many of you will be aware of MIFSA’s bread tag charitable fundraising activities – not only are bread tags recycled but we raise much needed funds for our programs and services through the sale of bread tags to horticulture.

We cannot stress enough how important this volunteering is to MIFSA, particularly the time it will save us in packaging bread tags for sale.

So, many thanks to the patients at James Nash House – we are grateful for your valuable input!

Susan Wilkes  
Communications Officer  
susanw@mifsa.org

### Volunteering SA Professional Development Training Workshops

Session	Date
Providing Quality Customer Service	Thursday, 7th May, 9:30am-12:30pm City of Prospect Reception Room, Civic Centre, Prospect Road

To register for this workshop please phone Volunteering SA, phone: 8221 7177 or email: [training@volunteering.sa.org.au](mailto:training@volunteering.sa.org.au)



## Mark of shame

I remember sitting in the waiting room of a community mental health service many years ago, and looking at a large poster on the wall about stigma, a poster that said things like: "Stigma = Tagism" and "Stigma = a mark of shame" and "Stop the stigma". I am in a waiting room looking at a wall that reinforces the idea of shame. The mental health industry is the main promoter of the idea of shame, through anti-stigma campaigns that achieve the exact opposite effect, by keeping shame alive in people's minds.

I am going to be controversial about stigma. I object to the focus on 'stigma' as it relates to mental illness and/or psychiatric disability. This focus is misspent and, I argue, a waste of time and resources. I believe it is counterproductive to talk about stigma and to continue to emphasize it! I look forward to the day when consumer/survivor movements around the world make the decision to stop talking about stigma, and get down to the real issue, that of discrimination.

Whenever any of us in the consumer/survivor movement make this an issue about stigma, we are reinforcing shame; and we continue to associate mental illness with shame, in much the same way as mental health services and organizations do that are funded to reinforce stigma and the 'mark of shame', (holding anti-stigma campaigns and producing posters, videos, postcards etc).

If someone tells you not to think about a pink elephant what do you do...? Think about a pink elephant. The more thinking and discussion about stigma, the more we keep it alive, and let's be clear about this, the more we keep shame alive.

'Stigma' is the most discriminatory and wicked concept that ever existed in western cultures, in relation to people who have different experiences of reality. Stigma is the shortened term for stigmata. Stigmata were the wounds of Christ as recounted in Christian history, suffered on the cross for our sins. The association between stigmata and marks of shame comes from a Christian view of disease: people who had disease were people who were sinners, and their disease was a punishment from God because they were inhabited by the devil.

So why do so many consumer/survivors keep promoting the concept of stigma and by inference, the social construction of shame?

The real issue is about discrimination. When the focus is on stigma, we keep the idea of shame alive and we locate the problem with the person living with mental illness or emotional distress, since it is they who feel the shame. On the other hand, when the focus of the debate is on discrimination, we put the emphasis on the discriminatory behaviour (the discriminator) rather than on the person experiencing discrimination. Only then can discrimination be tackled, and the responsibility for it placed squarely on the shoulders of those doing the discriminating.

I would be delighted if the mental health consumer/survivor movement officially decided not to continue the promotion of shame through the constant focus on stigma.



Instead of consumer/survivors talking about stigma I want the advocacy and political effort to focus on discrimination and subsequent critical distinctions, namely: positive discrimination; negative discrimination; unlawful discrimination; lawful discrimination; discriminatory attitudes (instead of stigmatising attitudes); direct discrimination and indirect discrimination.

Stigma is the most discriminatory concept of all. We can't fight discrimination by using the stigma idea, an offensive and discriminatory construct, as the main mechanism for challenging the status quo. It is impossible because all that is achieved is that shame is perpetuated..

This focus on stigma severely weakens the advocacy about discrimination. Talking about stigma and discrimination weakens the issue because it again, makes the issue about those people who experience the shame rather than on the people who are treating us less than fairly. Let us collectively dump odious 'shame' by dumping the stigma construct, and let's get serious about tackling discrimination. It isn't hard to do.

**Sandy Watson**

Sandy Watson is an independent consumer activist and educator, living and working in Sydney.

Used with permission from the December 2008 Newsletter of the Resource Centre for Mental Health Consumer Developed Initiatives. Accessed at: [www.ourcommunity.com.au/files/OCPNewsletter2.doc](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/files/OCPNewsletter2.doc)

## Housing SA Accommodation Advice

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

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



## New booklet for parents with mental illness

**Are you raising young children when mental illness is part of your life?**

OR

**Is a family member or friend raising young children when mental illness is part of the parent's life?**

**Are you able to provide feedback on a new booklet?**

The COPMI national initiative aims to promote better mental health outcomes for children (0 – 18 years) of parents with a mental health problem or disorder.

One way to do this is to provide information for parents, families, children and young people and their workers.

Resources have already been produced for workers ('Principles and Actions for Services and People Working with Children of Parents With A Mental Illness'), families (a booklet called 'Family Talk'), and for pregnant women and new mothers (a booklet called 'The Best for Me and My Baby'). These are downloadable from and available for order through the COPMI website: [www.copmi.net.au](http://www.copmi.net.au)

We are currently developing a new booklet with the assistance of consumers and carers for families caring for children aged 2-7 years where a parent is experiencing mental health problems.

As part of the resource development process COPMI is asking parents who are raising children in the 2-7 year age group and who experience mental health problems to provide feedback on the booklet. We're also keen to gain feedback from their friends and other family members who may be interested in the information in the booklet (eg spouses, grandparents).

Would you be interested in providing feedback on the draft booklet? Participants will be sent a brief survey to complete and return to the COPMI office and then will be sent the draft booklet and a follow-up survey. When you return the follow-up survey we will send you a \$30 Coles/Myer voucher as a 'thank you' for your time and effort. Please contact Elizabeth Fudge, COPMI Project Manager, if you can assist.

Elizabeth Fudge  
COPMI national initiative  
[fudgee@aicafmha.net.au](mailto:fudgee@aicafmha.net.au)  
Phone: (08)8367 0888 Ext 21  
Fax: (08) 8367 0999

### New in the MIFSA Library:

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder: a practical guide to treatment, by Clare S Rees, PhD

## FREE "Be Smoke Free!" and "MIND BODY LIFE" Courses

DIAMOND HOUSE AND WESTERN DIVISION OF GPs

Free Courses are coming up at Diamond House Clubhouse for people who have a mental health issue or mental illness. Individuals do not have to be a member of Diamond House to participate.

**Mind Body Life** is a 6 week program focussing on healthy eating, exercise and motivation! The group will be both informative and enjoyable with many surprises!

**Be Smoke Free!** is a group to help you reduce or quit smoking. The group is for anybody who is thinking about quitting, actively quitting or maintaining their non-smoking. The group will be interactive, educational and peer support will be encouraged. This is a 10 week program.

Both groups will be held at Diamond Clubhouse at 19 Kilkenny Road, Woodville Park.

A shared lunch FREE of charge for participants is offered before each session.

Mind Body Life course will take place every Tuesday from 1-2:30pm starting 3 March 2009.

Be Smoke Free group course will take place every Tuesday from 1-2:30pm starting 28 April 2009.

Bookings must be made through Diamond House with a GP referral form. If you would like to register for either program please put your name on the list at Diamond Clubhouse or contact Mark or Bec on 8244 3822 or talk to Kim at Diamond Clubhouse on 8244 5525. Numbers are limited so register your interest early.

## Tobacco and Mental Illness Project

**Be Smoke Free!** groups will also be held at Stepney, Elizabeth, Seaton, Noarlunga, Unley and Marion.

For more information regarding the Tobacco and Mental Illness Project please contact Maxie Ashton at the Seaton Mental Health Site on 8200 2006 or [maxie.ashton@health.sa.gov.au](mailto:maxie.ashton@health.sa.gov.au)





## Explore the amazing potential of your mind

**mind&  
ITS POTENTIAL**

2-3 December 2009,  
Sydney Convention Centre



One of the most important findings in 20<sup>th</sup> century neuroscience, the extraordinary capacity of the brain to change and develop, is the subject of the fourth Annual Conference on Mind & Its Potential, 2-3 December 2009, Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre. The discovery that our conscious experience, our mind, can be enhanced to benefit our happiness and wellbeing has far-reaching implications for education, psychology, medicine, the delivery of health care and aged care services, business and family life.

The fourth Annual Conference on Mind & Its Potential is an event of unparalleled profile and scale that will be at the forefront of public attention in December 2009. A compelling element of the conference is the open forum featuring a dialogue between special guest His Holiness the Dalai Lama and a group of eminent scientists including positive psychology founder Dr Martin Seligman. This is a unique opportunity to witness firsthand a dialogue that showcases the Dalai Lama's renowned interest and understanding of science combined with his compassion and concern for the wellbeing of humanity.

An audience of 3000 delegates at the Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre will be dazzled by a faculty of 40+ speakers from Australia and overseas who are leaders in neuroscience, psychology, philosophy, science, medicine, economics and religion. Media coverage of the event will be extensive.

The Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia is an endorsing body of this conference. This means that as a financial MIFSA member you can receive a special offer of 10% discount on early-bird and full 2-day conference prices and a 10% discount on pre and post conference workshop prices.

International keynote speakers already confirmed include:

- His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Spiritual leader of the Tibetan people, Nobel Peace Prize Winner
- Dr Martin Seligman, Founder of Positive Psychology, Best-selling Author: *Authentic Happiness*
- Baroness Susan Greenfield, pioneering neuroscientist scientist, entrepreneur, communicator of science, and policy adviser, author of *Tomorrows People*
- Marc Hauser, evolutionary biologist, lecturer, Psychology Department, Harvard University, Author: *Moral Minds: How Nature Designed Our Universal Sense of Right and Wrong*.
- Mind & Its Potential will explore the amazing revolution in our understanding of the brain and the implications for all walks of life – both personal and professional.

For further information or to register for the conference go to:  
[www.mindanditspotential.com.au](http://www.mindanditspotential.com.au)





## Stepping Out of the Shadows: reducing stigma in multicultural communities

**THIS RESOURCE IS A NEW TRAINING PACKAGE THAT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED FOR CALD COMMUNITY WORKERS TO EDUCATE THEIR COMMUNITIES ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH TO HELP REDUCE STIGMA TOWARDS MENTAL ILLNESS.**

This package contains additional resources including a DVD and bilingual mental health fact sheets.

The training package aims to:

- reduce stigma
- help individuals, families and communities from CALD backgrounds deal with mental illness and address the stigma associated with it
- increase their knowledge about mental health and decrease stigma.

The training kit aims to build a greater awareness of mental illness, dispel myths and misunderstanding, raise acceptance of mental illness as another illness, break down the stigma associated with mental illness, assist families and encourage them to seek the medical help required.

Multicultural Mental Health Australia (MMHA) has already piloted the training kit nationally. Expert Trainers have already been selected from each state and territory under the direction of MMHA. Some of the Expert Trainers have since trained their community leaders, who will be supported by MMHA during this funding round, to roll this stigma reduction training kit into their immediate communities. The Community Trainers are responsible for working at the grassroots level in raising awareness and acceptance of mental illness.

The implementation of the training kit will rely on the commitment and goodwill of many people working in the mental health and multicultural community sectors around the country.

To be involved in the national roll-out of this training, please call Multicultural Mental Health Australia – 02 9840 3333

For further details, please contact:

MMHA: Margaret El-Chami – 02 9840 3381 or 0408 445 794  
SBS: Sophia Spinelli – 03 9949 2111 or 0410 317 085

## Help develop guidelines for carers of people with bipolar disorder

Orygen Research Centre is developing guidelines to provide carers with information about bipolar disorder, suggestions for how they can help, and ways to cope and maintain their wellbeing. The aim is for these guidelines to be a useful, easily accessible resource that benefits carers, families and individuals affected by bipolar disorder.

Carers, consumers and clinicians are invited to share what they have learnt and be panel members on this project:

- Carers and consumers who are 18 years or over, and have experience in dealing with bipolar disorder and what helps, and have either supported others in similar situations or contributed to the literature in the area.
- Clinicians with experience and expertise in treating bipolar disorder and/or assisting families, or researchers who have contributed to knowledge in the area.

Expert panel members will be asked to rate statements about what to include in the guidelines, and to add their own comments and suggestions. They will not be required to attend any meetings as all. Contact will be via the Internet, or if preferred, by paper mail. Copies of the guidelines and related published articles will be sent to panel members and organisations that assist with the project.

For more information on the project and to register your interest go to: [www.mhfa.com.au/lesley/bipolar\\_carers.html](http://www.mhfa.com.au/lesley/bipolar_carers.html)

This research is part of a PhD project, being conducted at the ORYGEN Research Centre, under the supervision of Professor Anthony Jorm, Director of the Mental Health Literacy Program.

If you are interested in being a panel member, please contact Lesley Berk by email: [lberk@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:lberk@unimelb.edu.au) or by phone: 0402 518 843.

## Lifeline Information Service – Rural Mental Health – 1300 13 11 14

Lifeline's Information Service is a rural mental health information service. Information provided includes:

- referral to services and web sites
- printed material
- a range of self help resources.

The self-help resources focus on practical steps to help promote mental health in a range of areas.

For information and copies of resources call or visit <http://www.lifeline.org.au/infoservice> and further information is available at [infoservice@lifeline.org.au](mailto:infoservice@lifeline.org.au) and <http://www.lifeline.org.au>



## Marion Support 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; 6:15PM

**Next meeting: 20<sup>th</sup> April 2009.**

Excellent menu at seniors prices. Laughter galore, much chatter and interaction with each and all. Join us for a relaxing evening; everyone welcome – including members from other MIFSA support groups and visitors. **Bookings essential**, phone Narelle on 8278 5796.

At our last meeting donations raised \$30 for Bush Fire and Flood Relief Appeals.

Take care; see you all on 20th April at the Warradale Hotel, Diagonal Road Warradale, at 6:15pm.  
Narelle Gordon

## Mood Disorders Carers Group

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

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

**Coming meetings: Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> April and 26<sup>th</sup> May 2009.**

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

Group Convenor: Marcia Johnson Timm

## Discussion Forums

HELD MONTHLY AT KESWICK ON THE FOURTH WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH; 1PM – 2:30PM

Forums will provide opportunity to hear guest speakers enlighten and inspire us as we share the journey of recovery.

Forum topics will include: Positive Psychology; Social Inclusion and Community Participation; Emotional Intelligence; Mindfulness in Everyday Life: how living in the 'now' helps recovery.

All enquiries to Anna Byas, Forum Coordinator: [annab@mifsa.org](mailto:annab@mifsa.org)

## Rewire Recovery Group Program 2009

A GROUP FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING ANXIETY, DEPRESSION AND/OR MANIA. GROUPS HELD ON THE SECOND WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH, 1PM – 2:30PM

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. To attend this group, participants must be willing to practice skills and strategies between sessions.

No referral is required. Please direct all enquiries to Anna Byas, Group Coordinator/Facilitator: [annab@mifsa.org](mailto:annab@mifsa.org) or 8221 5160.

All sessions held at the MIFSA Conference Room, 1 Richmond Road Keswick

April 8	<b>Expand your life – Managing Anxiety and Avoidance</b> Strategies and techniques for reducing the impact of stress and anxiety.
May 13	<b>Worry Work</b> Strategies for dealing with unhelpful worry.
June 10	<b>Thinking about thinking</b> Learn how to challenge unhelpful thinking.
July 8	<b>Dealing with painful or unpleasant thoughts</b> Learn how to unhook from negative unhelpful thoughts.
August 12	<b>Identity and Self-Esteem</b> Powerful strategies to enhance sense of self and improve self-esteem.
September 9	<b>Accepting Emotions</b> Learn ways to let go of the struggle of unpleasant emotions.
October 14	<b>Constructive Communication</b> Explore ways to communicate more positively and comfortably.
November 11	<b>Building Resilience</b> Review values and brainstorm ways to develop a 'can-do' approach to creating the life you want.
December 9	<b>Evaluation and Celebration</b> Where we've been and where to from here.





## Bread tags fundraiser

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

### Thank you all for a fantastic effort!

Our thanks also to the efforts of our volunteers, including newcomers from James Nash House, in weighing and bagging the bread tags – your efforts are greatly appreciated.

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

- Blackwood High School Canteen*
- Bev Cook, Nandaly Victoria*
- Gill Pitt, Kingscote KI*
- Lina Sohner, Psychologist*
- Junesse Paterson and friends from Brighton Baptist and Victor Harbor Migrant Health Service*
- Narelle Gordon*
- Ikea*

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

### Delivery Points for Bread Tags:

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

Sunflower Shops Collection Bins at:

- Sixth Ave Shopping Centre, Cnr Sixth Avenue & Stephens Terrace St Peters
- Woolworth's Plus, 272 Shepherds Hill Rd, Eden Hills
- MIFSA at the MHRC Bldg, 1 Richmond Road, Keswick
- Panangga Activity Centre, 64 Elgin Avenue, Christies Beach

## MIFSA's Sunflower Shops are located at:



### CHRISTIES DOWNS

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

### GOODWOOD

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

### SEACOMBE GARDENS

577 Morphett Road  
Phone 8298 3051

### SHOPS COORDINATOR

Elsha, 0409 697 432

## From the Chief Executive Officer

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Please turn to page 11 for some great photos and more information and once again thank you again to all our marvelous MIFSA Volunteers.

Another exciting grant success includes addition of 3 new Personal Helpers and Mentors (PHaMs) Programs which offer us a fantastic opportunity to reach hundreds of people we haven't reached before via 5 MIFSA PHaMs teams. Please have a read of the various press releases and related information which we have included in this *MIFSA News* regarding the expansion of this valuable program throughout South Australia. MIFSA thanks and acknowledges funding from the Australian Government for this initiative.

For the past 17 years MIFSA has provided an Accommodation Support Service funded by the Department of Health. In mid 2005 a one-off grant of \$25 million was distributed amongst Non Government Services in the mental health sector and included a significant investment in Individual Psychosocial Rehabilitation Support Services referred to as "Strategy 6 packages". MIFSA was not directly funded to provide Strategy 6 packages but continued to deliver accommodation support (renamed IPRSS) to tenants of Roofs Housing Association and to deliver Strategy 6 packages via a brokerage model with Roofs Housing Association SA.

Last year the Department of Health tendered for providers to deliver Individual Psychosocial Rehabilitation Support Services. MIFSA submitted a tender but has been unsuccessful on this occasion. As our Accommodation Support funding has been included under the IPRSS banner, this therefore brings to a close 17 years of service provision to Roofs Housing tenants. We are now working closely with our successful partner organisations on transition arrangements for participants by March 31 to ensure that the excellent support we have provided over many years is able to continue.

We sought formal feedback regarding our tender bid and will continue to implement relevant quality improvements. Formal feedback also included two areas in which MIFSA was assessed to be particularly strong. These areas are 1) a commitment to recovery based practice and 2) links and partnerships with other providers in the sector, certainly a strong commendation of our work.

*Continued page 18>*

## In Memoriam

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



## Greg's Letterbox

ON TUESDAY 24TH FEBRUARY AT ABOUT 12:30PM GREG ANDERSEN, WITH THE AID OF HIS MOTHER ROSEMARY AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT WORKER RACHEL WINDSOR, TOOK TO SHOVEL AND ERECTED THE LETTERBOX MASTER PIECE.

Greg Andersen has been attending MIFSA Woodwork Program, led by Mark Markowski, for the past year.

Initially, Greg Andersen was accompanied by Rachel, but in December 2008 he attended classes independently. Tutor Mark says, 'Greg is doing really well.' Greg said, 'it looks great.' Mrs Andersen wanted to pull her chair out onto the street and look at it all day!

Greg continues to go to woodwork and we look forward to more woodworking accomplishments.

Greg, well done on this one!

Suzie Howard  
Keswick Activity Program Coordinator  
suzhoward@mifsa.org

## Personal Helpers? Mentors? Huh?

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These victories can take the shape of things that may be seen as large or small, but to the people who have shared them, these can be invaluable.

The woman, who is in an ongoing state of depression and has become afraid to leave the house, finds victory in dressing well, putting on makeup and meeting up for a coffee and a chat. There is a remembrance of hope, and that perhaps things will be ok again. She may think, 'Oh, this is how I used to feel...'

The man, who is struggling to live life courageously after experiencing relationship breakdowns, mental illness and homelessness, yearns to contribute positively to society. He is supported and mentored by PHaMs to find his own way into being accepted into a full time vocational course of his choice. There is a sense of achievement and empowerment of being accepted into a course. Also, a ray of hope shines into this man's life, that, hey, life CAN be different!

My hope is that these examples show how powerful any victories can be for PHaMs participants: inch by inch, day by day, hope is regained and lives can change!

I believe PHaMs workers are people who are genuinely interested in seeing others flourish and grow through the hardest of times.

So, in summary... the PHaMs Program is *sheer rock and roll!*

Rebekkah Sparrow,  
PHaMs Program Worker, Outer South



## From the Chief Executive Officer

continued from page 17

Finally we are preparing for a move from MIFSA's Keswick office to a larger premises in Wayville. The Cooke Tce building currently offers an open-plan lay-out. At present there are not enough rooms to allow for counselling, or sufficient interview spaces to allow for continued provision of high quality, confidential services to people living with mental illness, their family members and carers.

MIFSA provides counselling as part of its Service Agreement with the State Department of Health. In the last financial year MIFSA counsellors provided 927 counselling sessions. The current service is free and confidential, provided by skilled and qualified counsellors and offers an environment where individuals are heard, given the opportunity to work through issues, learn about change, and assimilate new strategies and attitudes into their daily lives.

To address the need for rooms in the new building a grant proposal was lodged with the Premier's Community Initiatives Fund. The application has been successful and will provide funding towards construction of interview and counselling rooms which will allow participants to meet with their workers to develop individual service plans, set goals and develop plans to progress their recovery journeys. The rooms will also offer a space for first time visitors to hear more about MIFSA and the range of programs they may choose to engage with. This Project is supported by a grant from the Government of South Australia. We thank them for their support.

These grant successes are duplicated by many non government organisations across Australia, as investment in community focussed, rehabilitation and recovery based services increases. Programs are now reaching individuals who are yet to embark on their recovery or carer journeys or who are well along their journey but glad to have some company and support along the way.

**It is a privilege to be a part of MIFSA and to work alongside participants, staff, volunteers and the Board of Management as we share the journey together.**

Natasha Miliotis



## Panangga in the community

THE TREVOR PARRY CENTRE, A MENTAL HEALTH COMMUNITY RECOVERY CENTRE AT FLINDERS MEDICAL CENTRE, IS NAMED AFTER CONSUMER ADVOCATE TREVOR PARRY, WHO PASSED AWAY IN LATE 2006.

Trevor Parry was not afraid to challenge the way services are delivered in the mental health sector and always ensured that the consumer perspective was foremost in decisions made. Trevor was also a strong supporter of MIFSA and in particular the Panangga Activity Centre.

Uni SA Occupational Therapy students Emma and Bettina organised the mosaic at the Trevor Parry Centre as well as enabling Panangga members opportunity to join in with the residents at the Trevor Parry Centre.

Here are some comments from some of the people that participated in creating the mosaic:

*"It was fun" – J*

*"Excellent, I really enjoyed pasting the tiles in" – R*

*"I found it therapeutic and stress free" – T*

*"I thoroughly enjoyed being a part of it, good fun, great sense of community / working together, Bettina and Emma were very welcoming, friendly and inclusive of all. Thanks" – B*

*"I only did one tile but I can proudly say I was a part of it" – C*

Below are just a few examples of the activities 'Out There' that Panangga members can enjoy through funding provided to MIFSA by both state and federal governments. Through the efforts of groundbreakers such as Trevor Parry the mental health sector in South Australia has an increasing range of program options for people living with mental illness.



Panangga Activity Centre's new opening hours:  
Tuesdays to Fridays 10am to 4pm.

Activity Centres Public Phones:

Keswick: 8410 5249  
Panangga: 8186 6482

## MEMBERSHIP FORM/ CHANGE OF ADDRESS



Mail to : PO Box 310 Marlestone 5033

- Membership Renewal  
 New Membership  
 Change of Address

### Membership Categories

- Single \$20   
Pensioner/Student \$10   
Organisation \$45   
Family \$30   
Pensioner 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 \_\_\_\_\_

## KEY CONTACTS

### Chief Executive Officer

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#### Personal Helpers and Mentors Program Team Leaders

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## MIFSA BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

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Marion Croser

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Natasha Miliotis

### PROGRAMS CONTINUED

#### Respite Program Team Leaders

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### SUNFLOWER SHOPS

#### Coordinator

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DEADLINE for articles, letters,  
reports for the June / July 09  
issue of MIFSA News:

**Friday, 1 May 2009**

### LOCATIONS:

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**Eyre Program**  
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