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LOCALS FRONT OF MIND IN STATEWIDE CONFERENCE

Tamworth resident **Rod Thompson** will be the keynote speaker a statewide mental health conference held at the Wests' Diggers Club next Wednesday.

Rod is a father of two and a manager at the local Audi dealership. He will be speaking about his journey with depression as a man from a rural area, and what he found helpful in managing his mental health and wellbeing.

The Recovery Conference is run by **BEING**, the peak body for people with a lived experience of mental illness in NSW. It aims to promote recovery and break stigma through the sharing of personal stories.

"With one in four rural Australians experiencing mental illness in their lifetime, positive conversations about mental health and wellbeing are more important than ever", says **BEING CEO Peri O'Shea**.

"Putting local people at the centre of this conversation is at the heart of what we do and what we aim to achieve in this Conference.

"Rural and regional people have unique experiences with mental health and wellbeing, different to people in the major cities. With this Conference, we hope to give people in the country a platform to share their recovery journeys, and the skills that helped them through it."

The Conference will comprise of workshops on practical skills for positive wellbeing, a panel of speakers with a lived experience of mental illness, and a world café where people can reflect on the day's learnings and inspire one another.

Some of the wellbeing workshops include:

- Exploring values, meaning and purpose with **Local Woman of the Year 2014 Sarah McFarlane-Eagle**
- Positive wellbeing through Aboriginal story-telling and dance with the **Gomerioi Dance Company**
- CBT strategies for positive wellbeing with **Dr Alan Avery** and **Yarif Freestone**

The Recovery Conference will be held **next Wednesday 26 May, Wests' Diggers Club on Kable Ave, Tamworth**. It is **free** for consumers and hugely subsidised for carers.

-ENDS-

A number of our guest speakers are available for interview.

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BEING is the statewide peak body for people with lived experience of mental illness (consumers). Our vision is for all people with a lived experience of mental illness to participate as valued citizens in the communities they choose.