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About Us

Mental Health Carers Australia is the only national advocacy group solely concerned with the well-being and promotion of the needs of people who care for someone with a mental illness.

Initially founded through the grassroots efforts of mental health carers as the national network of Arafmi services, Mental Health Carers Australia seeks to: advocate on behalf of carers, explore and strengthen the mental health caring role, develop knowledge, improve skills and offer support to reduce isolation and enhance the caring journey.

The Mental Health Carers Australia comprises member organisations who are leading mental health carer support agencies across Australia. They provide specialist mental health support to families, carers and their friends. Support includes: linking people to other carers who can offer face to face peer support, education services with other carers, and advocacy services which assist individuals to identify and find solutions to their challenges.

Our Vision

People with a mental illness, and their families and carers, will be understood, respected and provided with a level of treatment and support which provides them with the opportunity to be included in their community.

Our Mission

The Mental Health Carers Arafmi Australia's mission is to represent at national level the interests of ARAFMI groups throughout Australia and the needs and concerns of their constituency – families and others voluntarily caring for people with mental illness.

Presidents Report

This is my first report as President, in this role I had quite a few tricky months without an Executive Officer so I wish to thank Patrick Hardwick, Gerry Naughton, Jean Humphreys and members for their efforts and hard work in bringing Mental Health Carers Australia through this time.



Well what a year!

Mental Health Carers Australia is pleased to announce the appointment of our new Executive Officer Jenny Branton, who started in the role in July. Jenny brings extensive management experience in the not for profit and local government sectors, wide ranging experience in the disability sector including lived experience as a carer.

Great News!

We successfully obtained funds from The Carer Development Fund to continue our important work on behalf of Mental Health Carers Australia wide.

Some name changes!

The Mental Health Carers Australia name change followed those of Mental Health Carers Arafmi NSW to Mental Health Carers NSW (MHCN) Arafmi WA to Helping Minds.

Some more changes happening!

Warren Jenkins will be stepping down from his position as Mind Australia's Board representative for Mental Health Carers Australia.

Warren has served as Mind's representative since 2014 and prior to that as ARAFEMI

Victoria's representative for many years. I am sure you would like to join with me in acknowledging the contribution that Warren has made to the MHCA over a long period. Jeremy Coggin will replace Warren Jeremy is currently a Mind Board member and was previously a member of the ARAFEMI Victoria Board.

Frances Sanders' role in MHCAA has been transferred to Sarah Pollock. Sarah will be Mind's Officer Representative at national MHCAA meetings. She will be

responsible for the Family and Carer policy and advocacy at state and national levels. She will also assume administrative responsibility for the Mind Carer Development Fund. Sarah will provide support and supervision to Jenny Branton.

I would like to thank Jane Henty for her contribution, also give many thanks to Warren Jenkins and Kate Shipway who have resigned their positions as member representatives.

Kristine Kavron

Executive Officer's Report



Once again, the dynamic environment in which we operate presented some significant challenges to Mental Health Carers Australia, our member organisations, carers and the broader mental health sector. With the roll out of National Disability Insurance Scheme progressing, people experiencing mental illness, carers and service providers continue to grapple with what the scheme will mean for them and what the sector will look like in the future.

The national fiscal reform agenda has also increased focus and pressure on carers. The National Commission of Audit report forecast of a continuing 7% annual increase in the number of people receiving carer payment or allowance having prompted calls for a review of payments.

A major challenge for Mental Health Carers Australia was the departure of our Executive Officer, Jane Henty, in December 2015 and the position remaining vacant until June. During Jane's time with Health Carers Australia she was instrumental in guiding and driving important projects and initiatives and for advocating persuasively for carers at a national level. Our thanks go to Jane for her energy, enthusiasm and industry.

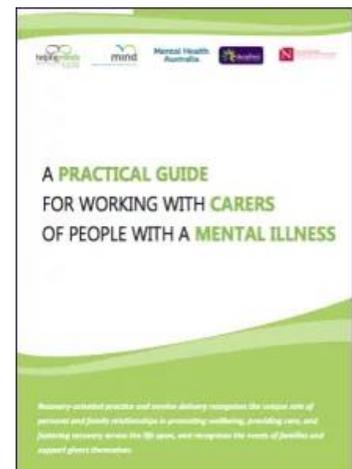
In October the decision was made to change our name to Mental Health Carers Australia, to better reflect changes in our member agencies and the external environment.

Despite the challenges some significant outcomes were achieved.

A Practical Guide for Working With Carers of People With Mental Illness

The development of this national guide was a major initiative for Mental Health Carers Australia. The primary purpose of the guide is to provide practical tools and checklists to enhance practice in engaging, supporting and working with carers in all areas in which mental health care is provided and to enable systemic change to influence organisational policies, procedures, protocols.

This ambitious and far-sighted project was undertaken in collaboration with Helping Minds, Mind Australia, Mental Health Australia and Private Mental Health Consumer and Carer Network Australia.



The guide was launched nationally in May and June and has been very well received. The implementation of the guide will be a major focus of activities in 2016-17.

National Carer helpline

This year saw a major project, the development of a national carer helpline. The helpline was created in response to carers around Australia identifying that easier access to information and support and increased capacity to navigate the mental health system would enhance their ability to function effectively at time of great confusion and distress.

The national helpline provides free and confidential information, support and referral for family, carers, and friends of people with a mental illness. Built on a partnership of Mental Health Carers Australia members' helplines it provides one point of access to local, relevant advice and support for people caring for someone with a mental illness.

caring4carers.com

Mental Health Carers Australia were engaged to provide expert advice to this international project, an initiative of the Otsuka and Lundbeck Alliance. The tool is a web-based carer resource designed specifically for carers of people with schizophrenia. The site provides essential information for carers including a service locator, as well as acting as a curator to all good information already in public domain.

I am delighted and excited to have joined Mental Health Carers Australia and look forward to the opportunity to work with all stakeholders across the nation.

Jenny Branton

Governance

Committee of Management



Kristine Havron, President

Kristine is the President of Mental Health Carers Australia and a member of Mental Health Carers NSW. Kristine has been a carer for 20 years and has a long association with Mental Health Carers NSW as President for 2 years, Secretary for 2 years and ordinary member for 2 years and is now again an ordinary member. She currently represents MHCAA on the National Mental Health Consumer and Carers Forum.



Patrick Hardwick, Vice President

Patrick is President of Helping Minds, Deputy Chair of the Private Mental Health Consumer Carer Network Australia, a Director of Mental Health Australia and a member of the National Mental Health Consumer Carer Forum. Patrick wants to see a cultural change where mental health services take a more family centred approach to treatment, discharge and support.



Warren Jenkins, Secretary

Warren was previously Executive Officer of Mental Health Carers Arafmi Australia and Executive Director of Arafmi Victoria. He has spent over 25 years in the management of mental health and disability services. Warren has been a mental health carer for 20 years, and represents the Mind Australia Board.



Jean Humphrey, Treasurer

Jean has been a Board member of Arafmi Queensland since 1999 and held positions of Treasurer and Vice President. She has previously been the Qld carer representative on the National Mental Health Consumer & Carer Forum and has held the positions of Deputy Co Chair and Ordinary Executive member.



Bronwyn Russell

Bronwyn has degrees in Psychology and Biology, and a Graduate Diploma in Management. She is mostly retired and works as a counsellor in Reproductive Medicine and casually as a tour guide for cruise ships in Darwin. She is President of Mental Illness Fellowship Australia (NT), Treasurer of MIFA, Trustee of Psychosis Australia and an ordinary member of Mental Health Carers Australia.



Kate Shipway

Kate is President of Mental Health Carers Tasmania. Kate has been involved as a mental health carer and advocate for over 10 years. She represented Tasmania on the National Mental Health Consumer and Carers Forum from 2005-09 and represented ARAFMI Tasmania on the Mental Health Council of Tasmania from 2003-2011

Financial Statements

1 July 2015 - 30 June 2016

Profit and loss

	Total			
	Actual	Budget	Var \$	Var %
Income				
Grant Income	4,500.00	12,000.00	7,500.00 ↓	62.5% ↓
Nat Project Funds	74,292.00	75,300.00	1,008.00 ↓	1.3% ↓
Membership Fees	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00	0.0%
Bank Interest	830.81	400.00	430.81 ↑	107.7% ↑
Total Income	84,622.81	92,700.00	8,077.19 ↓	8.7% ↓
Less Expenses				
Face to Face Meeting	20,205.12	12,000.00	8,205.12 ↑	68.4% ↑
Bank charges	45.71	0.00	45.71 ↑	-
Misc MHCAA Costs	1,206.50	1,200.00	6.50 ↑	0.5% ↑
Insurance	2,251.90	2,250.00	1.90 ↑	0.1% ↑
Consultancies	5,280.00	4,000.00	1,280.00 ↑	32.0% ↑
Travel & Accomodation	11,185.30	10,000.00	1,185.30 ↑	11.9% ↑
Teleconference Cost	297.81	0.00	297.81 ↑	-
Employment Expenses	36,343.39	55,310.00	18,966.61 ↓	34.3% ↓
Total Expenses	76,815.73	84,760.00	7,944.27 ↓	9.4% ↓
Operating Profit	7,807.08	7,940.00	132.92 ↓	1.7% ↓
Net Profit	7,807.08	7,940.00	132.92 ↓	

Balance Sheet

1 July 2015 - 30 June 2016

Asset	
Current Assets	59,096
Cheque account	<u>59,096</u>
Total Assets	<u>59,096</u>
Liability	16,374
Current Liabilities	<u>16,374</u>
Accrued Expenses	<u>16,374</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>16,374</u>
Net Assets	<u>42,722</u>
Equity	
Retained earnings	
Current year earnings	
	34,915
	7,807
Total Equity	<u>42,722</u>

Our Voting Members

Our members are long-standing providers of mental health services for consumers and carers. Mental health Carers Australia would like to sincerely thank our members for their tireless support and commitment in 2014 -2015.

Mind Australia (Victoria & South Australia)



Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia NT



Mental Health Carers NSW Inc



HelpingMinds (formerly Arafmi WA)



Mental Health Carers Tasmania



Mental Health Carers Arafmi Queensland Inc.

