



MENTAL HEALTH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE **COMMUNIQUE - MEETING 9 JUNE 2021**

The fourth meeting of the Mental Health Executive Committee (MHEC) was held on 9 June 2021. This communique provides 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 system integration and connection of clinical services with the wider mental health and AOD sector.

The discussions at the MHEC continue to focus on the significant pressures on the system and the impact that this is having on consumers, their families, and staff. Of noting, the MHEC reported that staff on the ground continue to work under significant pressure yet remain invested in providing the best possible care to each patient that presents to hospital and Emergency Departments.

There are many key initiatives in progress that will assist in delivering fundamental system reform, several which are detailed further in this Communique. A key part of this system reform agenda is ensuring services are developed to provide safe and appropriate care to consumers and their families, and that staff are supported in their role.

Mental Health Leads Sub-Committee

The Mental Health Leads Sub-Committee (MHLS) meets monthly to assist the MHEC in driving and operationalising system-wide improvements and reform. Key priority areas for both Committees continues to centre around facilitating the flow of people with complex and multiple needs out of the hospital system by improving support for them in the community. The MHLS also continue to raise the need to progress immediate strategies to address workforce requirements in parallel with the longer-term plan.

Roadmap Project- Community Mental Health Treatment and Emergency Response Services

The [Roadmap¹](#) project remains a priority project for the CMC and MHEC to oversee and support. This project seeks to deliver fundamental system reform for public community mental health treatment and emergency response services. Much of the discussions at the MHEC and CMC has continued to focus on ensuring the project delivers on its primary focus; to deliver a Roadmap that provides responsive, accessible and person-centred mental health care in the community that meets the needs of all people in WA. Both Committees will be regularly engaged at every stage to ensure they are well placed to support the project outcomes.

The Roadmap Steering Committee held its first meeting on 25 May and has nearly an equal representation of people with lived-experience and clinicians, demonstrating a commitment to partnering with carers and consumers. An external consultant group has been procured to provide project management, stakeholder consultation and the development of fully costed project recommendations based on new models of care. MHEC emphasised that adequate funding and appropriate pricing of current and any proposed new public mental health services is critical to implementation and highlighted the importance of Treasury being involved from early in the process. The project timeline will also need to consider the 2022-23 Budget process. MHEC and CMC will continue to receive regular updates throughout the course of the project.

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

The Ministerial Taskforce seeks to develop a whole of system, state-wide vision and plan for State Government funded public specialist mental health services for children and adolescents provided by WA Health Service Providers (HSPs). The final report will be delivered by 30 November 2021 and will make recommendations to the Minister for Mental Health with actions and a costed implementation plan.

The Taskforce project team has been consulting with HSPs to ensure they remain adequately engaged in the project. An 'Emerging Directions' Report will be finalised end of July/mid-August that will provide

¹ <https://www.mhc.wa.gov.au/about-us/major-projects/roadmap-for-community-mental-health-treatment-services/>

recommendations on how services should be configured and operate and will form the basis for more in-depth consultation. The MHEC raised that the appropriate level of funding needs to be considered on a recurrent basis for new services to be effective and to deliver on suggested changes.

The MHEC and CMC will continue to receive updates on the progress of this project and consulted as required. Further information on the Taskforce, including regular communiques, is available on the [MHC website](#)².

Graylands Reconfiguration and Forensic Taskforce (GRAFT)

The GRAFT project is another key priority project that will contribute to system reform and aims to inform the McGowan Government's planning and investment decisions regarding the Graylands hospital site, forensic mental health services and the nearby Selby Older Adult Mental Health Service. The work aligns with the [WA Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services Plan 2015-2025](#)³, which highlighted the need for these services to be decommissioned, divested and replaced with contemporary infrastructure and services.

A number of options on the future of the Graylands site are being reviewed and considered. To inform the reconfiguration planning and investment strategy, the Department of Health (DoH), in collaboration with the Mental Health Commission (MHC), is developing a demand and capacity model for both forensic and non-forensic mental health. The MHEC will continue to receive updates via the Department of Health, which is leading this work.

Patient flow initiatives: Mental Health Inpatient Snapshot Survey and Long Stay Patient Project

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 from inpatient services to the community

The Mental Health Inpatient Snapshot Survey (MHISS), conducted by the MHC in April 2021, identified 152 patients that could be discharged (at that point in time) if there were suitable accommodation and support in the community. The MHISS will be published on the MHC's website. The MHISS will be used to inform the key priority projects (Roadmap, ICA Taskforce and GRAFT), Long Stay Patient Project, and other programs that support transition of long-stay patients from the hospital to community settings. The MHISS provides detail on the complexity and needs of inpatients who could be discharged if the requisite level of accommodation and supports were available. The MHEC agreed that a summary of initiatives to enable people to get the support they require in the community would be published on the MHC website with a summary of the MHISS.

The Long Stay Patient Project is assisting with the transition of long-stay patients from hospital to the community using a case-by-case approach. This project has already supported a number of successful transitions. This project not only assists in finding more suitable and appropriate accommodation and support for people, but also frees up beds for others who need acute inpatient care. A cross-agency Steering Committee and Working Group, consisting of MHC and Departments of Health and Communities, has been established to assist with collaboration between government agencies, while working with non-government organisations, to identify solutions to transition long stay patients. MHEC raised the need for appropriate ongoing funding and wrap around services with clinical and peer worker support when transitioning a patient to help reduce the risk of these patients returning in crisis to hospital.

Mental Health Workforce Planning

The need for immediate solutions and long-term strategies to address current and future workforce shortages across the sector remains a focus across the MHEC, CMC and MHLS. The Department of Health and MHC continue to drive workforce planning as a high priority.

An update on the Department of Health's workforce planning includes the commencement of a national and international recruitment strategy, a mental health web-based recruitment platform that is now operational and links to individual health services, and 80-100 additional graduate mental health nurses that have been funded by Department of Health and are currently onboarding. Further data from HSPs will

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-ica-taskforce/>

³ <https://www.mhc.wa.gov.au/media/1834/0581-mental-health-planprintv16acc-updated20170316.pdf>

continue to inform demand modelling whilst concurrently implementing strategies to address known shortages.

MHEC emphasised the need to expand and develop a relevant and sustainable workforce outside health professions for new models of care. Specifically, to develop a peer workforce and to partner with NGOs. This aligns with the National Mental Health Commission National Peer (Lived Experience) Workforce Guidelines that will be released by mid-2021 and the MHC's Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Workforce Strategic Framework 2020-2025.

WA State Priorities Quarterly update

The May 2021 Quarterly Update on all system reform projects currently underway across the sector was endorsed by MHEC and is available on the [MHC website](#) ⁴.

Items for Noting

Other topics that were on the MHEC agenda for noting included progress towards the Commitment to Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing and the process for the Mental Health Act Statutory Review.

The next MHEC meeting is scheduled for 31 August 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](#) ⁵.

⁴ <https://www.mhc.wa.gov.au/about-us/major-projects/>

⁵ <https://www.mhc.wa.gov.au/about-us/sector-governance/>