

## **Mental Health Network (MHN) - 2020/21 Annual Report**

The Mental Health Network (MHN) operates under the governance of the Mental Health Commission (MHC) and is a key stakeholder in the MHC's [Stakeholder Engagement and Partnership Framework](#). Initially, and during the period of this annual report the MHN was co-funded by the Department of Health and the MHC, however post this reporting period, from July 2021, the MHN falls under the full governance and funding of the MHC.

The MHN operates with the leadership of part time Clinical and Community Co-Leads, with the support of a small team within the MHC and receives high level advice and support from an Executive Advisory Group (EAG).

The term of Dr Helen McGowan, Clinical Co-Lead of the MHN since it was established in 2014, ended on April 30, 2021. We thank Helen for her invaluable and highly appreciated contribution to the MHN. The Clinical Co-Lead position remains unfilled at this time, the vacant position being supported through advice from the Chief Medical Officer Mental Health and operationally through an increase in contact hours for the Community Co-Lead.

The following priorities were set for the MHN in 2021:

1. To inform the substantial mental health reform agenda; and the development, promotion, and support of models of service for major new initiatives;
2. To provide further engagement opportunities for MHN members by implementing the [MHN Communication Strategy](#) and supporting the re-invigoration of MHN Sub Network Steering Committee membership; and
3. To provide further learning opportunities for MHN members by progressing stage two of the MHN's orientation and development program.

A detailed Work Program (**Attached**) has been developed to progress these priorities.

### **1. Informing the mental health reform agenda and the development and implementation of models of service**

Opportunities to inform initiatives flowing from the WA State Priorities for Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs 2020-24, The Sustainable Health Review Recommendations, the WA Election Commitments and other reforms including the Productivity Commission's 2020 Mental Health Inquiry Report (Productivity Commission Inquiry Report) and the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety Report have been allocated to MHN Sub Networks through an enhanced Work Planning template and a link to responsible MHC Project Managers.

Through this process to date, the MHN has informed the design and implementation of the 16-bed youth homelessness residential Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) service, the implementation of the Young Persons Priorities for Action, the design of a project to progress the Neuropsychiatry and Developmental Disability priority cohort, implementation of Sustainable Health Review Recommendation 29 (future research priorities), the implementation of the WA Eating Disorders Specialist Service, The Ministerial Taskforce - Mental Health Services for Children and Adolescents 0-18 years, the Graylands

Hospital, Forensics services and Selby Older Adult Mental Health Service Taskforce, and the MHC response to the Productivity Commission Inquiry Report.

In November 2020, the MHN completed a [Statewide Model of Care for the Treatment and Support of People with Personality Disorders in WA](#) (PD MoC). The MHC contracted the WA Association for Mental Health to develop and produce the PD MoC in consultation with the MHN and the Personality Disorders Sub Network Steering Committee, which took on the role of Reference Group for the project.

In October 2020, in response to the COVID-19 emergency, the Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Sub Network Steering Committee completed a report for the MHN: [Emerging Trends Post COVID-19 Restrictions for WA Families with Infants and Young Children](#). This report provides a snapshot of the concerns and thoughts of consumers, carers, health professionals and other community support workers of the emerging trends following the COVID-19 restrictions in Western Australia for families in the perinatal period with infants and young children.

## 2. The MHN Governance and Strategic Alignment Project

The MHC established the MHN Governance and Strategic Alignment Project in June 2021. This project aims to ensure that the MHN is optimally positioned and equipped to contribute to the successful delivery of the Western Australian mental health and alcohol and other drug priorities in accord with the MHC's Stakeholder Engagement and Partnership Framework and the new governance arrangements for mental health, alcohol, and other drug services. The project seeks to work with the MHN Co-Leads, MHN Executive Advisory Group and Sub Networks to build on previous reviews and recommendations to define the unique role of the MHN in the view of the new governance structure. Further information on the project can be found on the MHC website [here](#).

## 3. Providing further engagement opportunities for MHN members

In September 2020 the MHN completed an outstanding recommendation of the February 2019 MHN Review; finalising a [MHN Communication Strategy](#), including strategies to engage with internal and external key stakeholders and the MHN membership base.

**Sub Networks** assist the MHN achieve its mission with focus on a particular area of identified need; population, condition, or geographic region. In June 2021 there were nine active sub networks, each having selected an organising steering committee which enlisted administrative support from a sponsoring agency:

### Sub Network Steering Committee

- Youth
- Personality Disorders
- Multicultural
- Older Adult
- Neuropsychiatry and Developmental Disability
- Eating Disorders
- Forensic
- Perinatal and Infant Mental Health
- Rockingham, and Kwinana Region

### Sponsoring Agency

North Metropolitan Health Service.  
 South Metropolitan Health Service  
 North Metropolitan Health Service  
 Hope Community Services  
 360 Health and Community  
 North Metropolitan Health Service  
 Outcare  
 Women and Newborns Health Service  
 Rockingham Peel Group

The Joondalup and Wanneroo Sub Network wound up in January 2021, having been unable to secure renewal of agency sponsorship. The plan to establish a new MHN Sub Network on a priority mental health population, condition, geographic area, or systemic response has been delayed pending completion of the MHN Governance and Strategic Alignment Project.

The Personality Disorders, Multicultural, Older Adult, Neuropsychiatry and Developmental Disability, Eating Disorders, Forensic and Rockingham and Kwinana Steering Committees conducted Expressions of Interest to refresh committee membership, ensuring essential portfolios were filled.

The Multicultural, Older Adult, Neuropsychiatry and Developmental Disability and Eating Disorders Steering Committees also recruited new Co-Chairs.

As of June 2021, the total MHN membership was 1,001, an increase from 804 in June 2020. Sub Network membership has been broken down below, noting that members are able to nominate their interest in more than one Sub Network upon registration:

<b>Sub Network</b>	<b>Membership</b>
• Youth	572
• Personality Disorders	507
• Multicultural	413
• Older Adult	369
• Neuropsychiatry and Developmental Disability	344
• Eating Disorders	342
• Forensic	310
• Perinatal and Infant	310
• Rockingham and Kwinana	210

Sector representation comprised of the following figures, noting that members are able to nominate for more than one sector upon registration:

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Membership</b>
• Mental Health Clinician	361
• Consumer	182
• Non-Government Organisation	159
• Family/Carer	158
• Culturally and Linguistically Diverse	74
• Aboriginal Health	38
• Primary Health	18

The Multicultural Mental Health Sub Network was particularly active in enhancing communication between Sub Network Steering Committees and Sub Network members, establishing a quarterly member newsletter, and holding a member forum to inform its annual Work Plan.

#### **4. Providing further learning opportunities for MHN members**

Upon appointment, new members recruited to Sub Network Steering Committees were provided with an orientation pack and taken through the structured orientation process developed in 2019/20 following the 2019 MHN Review.

Progress in the next stage of the orientation: professional development training and support program, the co-designing of a training and mutual support mechanism for lived experience committee members and base training for Steering Committee Co-Chairs and members has been delayed pending completion of the MHN Governance and Strategic Alignment Project.

#### **Attachment: Mental Health Network (MHN) – 2021 Work Program**

1. To **inform** the following state and commonwealth reform agenda and models of service for major new Mental Health Commission (MHC) initiatives:

##### WA State Priorities for Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drugs 2020-24

- Design of the Parenting Campaign (Project 4)
- Implementation of the 20-bed metropolitan adult Community Care unit (Project 19)
- Design and implementation of the 16-bed youth homelessness residential MH and AOD service (Project 20)
- The review of the Commonwealth Specialist Dementia Care Unit Program review (Project 22)
- Design and implementation of a regional MH Police Co-Response program (Project 25)
- Development of a Community Treatment and Emergency Response Roadmap (Project 28)
- Design and implementation of 10 youth forensic beds – commonwealth initiative (Project 31)
- Expansion and refurbishment of hospital beds – Fremantle Older Adult (Project 33)
- Development of Joint Regional Plans (Project 37)
- Implementation of the Young Persons Priorities for Action (Project 48)
- Implementation of Recommendation 9 (respectful and appropriate end of life care)
- Implementation of Recommendation 29 (future research priorities)

##### WA Election Commitments

- Design and implementation of the Bunbury and Geraldton Police Co-Response programs
- Design and implementation of the Rockingham Mental Health Emergency Centre and Behavioral Assessment Centre
- Implementation of the WA Eating Disorders Specialist Service
- Design and implementation of the youth long term housing support program
- Design and implementation of the Youth Step-Up Step-Down Service
- Implementation of the Child, Adolescent and Youth Forensic Outreach Service
- Expansion of youth mental health community treatment services
- Design and implementation of the psychosocial support packages for young people

Sustainable Health Review

- Implementation of Recommendation 6c (invest in the capacity to balance MH&AOD services)
- Implementation of Recommendation 7 (implement MH & AOD models of care)
- Implementation of Recommendation 8 (support children and families to get the best start in life)

Other Mental Health Reform Initiatives

- The Ministerial Taskforce - Mental Health Services for Children and Adolescents 0-18 years
- The Graylands Hospital, Forensics services and Selby Older Adult Mental Health Service Taskforce
- The MHC response to the Productivity Commission Inquiry Report
- Implementation of relevant recommendations of the Aged Care Royal Commission
- Development of the MHC multicultural mental health strategy