



ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

Background

The Mental Health Advisory Council (Council) was initially appointed by the Honourable Helen Morton MLC, Minister for Mental Health, Disability Services in May 2011. The Council took a break in July 2018 for the purposes of undertaking a recruitment process for new members to replace Council members whose terms had expired. There was an enthusiastic response to the recruitment process following which eight new members were appointed by the Honourable Roger Cook MLA, Deputy Premier; Minister for Health; Minister for Mental Health in October 2019. A specific Aboriginal recruitment process was co-designed with the Mental Health Commission (MHC), Council Chair, Dr Michael Wright and the MHC's Elders-in-Residence, Uncle Charlie and Aunty Helen Kickett. This successful process resulted in the appointment of Mr Paul Parfitt and Ms Patricia Councillor to the Council in June 2020. Over the last twelve months, Council has appointed a Deputy Chair and welcomed the re-appointment of current members, as well as four new members to the group.

The current members of the Council are:

Ms Margaret Doherty (Chair)	Ms Emily Wilding
Ms Patricia Councillor (Deputy Chair)	Ms Tracey Young
Ms Jessica Nguyen	Dr Pauline Cole
Dr Richard Oades	Ms Virginia Catterall
Mr Paul Parfitt	Ms Nafiso Mohamed
Ms Lee Steel	Ms Jennifer Wilton

Diversity

The Council is proud of their diverse membership portfolio with individuals from a range of areas and backgrounds. These include people from the following communities:

- Regional, rural, and remote areas (Geraldton, Bunbury, Northam, Pingelly);
- LGBTQIA+SB;
- Ethnoculturally and linguistically diverse;
- Consumer and Family / Carer;
- Youth; and
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

Council members come from a variety of lived experience and professional backgrounds including those who work as independent consultants and those who have held roles in executive leadership, private practice, management, and frontline positions in relevant public, private and community-managed organisations.

Further information about individual Council members can be found [here](#).



Purpose

The purpose of the Council is to bring together members of the Western Australian community to provide high level advice and input to the Mental Health Commissioner (Commissioner) regarding major issues affecting Western Australians with mental health challenges, their families and people who work in services. Written Advice provided by Council to the Commissioner is available [here](#).

The Council provides a forum for information exchange between key stakeholders, direct input to key Mental Health Commission initiatives as well as discussion about broad strategic issues relating to mental health.

Role and Function

The Council is tasked with providing independent, highly focused and practical advice to the Commissioner, on mental health issues including:

- Implementation of the Western Australian Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services Plan 2015-2025;
- Effective implementation of the Mental Health Act 2014;
- Aspects of work program(s) developed by the Commissioner and the Council;
- Reform, strategy implementation and broad directions for enhancing mental health and well-being;
- Improvements to funded programs to better support people with mental illness, including through better coordination and integration of existing mental health programs; and
- Appropriate strategies for developing and implementing mental health programs for people with particular needs.

Additional information is available in the Council's Terms of Reference [here](#).

Executive support is provided to the Council by the MHC. Ms Caitlin Parry has held the role of Project Officer since November 2020. The Council would like to thank Caitlin for the commitment, professionalism and enthusiasm she brings to this role and to the support of Council members.

Meetings

The Council is required to meet no less than four times per year according to its Terms of Reference. Traditionally it has held meetings monthly, excluding January. Meetings are generally three to four hours in duration and may be attended in person, or via an online platform.

Like most, Council adapted to online meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic, always ensuring the health and wellbeing of Council members and guest presenters were considered first and foremost.

For their 2022 annual regional trip, Council were scheduled to travel to Geraldton to meet with service providers and community members, however the Western Australia border opening and restrictive regional travel delayed this trip. Council plan to rebook this opportunity later in 2022.

The Minutes of Council meetings are available [here](#).



Values

The Council is committed to working in line with its values which were co-designed with consumers and family members.

The values are:

- Value and respect diversity and work in an inclusive and accessible way with particular sensitivity to advocating for the most unheard voices;
- Explore innovation in mental health with curiosity and seek out the best local, national and international practices; and
- Promote hope for recovery for individuals with mental ill-health and their families and carers.

Council members take it in turns to provide a short, relevant piece for discussion at the beginning of the meeting which sets the tone and recovery focus of Council's work.

At the end of each meeting, Council members undertake a short group reflection to observe and reflect on how well (or not) Council reflected its values in the processes and content of the meeting. This reflective process helps to keep the values alive and front and centre of Council's work.

The Council is also mindful of the principles of co-production as a guide to its processes and practices and so includes co-production principles in each Agenda. In order to provide and maintain a safe working space for robust discussions, Council seeks feedback from guest presenters through a survey and seeks to incorporate learnings.

Priorities

The Council priorities for the 2021-22 period have been:


- Young People's Priorities for Action
- Ministerial Taskforce into Public Mental Health Services for Infants, Children and Adolescents aged 0-18 years in WA
- Workforce Strategic Framework
- Mental Health Act 2014 Statutory Review
- Roadmap for Community Mental Health Services, including Emergency Response Services
- Graylands Reconfiguration and Forensic Mental Health services
- Applying an LGBTQIA+SB lens to mental health
- Immediate Drug Assistance Coordination Centre (formally One Stop Shop)
- Valuing Lived Experience Program (Curtin University)
NDIS, access and availability for those with psychosocial disability

The development of these priorities was delayed by the need to quickly respond to and proactively provide advice to the Acting Commissioner with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic and its ongoing impact on mental health and alcohol and other drug use in the community.

Guest Presenters

The Council would like to thank the guest presenters who provided specialised information which informed Council's Advices to the Mental Health Commissioner. External presenters included (in order of attendance):

- Samantha Jenkinson - NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Commission
- Sharon Thomson, Lindsey Money - Mid-West Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services, WACHS

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- Nathan Johansen, Katrina Jackson, Violet Evans, Chris Fitzgerald - Geraldton Mental Health Co-response Service
 - Nigel Tremain, Veronica Summers - Geraldton Consumer and Carer Advisory Group
 - Breda Ryan and Molly Kennedy - WA Country Health Service (WACHS)
 - Dr David Hodgson - School of Allied Health, Curtin University
 - Lyn Mahboub - School of Allied Health, Curtin University
 - Jo Drayton - Holyoake (Wheatbelt)
 - Malcolm Jetta - Moorditj Youth Foundation Aboriginal Corporation
 - Helen Morton - Pingelly Somerset Alliance
 - Denise Kluck - Wheatbelt Mental Health Service, WACHS
 - Dr Nathan Gibson, Chief Psychiatrist
 - Dr Geoff Smith - Office of the Chief Psychiatrist
 - Adjunct Associate Professor Theresa Williams - Office of the Chief Psychiatrist
 - Debora Colvin - Graylands Reconfiguration and Forensics Taskforce (GRAFT)
 - Dr Sarah Pollock, Chief Mental Health Advocate
 - Amanda Waegeli, Independent Consumer Representative and Kerry Hawkins, Independent Family/Carer Representative - Mental Health Executive Council and Community Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Council.
 - Learne Durrington, CEO - WA Primary Health Alliance

A number of MHC staff provided updates on a range of initiatives and received direct feedback from Council. The Council appreciates the efforts and energy brought by these individuals to Council presentations.

Conclusion

The Council continues to be committed to providing independent and robust advice to the Commissioner and to supporting the transformation of the mental health, alcohol and other drug sectors to best meet the needs of individuals, family members and carers as well as those who work in services.



Margaret Doherty
 Chairperson
 Mental Health Advisory Council
 10 October 2022