



MENTAL HEALTH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE COMMUNIQUE - MEETING 17 MARCH 2021

The third meeting of the Mental Health Executive Committee (MHEC) was held on 17 March 2021. This communique has been developed to provide all stakeholders with information and outcomes from this meeting.

The purpose of the MHEC is to lead the continuous development of a mental health, alcohol and other drug (AOD) system that is efficient, sustainable, recovery-focused, consumer-led and integrated. The MHEC works alongside the Community Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Council (CMC) to ensure there is system integration and connection of clinical services within the wider mental health and AOD sector.

Key themes emerging from this MHEC meeting included recognising the hard work of frontline mental health staff; the agreed need for immediate solutions to alleviate pressures on the mental health and AOD system; and acknowledging improved transparency and clarity of processes such as funding allocation and governance of interagency collaborations.

Mental Health Leads Sub-Committee

The Mental Health Leads Sub-Committee (MHLS) continues to meet monthly to assist the MHEC in driving and operationalising system-wide improvements and reform. MHEC acknowledged the work progressed by the MHLS, noting that a number of items being led and discussed by the Sub-Committee were on the MHEC agenda. Key priority areas for both Committees relate to facilitating the flow of people with complex and multiple needs out of the hospital system by improving support for them in the community.

Roadmap Project- Community Mental Health Treatment and Emergency Response Services

The Roadmap project is governed by MHEC and CMC and will lead to fundamental system reform for community treatment and emergency response services. The project will deliver an evidence-based, system-wide Roadmap with proposed models of service, commissioning models, referral pathways and governance arrangements. It will include a costed implementation plan and evaluation framework to ensure the services are responsive, accessible, person-centred and seamlessly connected.

The Roadmap project will adopt a phased approach so that interim project findings are made available to inform more immediate initiatives, such as where existing services can be optimised, reconfigured, enhanced or expanded. This includes consideration of 7-day-a-week service profiles and a shift to focusing on inclusion rather than exclusion criteria.

The Roadmap for services related to infants, children and adolescents will be informed by the Ministerial Taskforce into Public Mental Health Services for Infants, Children and Adolescents aged 0-18 years in Western Australia.

Ministerial Taskforce into Public Mental Health Services for Infants, Children and Adolescents aged 0-18 years in Western Australia

On 14 December 2020, Hon Roger Cook MLA, former Minister for Mental Health announced a Taskforce would be formed to address a recommendation that arose from the [Chief Psychiatrist's Review into the Treatment of Ms Kate Savage by Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services](#)¹

The purpose of the Taskforce is to clearly articulate a vision for public specialist mental health services for children and adolescents across WA, by developing a whole of system plan for State Government funded specialist child and adolescent mental health services provided by WA Health Service Providers (HSPs) in the Perth metropolitan and Western Australian country areas.

The Taskforce is led by independent chair Ms Robyn Kruk AO and the first Taskforce meeting was held on 11 March 2021. The final report will make recommendations to the Minister for Mental Health with

¹ <https://www.chiefpsychiatrist.wa.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CP-Targeted-Review-Report-KS-Review-081220.pdf>

actions and a costed implementation plan. It will be delivered by 30 November 2021. Throughout the course of the project, MHEC and CMC will be kept informed of the progress and consulted as required. Further information on the Taskforce, including regular communiques, is available on the [MHC website](#)²

Sector patient flow initiatives and supporting people with complex needs in the community

There continues to be a focus on improving capacity across the system to appropriately support people with complex mental health and AOD needs, and to enable patient flow through emergency departments and between Health Service Providers and the community sector. While several projects, such as the Roadmap, will deliver major reform, there is a need to continue to devise and implement immediate and short-term solutions.

The Mental Health Commission (MHC) is working closely with Health Service Providers and Non-Government Organisations to collaborate on initiatives that provide alternatives to inpatient and Emergency Department treatment; support hospital discharge; and promote rehabilitation and recovery in the community.

Mental Health Workforce Planning

A mental health workforce that is appropriately resourced with the correct skill mix is recognised as essential in the provision of best-practice care and support. The current and mounting pressures on the workforce are acknowledged, as well as the anticipated workforce shortage due to significant expansion and commissioning of new public and private mental health services in WA over the next five years. The MHEC and MHLS recognises the mental health workforce as an urgent issue that needs both immediate solutions and long-term strategies to address staffing requirements across the sector. There is also a need to ensure the skills, capability, capacity and structure of the workforce complements contemporary service models including the development of the peer-workforce, which is aligned with the National Mental Health Commission National Peer (Lived Experience) Workforce Guidelines that will be released by mid-2021.

In addition to MHC's Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Workforce Strategic Framework 2020-2025, the Department of Health is undertaking a mental health workforce planning project to deliver a five-year strategy to support the future expansion of mental health services across the public system. The project aims to quantify the current and anticipated workforce shortages to inform demand modelling of mental health workforce needs into the future. It will identify immediate, medium and long-term targeted recruitment and workforce development strategies and address the urgent need to recruit staff to alleviate workforce issues and prepare for new services commencing. The work undertaken in the project will also inform the Roadmap. Workforce planning will continue to be a key item on the MHEC agenda.

WA State Priorities Quarterly update

The latest Quarterly Update on all system reform projects currently underway across the sector was endorsed by MHEC and is available on the [MHC website](#)³

Items for Noting

Other topics that were on the MHEC agenda for noting included the establishment of the Graylands Reconfiguration and Forensic Taskforce, to inform the Government's planning and investment decisions regarding the Graylands Hospital site and forensics services; and progress towards: recommendations from the [Non-admitted Mental Health Services Evaluation](#)⁴; recommendations from the [Mental Health Emergency Response Line \(MHERL\) and Rurallink Evaluation](#)⁵; and an implementation plan for the [Young People's Priorities for Action 2020-2025](#)⁶

The next MHEC meeting is scheduled for 9 June 2021.

Please feel free to distribute this Communique to your wider networks. Communiques and other relevant documents for the MHEC and CMC are available on the [MHC's website](#)⁷

² <https://www.mhc.wa.gov.au/about-us/major-projects/ministerial-taskforce-into-public-mental-health-services-for-infants-children-and-adolescents-aged-0-18-years-in-western-australia-the-taskforce/>

³ <https://www.mhc.wa.gov.au/about-us/major-projects/>

⁴ <https://www.mhc.wa.gov.au/media/3523/non-admitted-mental-health-services-evaluation-executive-summary-july-2020.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.mhc.wa.gov.au/media/3522/mental-health-emergency-response-line-evaluation-executive-summary-2020.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.mhc.wa.gov.au/media/3489/yppa-young-people-priorities-for-action.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.mhc.wa.gov.au/about-us/sector-governance/>