



## **MENTAL HEALTH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE COMMUNIQUE – MEETING 19 August 2020**

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The Mental Health Executive Committee's (MHEC) purpose is to lead the continuous development of a mental health and alcohol and other drug system that is efficient, sustainable, recovery-focused, consumer-led and integrated. The MHEC met for the first time on Wednesday 19 August and is chaired by the A/Commissioner of the Mental Health Commission (MHC).

This communique has been developed to provide all stakeholders with information and outcomes from this meeting.

To support the MHEC, the Minister for Mental Health requested the development of a Terms of Reference and a MHEC Charter to guide the operations of the MHEC. These are available on the MHC website at <https://www.mhc.wa.gov.au/about-us/sector-governance/>

The first meeting agenda covered a range of topics that assisted with familiarising members with the many projects and priorities across the system. In future, all members will have the opportunity to place items on the MHEC agenda, which will also be reflected in the Communiques.

The Minister for Mental Health officially welcomed all to the meeting and highlighted the importance of the MHEC in delivering the Government's reform priorities. The MHEC is part of several new governance arrangements for the mental health, alcohol and other drug (AOD) system in Western Australia (WA) and is tasked with driving reform and working collaboratively to lead the implementation of the Government's intentions and objectives for mental health and AOD services in the public health system.

The Minister also highlighted that the MHEC will need to work in partnership with the Community Mental Health, AOD Council (CMC) to drive system integration and connect the clinical space with the vast network of the community sector. The Minister also made it clear the important role of the consumer and family/carer representatives on the MHEC and CMC to make sure the voices of consumers and carers are heard. It is vital that people with lived experience are central to the development and delivery of the work of the MHEC. The Minister's speech is also available on the MHC website at the above link.

The MHC has been working to improve its operating model to ensure it is best placed to effectively and efficiently lead and collaborate with the mental health and AOD sector, across both the public and community components of the sector. An interim structure was developed to support the improved Operating Model and has now been implemented. The new interim structure is available on the MHC website at <https://www.mhc.wa.gov.au/about-us/our-structure/>

In addition, following last year's Office of the Auditor-General Report into public mental health services and the release of the Clinical Governance review this year, the MHC has been working to clarify how different parts of the sector work together, and the roles and responsibilities of key entities. The MHC and Department of Health drafted a 'Governance of Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services: Roles and Responsibilities' document that outlines the primary governing legislation, roles and responsibilities of key agencies in the WA mental health and AOD sector. A draft sector governance structure infographic has also been developed based on this document, which is currently being finalised. Both will be published on the MHC's website as soon as practicable.

The MHC is developing a Stakeholder Engagement and Partnership Framework that will seek to ensure that system reform will be supported by efficient and effective stakeholder engagement approaches, to complement the establishment of the MHEC and CMC. The MHC will consult on the development of this Framework.

A Mental Health Leads Sub-Committee will be formed to support the MHEC and assist in guiding and supporting system-wide improvements and reform. The Sub-Committee will meet monthly and provide advice and guidance to the MHEC and make recommendations regarding mental health and AOD operational, strategic and policy matters impacting reform, and solutions to support the ongoing reform agenda and drive innovation. It is anticipated the first Sub-Committee meeting will be held in September.

The Terms of Reference for the Co-Leadership Safety and Quality Mental Health Steering Group is currently being reviewed to support and advise the MHEC and CMC on system wide safety and quality and quality improvement issues.

There were a number of key agenda items at the first meeting that highlighted the major reform work that will be undertaken over the next four years. The A/Commissioner indicated that whilst many 'easy wins' have already been achieved, the MHEC, CMC and sector are now required to provide the necessary leadership to confront the really hard system challenges. This work will only be achieved by everyone working together to create a mental health and AOD system that meets the growing needs and expectations of the WA community.

The MHEC was informed of a number of evaluations and projects that will be taken into account in the future development of community-based mental health and AOD services that are responsive, accessible, person-centred and seamlessly connected.

Young people will also be an important focus of the MHEC, as young people are vulnerable to experiencing mental health and AOD issues, which has been exacerbated by COVID-19. The MHC is developing a Young People Priorities Framework, which is to address and respond to issues faced by young people and the service system they access. The Framework will focus on the whole continuum from prevention to acute, with the target cohort being 12-24 year olds. There are a number of strategic pieces of work which emphasise the urgency of addressing mental health and AOD needs of children and young people. In addition, a review into the mental health services for children and young people, led by the Chief Psychiatrist, will help to inform the Framework. The Framework will be produced by the end of the year with consultation to commence as soon as possible across a variety of stakeholders.

Other topics that were raised and tabled through the MHEC included specialist community based sub-acute transition options, an AOD crisis intervention system service model and suicide prevention, including Aboriginal suicide prevention.

The MHEC will also have a number of standing items on its quarterly agenda that are of significant importance with regular updates and monitoring to be provided. These include:

- the Sustainable Health Review Strategy 2 recommendations;
- future planning for the Graylands site;
- forensic mental health services and the growing risks associated with increasing pressures on forensic services;
- system-wide data, given that the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for more integrated system-wide data to enable the system to better respond to the changing needs of people with mental health and AOD issues;
- National agenda updates and alignment to the WA priorities;

- National Disability Insurance Scheme and mental health; and
- COVID-19 recovery planning and implementation of mental health and AOD initiatives.

The next MHEC meeting is scheduled for 7 December 2020.

Please feel free to distribute this Communique to your wider networks. Communique's and other relevant documents for the MHEC and CMC are also available on the MHC's website at <https://www.mhc.wa.gov.au/about-us/sector-governance/>.