Being

Mental Health & Wellbeing Consumer Advisory Group

AnnualReport2015

BEING | Mental Health & Wellbeing Consumer Advisory Group

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BEING is a not-for-profit organisation, which receives core and some project funding from the Mental Health Commission of NSW.

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About us

BEING is the independent, state-wide peak organisation for people with a lived experience of mental illness (consumers). We work with consumers to achieve and support systemic change.

Our vision

Our vision is for all people with a lived experience of mental illness to participate as valued citizens in the communities they choose.

Our purpose

BEING's purpose is to ensure that mental health consumer views are heard by policy makers, service providers and the community.

Our values

The lived experience of people is fundamental to all that BEING does and our work is underpinned by a commitment to upholding international human rights.

BEING holds the following values:

- Respect and dignity for all to enable inclusion
- Social justice and equity to ensure participation
- Belief in recovery to make it possible for every individual to recover
- Integrity to ensure transparency and accountability
- Fidelity to ensure the legitimate representation of the views of consumers

Our guiding principles

- Principles of recovery underpin all our work
- Recognition of the importance of a holistic approach
- Collaboration and team work
- Flexibility, responsiveness and innovation
- Consultative and participatory processes that have consumers at the centre
- Promoting equity and positive images to address discrimination and prejudice
- Being accessible and approachable for all
- Promoting professionalism and quality practice

Chairperson's Report

As a board member for the last five years it has been a privilege to be part of a very unique and important organisation. It has been an honour to have been entrusted with the Chair by my peers in this first year under the new banner, BEING. 2015 has been a year of great significance to us. On the one hand we are nurturing the infant BEING and celebrating a successful first year. On the other hand we have come of age with the 21st birthday of the NSW Consumer Advisory Group.

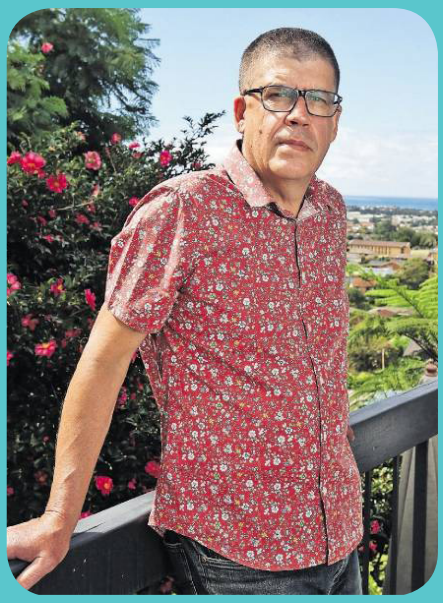
Our new name symbolises the growth of the organisation and it allows us to move confidently and creatively into the new era of mental health reform that is promised by *The Strategic Plan for Mental Health in New South Wales 2014-2024*. Being is about Living Well: Living Well is about Being.

But no Being is an island and this year has marked a strengthening of partnerships, particularly with WayAhead – Mental Health Association NSW and ARAFMI NSW, within the exciting and innovative Collective Purpose collaborative, and with the Mental Health Commission of NSW and the Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol Office.

I would like to thank our CEO Peri O'Shea and her staff for their tireless and creative work in moving BEING forward: by consolidating and strengthening policy and consultation work through projects like Mobilising Local Communities and Champions for Change, by nurturing our creativity with the wonderful Recovery in Art Exhibition, and by developing a new training and education capability.

I would particularly like to thank and acknowledge the Board of Trustees: Virginia Divall, Sunny Hemraj, Jodie Ingram, Rosanne Feneley, Irene Gallagher, Robyn Maurice, Mandy Miles and Fayez Nour. The individual and cumulative passion, skills, time and experience that they bring to the Board is substantial and it has been a real pleasure working with such a wonderful team.

As volunteers the Board members make a substantial commitment to the organisation and we are rewarded by the friendships that we form and by the opportunity to develop our own skills and abilities in such an inclusive professional setting. With a mandated 75% Lived Experience, the Board epitomises the very best things we understand about Recovery.



The consumer movement needs a strong BEING, and we need to continue to strive to influence and create services that see the world with the same vision as Being, 'for all people with a lived experience of mental illness to participate as valued citizens in the communities they choose.' We need to move confidently and strategically, as we are the ones, because of the curse and gift of lived experience, who can truly transform and heal a wounded system.

In conclusion, I wish Peri, the staff, the members and the new Board all the best as we continue to work together to achieve our common goals.

T Heffernan

Tim Heffernan
BEING Chairperson

CEO's Report

2015 has been a year of adventure, new opportunities and new connections. We started the year with a new name which linguistically represents all we stand for – 'Being' in all its forms.

Early in the year, our office was renovated into the Activity Based Workplace we have today. This is an important development in our partnership with WayAhead – Mental Health Association NSW and ARAFMI NSW. A few months after we moved back into the new offices, and together with these two partners, we also launched the pilot of Shared Administration Services as part of the Collective Purpose project.

Through all this internal change, our team continued to focus externally working with people with lived experience of mental illness and our many partners to:

- reach out to people and communities
- support and facilitate consumer participation
- work together for positive change
- connect consumers and the sector
- work towards an inclusive community
- advocate for consumers' priorities and views.

As the CEO of BEING, I am again both humbled by and proud of our dedicated staff, volunteers, Board Members and the people throughout the State we work with. I extend my heartfelt thanks to you all.

In particular I wish to thank our Senior Policy Officer Ka Ki Ng and her team, Karina Ko and Elena Sutcliffe, who have achieved much of the awesome policy and advocacy work highlighted in the report; Esther Pavel-Wood who was instrumental in significantly increasing our profile through awards, project funding and by leading the charge in the rebrand. Thanks to Lawrence Muskitta and Rachael Laidler who, among other things, supported the Consumer Worker Project; and to Eloisa Cullington, Maureen O'Keeffe, and Anna Heldorf who supported the Board, kept me organised, managed the electronic media and ensured the smooth functioning of the organisation. Last but not least, thanks to Cecilia Rais who had the mammoth task of supporting the Human Resources and Financial aspects of the organisation until the move to Collective Purpose.

I also wish to thank all the Board members for their service to the organisation and the community. In particular I wish to thank Tim Heffernan, Fayez Nour and Virginia Divall who in their roles as Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary (respectively) were always ready and able to go the extra mile in their own time to support the organisation and support me as CEO.

This report is a comprehensive testament to all the important work that has occurred this year. As the CEO of an excellent team of committed, wonderful people, I am very proud to be able to present this report to you and look forward to continuing to work with you all in the future.

In solidarity,

Dr Peri O'Shea
CEO

Mental Health & Wellbeing Consumer Advisory Group

From NSW CAG to BEING: 20 years in the making

At the end of 2014, we changed our trading name from NSW Consumer Advisory Group – Mental Health Inc. (NSW CAG) to our current name: Being.

This name change is based on a wide recognition that the mental health field has changed significantly since our organisation was formed 20 years ago, and our need to present an updated image to stay relevant to the new generations and fast evolving environment. The new brand builds on our rich history in mental health consumer advocacy, and also captures a renewed vision for the future, in a way that is fresh and exciting.

The word 'Being' speaks to a number of our core values. It has a focus on people — human beings. It recognises different states of being as legitimate and important to the individual. And finally, it encapsulates our 'whole of health' philosophy – that mental health is about more than just your head, it's about the whole of your wellbeing.

The logo – a speech bubble made up of links, represents the power of the shared voice and the power of networking, while also celebrating the value of each individual person's thoughts and experiences. It reflects our belief that people with lived experience are stronger together and reaffirms the importance of advocacy and storytelling in the mental health space.

The BEING name was unveiled at our 20th birthday party on 3 December 2014, at The Mint in Sydney. Many of our friends and supporters were there, including our patron, the Governor of NSW, His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd), the Mental Health Commissioner of NSW, Mr John Feneley, and long-time mental health consumer advocate and former NSW CAG CEO, Mr Douglas Holmes.

As part of the new name, we also changed the look of our website, e-newsletters and social media. Throughout 2015, we have received a lot of positive feedback on the changes, with many people telling us that they liked and connected with what BEING represents.

While our name and appearance have changed, we remain focused on working with mental health consumers to influence system-wide changes. We will continue to build upon the achievements made in the last 20 years, and we look forward to continuing that journey with our members, partners, supporters and stakeholders.

BEING's Membership

BEING's members play an important role in driving and guiding the direction of the organisation. Members participate in Annual General Meetings and Special General Meetings and vote in the Trustees to the BEING Board.

BEING offers membership to people who self-identify as having a lived experience of mental illness and associate membership to everyone else. Since January 2015, BEING has gained 37 new Members and 9 new Associate Members. This takes our total membership to 304 Members and 25 Associate Members. This includes 14 members or associate members who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and 27 members or associate members who identify as culturally and linguistically diverse.

We are currently reaching out to individuals who connect with BEING through our subscribers' database (previously called Network NSW) to invite them to become members. We encourage everyone who receives our e-news to check that they are also members or associate members of the organisation.

Board of Trustees

BEING is governed by a Board comprising a minimum of 7 and a maximum of 11 Trustees.

The role of the Board is to govern the organisation, primarily through setting the strategic vision and monitoring BEING's progress towards the strategic goals set.

At least 75% of BEING's Board is comprised of mental health consumers.

In 2015, BEING's Board Members were:

- Tim Heffernan (Chair)
- Virginia Divall (Secretary)
- Fayez R. Nour (Treasurer)
- Irene Gallagher
- Jodie Ingram
- Robyn Maurice
- Sunny Hemraj
- Rosanne Feneley
- Rachel Green, who resigned earlier in the year to take on a new role as a new parent
- Mandy Miles, who joined the Board in July

Together the Board Members have brought a wealth of lived experience and diverse skills to the organisation. We thank the 2015 Board for their vision, commitment and service to BEING, and to the community.

Staff and Volunteers

The fabulous staff who have worked at BEING in 2015 are:

- Dr Peri O'Shea – Chief Executive Officer
- Anna Heldorf - Executive Support & Communications Officer
- Cecilia Rais – Financial and Human Resources Officer
- Elena Sutcliffe – Policy & Administrative Support Officer
- Eloisa Cullington – Personal Assistant to the CEO
- Esther Pavel-wood – Senior Operations and Project Officer
- Ka Ki Ng – Senior Policy Officer
- Karina Ko – Policy Officer
- Lawrence Muskitta – Consumer Workers Project and Communications Officer
- Maureen O'Keeffe – Administrative Assistant
- Rachael Laidler – Events and Consumer Workers Project Officer
- Laura Knight – Casual
- Susan Palmer – Casual

BEING depends on the hard work of a group of dedicated and passionate volunteers to do its important work. A heartfelt thank you goes out to all of our volunteers, who give up their valuable time to help BEING achieve its vision.

Reaching out to people and communities

Recovery Conference, Tamworth

On Wednesday 27 May, the team at BEING flew to Tamworth to hold our 2015 Recovery Conference, 'BEING in the Country'. This year's conference focused on the barriers to wellness faced by people in regional and rural areas.

The topics and content of the conference were developed together with consumers in the region. Many of the speakers and workshop facilitators were also people from the Tamworth and surrounding areas.

Ninety consumers and carers attended the day, including people from areas far outside of the Tamworth region. Attendees heard personal recovery stories from rural consumer speakers. They also learnt different wellbeing strategies, such as using movement and mindfulness, in workshops delivered by local consumers and wellbeing advocates. Eight organisations from the local region and across NSW also held stalls and connected with people at the conference.

The conference received a lot of support from the local media. Karina Ko at BEING was interviewed by two local radio stations in the lead up to the event.

Two local newspapers published interviews with the keynote consumer speaker, Rod Thompson. A segment about the Conference, including an interview with Rod and BEING CEO, Dr Peri O'Shea also appeared on regional Prime 7 News.

We were thrilled by the enormous support from the people and services both within and outside of the Tamworth region. We are grateful to have heard many inspirational stories and made so many new friends.

Recovery in Art

In October 2015, BEING hosted our 5th annual Recovery in Art Exhibition at The Muse, Sydney TAFE Ultimo. The exhibition featured the artworks of 57 artists with a lived experience of mental illness, and images of three group murals currently on display at Cumberland Hospital.

The exhibition was launched on 7 October, with over 80 attending guests, artists and VIPs, including the Governor of NSW, His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley Ac DSC (Ret'd), and the Mental Health Commissioner of NSW, Mr John Feneley.

The exhibition included a musical performance by Cosmo Gelzinnis, two young consumer artists from Newcastle, and a Youth Mental Health Forum for Sydney TAFE students in partnership with Sydney TAFE Counseling service and Headspace Camperdown,

These events provided a forum for young people with a lived experience of mental illness to share their own experience of mental illness and recovery, and also to gain experience running their own event.

Over the course of the exhibition, over 120 people from diverse communities and backgrounds joined us for the exhibition and events.

Recovery in Art received media coverage in the Sydney Morning Herald and on the Sydney local radio station 2SER. On 1 October, Jamie Preisz, a contributing artist, and BEING's Rachael Laidler and Ka Ki Ng were interviewed by 2SER's Melinda Boutkasaka. The interview talked about the exhibition, the role of art in mental health, and broader issues affecting mental health consumers.

The Sydney Morning Herald also spoke to contributing artists M. Sunflower Trad and Jamie Preisz and published an article titled "Recovery in art: How creativity helps the healing process" (7 Oct 2015).

"The exhibition has really opened my eyes and mental health up to being more accepting of my dreams in art, and has given my self-esteem such a wonderful boost. It is helping me leave the house more often, and to try to say yes more often instead of being too scared to even try." (Artist: M. Sunflower Trad, 2015)

BEING Out & About

Holding stalls at community events is a great way to connect with people in different communities and settings. We held four stalls in 2015. Below are two highlights.

The *Heal for Life* open day, '100% Worthy', in the Hunter Valley celebrated World Mental Health Day as well as the Foundation's 16th Birthday. BEING CEO, Dr Peri O'Shea spoke at the event and also held a stall on behalf of BEING and our partner organisations, WayAhead and ARAFMI.

The *Mental Health Month* BBQ at NSW Parliament House hosted by the Mental Health Commission of NSW and the office of the NSW Minister for Mental Health, the Hon. Pru Goward MP was held at the NSW Parliament Speaker Garden, the event was about mental health organisations talking to MPs and their staff about mental health and wellbeing. Our stall was visited by Minster Goward and we spoke to a number of Parliamentary staff and other organisations.

Making use of technology

BEING is moving head first into the digital age and embracing a range of channels for communicating with our members, stakeholders and partners, including a monthly e-newsletter, Facebook and Twitter, and a brand new website! This has enabled us to strengthen our relationships with existing stakeholders, as well as to reach many more new people.

Some key achievements in 2015:

E-newsletters: On average, we have 10 new subscribers each month, and we are currently distributing the e-news to a total of 1,126 subscribers. Since January 2015, we have sent out 11 monthly e-newsletters and 10 special bulletins.

Facebook: Over 460 people have now liked the BEING Facebook page, up from 320 people at the beginning of 2015, a growth of 43 percent. The reach of our posts is also steadily growing, meaning many of our posts are now being shared with people that are outside of our direct network.

Twitter: BEING now has 1,107 Twitter followers, up from 780 in January 2015, an increase of 42 percent. More importantly, so far in 2015, BEING has had 47,121 'Tweet impressions', this means what we are saying on Twitter is being seen by many thousands of people across Australia and the world!

Website: For much of this year, we've been working on moving from the old NSW CAG website to our new BEING website. In August, BEING launched a new beautifully designed and modern website. So far we have received overwhelmingly positive feedback and we continue to work on improving and updating the website to ensure that it is a dynamic and useful resource for all of BEING's stakeholders.

Supporting and facilitating consumer participation

Working with consumers to build sector capacity

BEING works with consumers to speak at events and to educate others about consumer issues and experiences. In 2015, we worked with consumers who spoke about their lived experience at events held by other groups and organisations. These events included:

- A training session for GPs working in rural and remote communities
- A forum at NSW Parliament House looking at older people's mental health issues
- A national conference on the design and delivery of mental health services under the National Disability Insurance Scheme
- A forum held by the Ministry of Health on the issue of restraint and restrictive practices in mental health inpatient services

Aside from sharing their experience of living with mental illness, the consumer speakers talked about times when services or the service system failed them. They also shared their thoughts on changes that could help make things better.

It is always a privilege to work with individual consumers to support them to share their lived experience and life learnings with a broader audience. A big thank you to the eight individuals who worked with us this year.

MH-CoPES moving to YES

This year, a new consumer evaluation tool for mental health services called 'Your Experience of Service' (YES) came out and replaced the MH-CoPES (Mental Health Consumers Perceptions and Experiences of Service) questionnaire.

Unlike MH-CoPES, which was only used in NSW, the YES tool was developed nationally and is now being used by other states. YES was significantly informed by MH-CoPES, and our CEO represented BEING on the National Expert Reference Group. The tool also had substantial consumer input in its development and initial testing and the implementation of YES in NSW is overseen by BEING and the State-wide Implementation Committee (SWIC) which is mainly made up of consumer workers representing each LHD.

YES also continues to use the Action and Change Framework created through the MH-CoPES project. We are pleased to continue working with InforMH at the NSW Ministry of Health, the SWIC and Local Health Districts to implement YES, in order to support and increase effective and meaningful consumer participation in service quality improvement.

Working together for positive change

Champions for Change

Between June and August, the policy team carried out the Champions for Change project in partnership with the Mental Health Commission of NSW. The project involved consulting with consumers, who are or want to become advocates for positive change in mental health reform in their local communities.

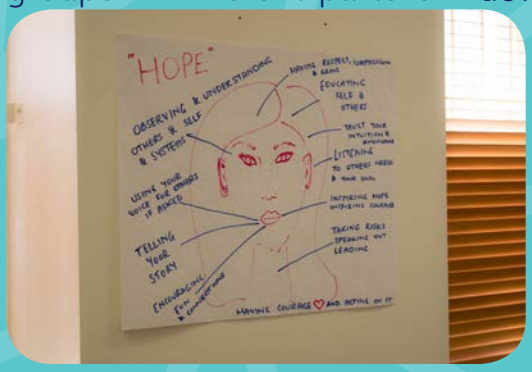
All of the face to face consultations were done by facilitators in the community, with support from the BEING's policy team. We asked people about what they need in order for them to make the changes happen. The report was submitted to the Commission in August. We are now working with the Commission to see what can be done to start creating positive changes.

Training people to make systemic change

In May and October 2015, we delivered a three-day consumer advocacy training at the NSW Institute of Psychiatry. We also delivered one-day consumer advocacy training to the consumer network at Port Macquarie in August.

Many of the people who attended our consumer advocacy training were newly employed in consumer peer worker roles or were members of newly formed consumer groups in different parts of NSW. We are pleased that more people are becoming engaged with the mental health consumer advocacy space, and to see more opportunities for consumers becoming available.

In September, BEING in partnership with Illawarra Shoalhaven Partners in Recovery sponsored two consumers to attend a PeerZone 'Train the Trainer' course. PeerZone, developed by mental health consumers in New Zealand, is a series of consumer-led workshops in mental health and addiction, where people can develop a deeper understanding of themselves, learn about personal recovery, become more empowered and connected to the world. In 2016, BEING will roll-out the delivery of PeerZone courses to consumers in NSW.



BEING will also be making our consumer advocacy training more widely available and accessible to consumers across NSW in the future.

Connecting consumers and the sector

The Consumer Worker Forum

BEING will be hosting the 2015 Consumer Workers Annual Forum on 26 and 27 November 2015 in partnership with the NSW Mental Health Consumer Workers Committee (CWC) and The Mental Health Commission of NSW,

The NSW Consumer Workers Forum is an annual event that brings together the state's public mental health consumer workers.

This is a valuable and unique opportunity for consumer workers to connect with one another, share ideas and identify best practice to enhance services throughout the state. It also gives consumer workers a platform to talk about issues in their workplaces and innovative projects they are running to serve their local area.

This year's Annual Forum will feature addresses by NSW Mental Health Minister, the Hon Pru Goward MP, Deputy Mental Health Commissioner Fay Jackson and Dr Karin Lines from the Mental Health Drug & Alcohol Office at the NSW Ministry of Health. From these key speakers, consumer workers will learn more about the NSW Government's vision for the peer workforce in the public mental health system.

During the two-day forum, attendees will also get to attend workshops on a number of topics that are led by consumer workers in NSW. These include topics such as, 'Consumer work with culturally and linguistically diverse people', 'Peer work with youth and older people', and 'How to create and implement a Recovery College'.

NSW Mental Health
CONSUMER WORKERS' COMMITTEE

Mental Health Commission of New South Wales

Education and training for services and students

BEING works in training and education for students and people working in the mental health and human services sector. This is in addition to the presentations and public speaking we already do at conferences and forums.

Some highlights in this area include: BEING presented to first year psychiatry students on working with consumers and carers. We also presented at the induction training for new Official Visitors on consumers' views of the Official Visitors Program. The presentation was based on consumer feedback collected from our Official Visitors Program review project in 2014, and the presentation focused on what Official Visitors could do to improve people's experience with the program.

BEING CEO Peri O'Shea spoke on a panel at the Recovery-Oriented Leader Development Program in July and again in October on personal values and how they impact on our leadership and recovery-oriented practice. The program was designed for leaders in the mental health and community sector to strengthen their capabilities in applying recovery-oriented practice.

BEING also reviews and provides input into training and education materials developed by other agencies. For example, this year, we helped review the Mental Health Coordinating Council's pilot online program on supporting mental health recovery. We also provided input into the course materials for the Australian Catholic University's Master of Mental Health.

We believe it is important that the sector continues to gain a deeper understanding of consumer issues and appreciation of the value of consumer participation. This is an area of work we will be expanding in the coming years.

Building sector capacity

In 2015, BEING spoke and delivered presentations at a number of events. We use these speaking opportunities to highlight issues that are relevant to consumers, and promote the value of consumer participation across different services and systems development activities.

For example, we spoke about consumer perspectives on trauma-informed practice at the So You Want to Change the World Forum. We spoke at the inaugural Agency for Clinical Innovation Mental Health Network Forum on prior-

ities for consumers of NSW mental health services, including the benefits of having more consumers working in the sector, and more consumers being involved in service development and improvement. We also spoke about what makes a 'home' for many mental health consumers at a forum held by the St Vincent's Health Network.

We are pleased to have shared our knowledge and values with those working in the mental health sector and beyond, and these opportunities always lead to us meeting new people and making new connections.

Participation at conferences and forums

Conferences and forums are great ways to learn about new developments in the sector and build connections with those working in the field.

In 2015, BEING attended a number of such events, including the Official Visitors Program's annual conference, various mental health services benchmarking forums held by the Ministry of Health, a national conference on developing evidence-based policy, and a conference and some webinars about the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

This year, BEING again ran a competition to identify three consumer advocates to sponsor to attend The Mental Health Services Conference (TheMHS) in Canberra in August. We received over 40 applications and were pleased to have Bani Aadam, Katherine Gill and Nicole Neilson joining us at the conference. We were particularly pleased that the sponsorship had enabled Katherine Gill to present four different papers at the conference that are all related to consumer issues.

Working towards an inclusive community

Our work in disability

For a long time, mental health has been set apart from the disability sector. Many people have disability related to their mental illness, but told us that they couldn't get support because their disability weren't being recognised. BEING has continued to advocate for more inclusion of people with disability related to mental illness, below are some of our key activities from 2015.

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

In the middle of 2015, the NDIS started rolling out in areas outside the NSW Hunter region. To stay up-to-date on the fast pace developments, we attended several of the NDIS Community of Practice Forums held in Newcastle jointly by the Mental Health Commission of NSW and the Mental Health Coordinating Council, we also joined a number of webinars ran by the National Disability Insurance Agency.

In August, we attended a forum held by the NSW Ombudsman to hear about mental health consumers' experience with the NDIS in Newcastle. In September, we gave input on what NDIS packages should look like for people with disability associated with their mental illness.

In October, we worked with two consumers involved with the NDIS at the Hunter Region to support their presentation at a national conference about mental health services and the NDIS. There are so many changes happening in this space. We continue to keep an eye on the new developments and look for opportunities to inform the NDIS as it progresses.

Disability networks

BEING is a member of the NSW Disability Network Forum and the NSW Ombudsman's Disability Roundtable. This year, both networks have been particularly focused on the roll out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. As a member of the NSW Disability Network Forum, we contributed to the Forum's submissions about:

- Review of the Disability Employment Framework
- Quality and safeguards in the National Disability Insurance Scheme

NSW Disability Inclusion Plan

The NSW Parliament passed the Disability Inclusion Act in 2014. It requires the NSW Government to have a NSW Disability Inclusion Plan to show how it will improve the inclusion of people with disability. In January 2015, we responded to the Government's call for ideas for this plan. We recommended that the NSW Government make sure the Plan covers mental health consumers, and that mental health consumers are involved in the development, implementation and review of the plan.

The Government released its plan in February 2015, and it includes disability related to mental illness. The NSW Disability Inclusion Plan requires each NSW government agency to have their own Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

To continue our advocacy in this area, we participated in two disability inclusion action planning consultations: one in August for the NSW Department of Family & Community Services, and one in September for The NSW Ministry of Health. BEING spoke about some of the issues affecting mental health consumers in the public housing and hospital setting, and what the two government agencies could do to address them so they can become more inclusive of people with psychosocial disability.

Working with the Arabic community

In 2015, BEING received a project grant from the Inner West Sydney Partners in Recovery. The project involves working with the Arabic speaking community in Inner West Sydney to develop resources to increase that community's understanding of mental health issues, and their ability to access mental health information and support. Metro Assist and the Transcultural Mental Health Centre are key project partners.

This project will continue into 2016. As part of the project, we will be seeking input from members of the Arabic community to help decide what mental health resources need to be developed, and how to make sure the community can easily access those resources. We are very excited to be embarking on this project, and to be establishing new relationships with Arabic community members and with organisations that work with them.

Strengthening inclusion of people of intersex, trans and gender diverse experience

In June 2015, BEING staff attended a training by the National LGBTI Health Alliance to learn more about the particular mental health issues that affect lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) people, and what we can do about some of those issues. BEING is now working toward LGBTI inclusivity as a MindOUT! Champion, part of the MindOUT! National LGBTI Mental Health & Suicide Prevention Project.

mindout

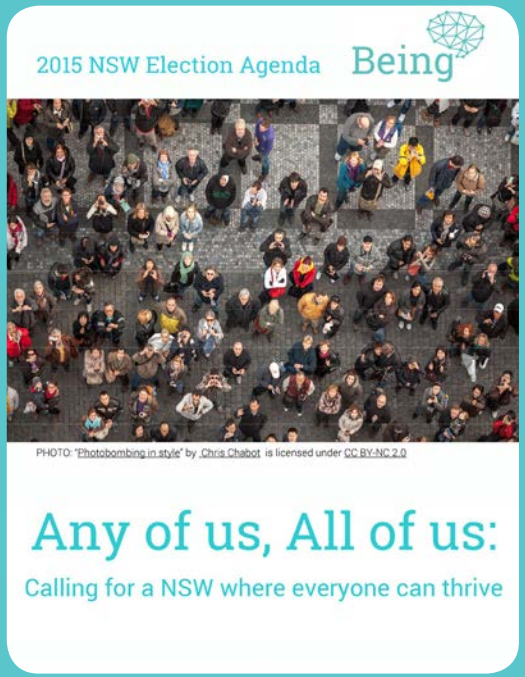
LGBTI National LGBTI Health Alliance

Advocating for consumers' priorities and views

NSW election consumer agenda

Leading up to the NSW State election in March 2015, we wrote an Election Agenda to raise awareness of six priorities that mental health consumers said the State Government needs to act on: inclusive communities, housing, transport, employment, legal assistance, and mental health education and support for young people. These priorities were based on consumer's input via online and face to face consultations.

The Election Agenda with its six priorities were sent it to all NSW members of Parliament. People responded, including the Baird Government, and Alex Greenwich (Member for Sydney). We also met with Jenny Leong (Member for Newtown) to discuss some of the priorities and the need for a whole-of-government approach to mental health. The priorities will continue to guide our advocacy in the long-term.



On issues facing young people

In February 2015, we connected with young people to hear their views and experiences about using medication for mental illness. We held an online survey and went to an inpatient service to talk with some young people. We shared the feedback with the Mental Health Commission of NSW to help them evaluate the extent that the system is responding safely and sensitively to young people's needs.

We continue to be an active member of the Children & Youth Mental Health Subcommittee in the Ministry of Health. In 2015, we also started participating in two new groups that arose out of the Subcommittee. One group aims to strengthen the partnerships between the Ministry of Health and the Department of Education to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people. The other group assists with developing a training package and resources on caring for young people with mental health issues in paediatric inpatient settings.

On issues facing older people

BEING is an ongoing member of the Older Persons' Mental Health Working Group at the Ministry of Health. Through this group, we are able to have input and learn about developments in policy and services for older people. This year, BEING is also part of a project group to help the Ministry develop a model of care for community-based Specialist Older Persons' Mental Health Services. The project included consultations with older people who were accessing these specialist services. Once the model of care is finalised, it will provide important guidance on what these specialist services should look like and how they should work.

As part of our work in this area, we have continued to participate in the benchmarking forums held by the NSW Ministry of Health for Specialist Mental Health Services for Older People. Benchmarking forums use data collected by public mental health services to drive quality improvements in those services. In addition, in August, we recruited and worked with an older person, Steve Atkins, to speak at an Older People and Mental Health forum held by The Council on the Ageing NSW at NSW Parliament.

Senate Committee on Health Hearing and Roundtable

In February 2015, we participated in a hearing with the Senate Select Committee on Health. The Committee's role is to look into and report on the Federal Government's health policy, administration and expenditure. We made a submission to the Committee in 2014 and we were invited to attend this hearing to give further information. At the hearing, we shared our views on how the proposed GP co-payments and the transition from Medicare Locals to Primary Health Networks might impact on consumers.

In August 2015, we were invited by the Committee to participate on a roundtable to provide further evidence. In addition, we identified and worked with three consumers to share their lived experience with the Committee at a separate Consumer and Carer Session. We coordinated with ARAFMI NSW to ensure there was a fair carer representation as well. The Committee's final report to the Senate is due in mid-2016.

Advanced care planning

Advance care planning is about making plans for end of life decisions while you are well, so your loved ones and services know what you want when you are reaching that end of life stage, and are too unwell to make those decisions. People with mental illness has the same right to advance care planning as anyone else.

To clarify how to do advance care planning, and people's rights and responsibilities, the NSW Ministry of Health has been developing some online resources on advance care planning for people with mental illness in general health settings. BEING provided direct input into the draft resources. In mid-2015, we also recruited and worked with nine consumers to further review the resource that was designed for the community. The resources became publicly available in November 2015 and can be accessed on the NSW Ministry of Health website.

Committee participation

Overall, BEING participated on 19 committees and interagency groups in 2015. These spanned across a wide variety of topics and purposes. In addition to the topics that were mentioned above, some of the other topics were:

- Evaluation of two Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative (HASI) programs - HASI Plus and HASI Boarding House
- Review of the policy regarding the use of seclusion and restraints in mental health
- Development of a Mental Health Insights Report by the Bureau of Health Information

We also continued to chair the Mental Health Consumer Subcommittee, and provide representation at the Mental Health Program Council and Clinical Advisory Council at the Mental Health and Drug & Alcohol Office in the NSW Ministry of Health.

Financial Reports

THOMAS DAVIS & CO.
(ESTABLISHED 1894)
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

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BOX 492 G.P.O.
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TELEPHONE: (02) 9232 1188
FACSIMILE: (02) 9231 6792
EMAIL: mail@thomasdavis.com.au

NSW CONSUMER ADVISORY GROUP - MENTAL HEALTH INC
ABN 82 549 537 349

LEVEL 20
68 PITT STREET
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Auditor's Independence Declaration to the Committee Members of NSW Consumer Advisory Group - Mental Healh Inc, under secion 60-40 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (ACNC Act)

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2015 there have been:

(a) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements of section 60-40 of the ACNC Act in relation to the audit; and.

(b) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Thomas Davis & Co.

THOMAS DAVIS & CO.

J.G. Ryan

J.G. RYAN PARTNER

Chartered Accountants

Sydney
16 November 2015

NSW CONSUMER ADVISORY GROUP - MENTAL HEALTH INC
ABN 82 549 537 349

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the Committee the financial report:

(a) Is in accordance with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (ACNC Act); and

(i) Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of NSW Consumer Advisory Group - Mental Health Inc. as at 30 June 2015 and its performance for the year ended on that date.

(ii) comply with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent outlined in Note 1 and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013;

(b) At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that NSW Consumer Advisory Group - Mental Health Inc. Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:

T Heffernan

Timothy Heffernan
Chairperson

Fayez Nour
Treasurer

SYDNEY, 16/11/15

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(b) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Thomas Davis & Co.

THOMAS DAVIS & CO.

J.G. Ryan

J.G. RYAN PARTNER

Chartered Accountants

Sydney
16 November 2015

NSW CONSUMER ADVISORY GROUP - MENTAL HEALTH INC
ABN 82 549 537 349

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 30TH JUNE 2015

	Notes	2015 $	2014 $
Current assets			
Cash assets	5	316,692	265,270
Receivables	6	8,024	3,747
Total current assets		324,716	269,017
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	7	8,563	8,197
Total non-current assets		8,563	8,197
Total assets		333,279	277,214
Current liabilities			
Payables	8	28,909	15,735
Provisions	9	43,523	38,850
Total current liabilities		72,432	54,585
Non-current liabilities			
Provisions	9	20,451	15,174
Total non-current liabilities		20,451	15,174
Total liabilities		92,883	69,759
Net assets		240,396	207,455
Members Funds			
Retained funds	13	240,396	207,455
Total Members Funds		240,396	207,455

NSW CONSUMER ADVISORY GROUP - MENTAL HEALTH INC
ABN 82 549 537 349

DETAILED INCOME STATEMENT
FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE 2015

	2015 $	2014 $
Revenue		
Anti-Stigma Project		-
CoPES Funding (NSW) Health		-
Core Funding (NSW) Health	569,393	551,365
Interest Received	2,530	2,172
Management Fees	250	10,389
Project Grants	167,255	114,357
Other Income	29,708	10,809
Reimbursements	10,401	3,109
	779,537	692,201
Expenditure		
Advertising & Promotion	2,626	5,292
Agency Temporary Staff	34,066	-
Assets Purchase <$500 (OEN-C)	-	1,333
Audit Fees	4,450	4,300
Bank Charges	455	437
Board Governance Expenses	36,729	24,477
Busi Planning Reporting& Eval	1,125	11,058
Conferences	35,782	31,413
Consultations	56	1,242
Co-location Expenses	20,000	19,759
Computer Expenses	15,077	1,994
Consultancy/Contractors Fees	-	2,915
Depreciation Expenses(FF&OE)	2,206	5,780
Employment Support & Supervision	2,250	3,000
Fees and Permits	225	91
Health & Safety	-	132
Insurance General (all)	-	4,587
Management Fees	24,742	18,639
Meeting Expenses	3,355	967
Membership Fees Paid	1,586	1,673
Postage, Freight & Courier	895	709
Printing & Stationery	7,669	7,762
Publication & Inform Resources	787	1,933
Repairs & Maintenance	-	300
Reimbursement of surplus funds	-	10,253
S&W - Annual Leave	23,523	23,260
S&W - LSL Wages	1,834	-
S&W - Recruitment Expense	563	720
S&W - Personal/Carers Lve	10,731	12,962
S&W - Superannuation Employ Exp	42,716	39,378
S&W - Workers Compensation Ins	1,447	2,536
W&S - Wages & Salaries	432,468	405,010
S&W - Provision Exp Annual Lve	5,394	4,216
S&W - Provision Exp LSL<12m	(722)	36
S&W - Provision Exp LSL>12m	5,276	15,174
Staff Amenities	156	439
Sundry Expenses	10	-
Telephone Fax & Internet Charge	4,094	4,687
Training & Development(staff)	9,088	17,644
T&A - Staff & Subsistence	10,563	17,061
T&A - MVAllowance (payroll)	1,195	868

NSW CONSUMER ADVISORY GROUP - MENTAL HEALTH INC
ABN 82 549 537 349

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE 2015

	Notes	2015 $ Inflows (Outflows)	2014 $ Inflows (Outflows)
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash Receipts		779,537	713,171
Cash payments to suppliers and employees		(725,543)	(681,948)
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	11(b)	53,994	31,223
Cash flow from investing activities			
Payments for property, plant and equipment		(2,572)	(3,941)
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities		(2,572)	(3,941)
Net increase / (decrease) in cash held		51,422	27,282
Cash at the beginning of the financial year		265,270	237,988
Cash at the end of the financial year	11(a)	316,692	265,270

The Statement of Cash Flows should be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF NSW CONSUMER ADVISORY GROUP - MENTAL HEALTH INC
ABN 82 549 537 349

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of NSW Consumer Advisory Group - Mental Health Inc., which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2015, and the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, a summary of significant accounting policies, other explanatory notes and the certification by members of the committee on the annual statements giving true and fair view of the financial position and performance of the association.

The Responsibility of members of the committee for the Financial Report

The members of the committee of the association are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 is appropriate to meet the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (ACNC Act) and is appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The Committee of Management's responsibility also includes such internal control as the Committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view, in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Committee of Management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report of NSW Consumer Advisory Group - Mental Health Inc.; is in accordance with section 60-40 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012; including:

(a) presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of NSW Consumer Advisory Group - Mental Health Inc. as of 30 June 2015 and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended on that date; and

(b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent outlined in Note 1 and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013.

Basis of Accounting

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist NSW Consumer Advisory Group - Mental Health Inc., to meet the requirements of the ACNC Act. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

Thomas Davis + Co.

THOMAS DAVIS & CO.

J.G. Ryan

J G RYAN PARTNER

Chartered Accountants

SYDNEY,
16 November 2015

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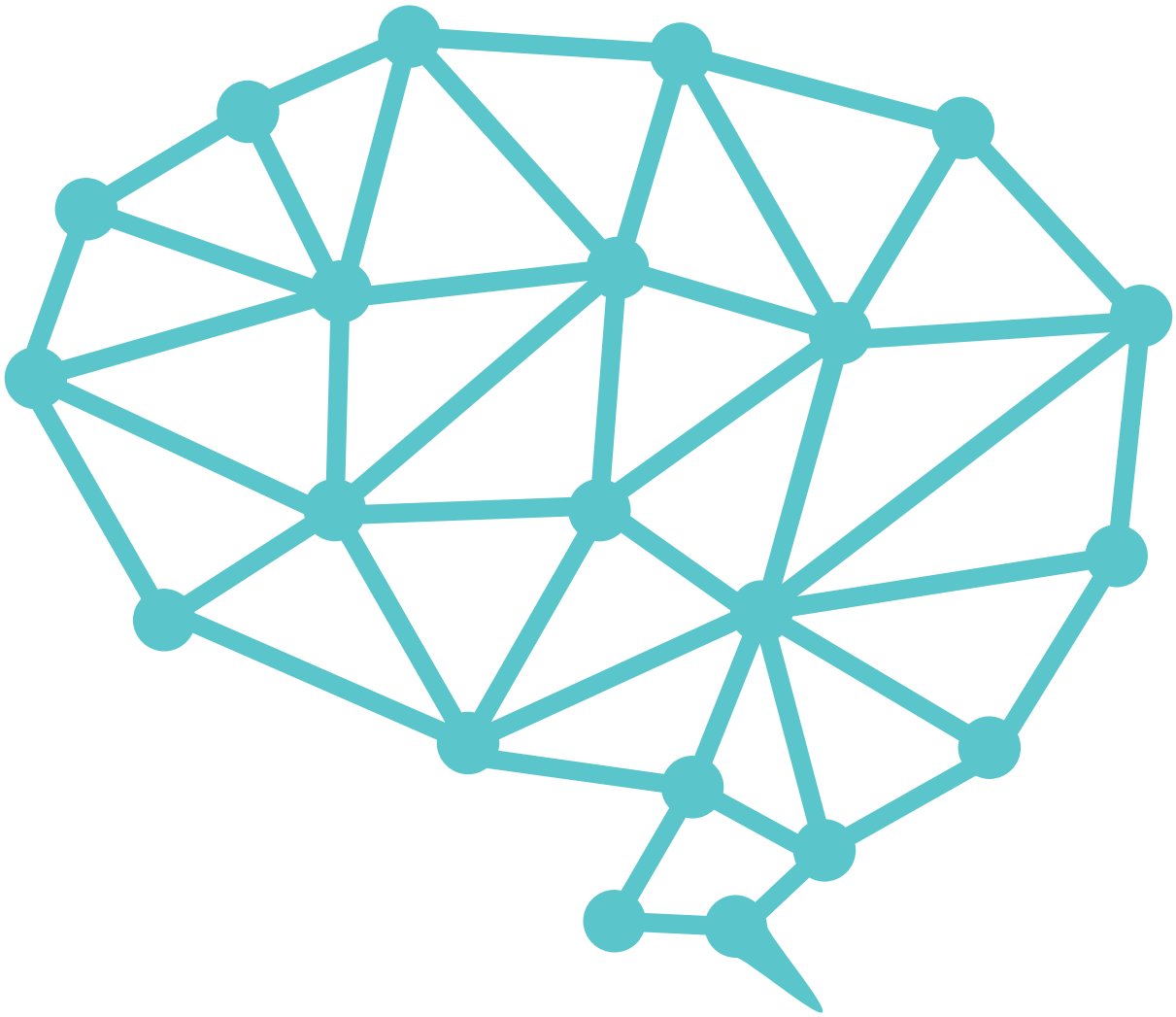
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