



Queensland  
**Mental Health and Drug  
Advisory Council**

## Queensland Mental Health and Drug Advisory Council meeting Brisbane, Queensland (3 May 2019)

### COMMUNIQUE

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The Queensland Mental Health and Drug Advisory Council convened its first meeting for 2019 on Friday 3 May. The meeting agenda primarily focused on the progression of *Shifting minds: Queensland Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs Strategic Plan 2018-2023* implementation, the mental health sector, and induction for the new Council members.

#### **Council meeting discussions**

##### *Acknowledgement of the outgoing Council members*

The Council Chair and members formally acknowledged the contributions made by outgoing Council members Mr Jeremy Audas, Ms Janice Crosbie, Ms Martina McGrath, Mr Hamza Vayani, Ms Samantha Wild and Dr Mark Wenitong at the Council meeting.

##### *Update of the Queensland Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol Strategic Plan*

The Council was provided with an update on the progression of *Shifting minds: Queensland Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs Strategic Plan 2018-2023 (Shifting minds)* implementation.

The Council members noted that a Senior Leadership Group (SLG) had been established to provide cross-sector government leadership for the implementation of the strategic objectives of *Shifting minds*.

The Council was advised that integrated planning is currently underway to support the early implementation of the 'Whole-of-system' strategic priorities for strengthening and integrating the cross-sectoral approach to problematic AOD use and harm minimisation, and suicide prevention, including:

- renewing the Queensland Government's approach to preventing and reducing problematic AOD use, including reducing drug-related deaths. The Council noted that a commitment has been made to deliver an AOD strategy by late 2019;
- renewing the Queensland Government's suicide prevention approach through a focus on higher-risk groups and settings. The Council noted that a commitment has been made to deliver a suicide prevention plan by mid-2019.

The Council noted that a series of forums planned to support the implementation of the Strategic Plan focus areas. It is proposed that the forums will be aligned to the focus areas of *Shifting minds* (better lives; invest to save; whole-of-system improvement).

In addition to the forum series, the Council noted that further engagement and collaboration with and between Queensland Government agencies and non-government stakeholders will be required to support the key priorities under each focus area.

It was acknowledged that this is a fast moving and complex arrangement; supporting consultation across multiple government agencies and population groups, in addition to the Council.

The Chair made a request that the Commission provide the Council with brief summaries on any significant consultations and forums relating to *Shifting Minds*, including the Suicide Prevention and Alcohol and Other Drugs.

### ***Alcohol and Other Drugs update***

The Commissioner discussed his attendance at the second pill testing trial at the Groovin' the Moo Festival in Canberra (27-28 April) where he observed the operations of a pill testing service alongside with Government representatives, including the Member for Thuringowa, Mr Aaron Harper MP, and the Member for Maiwar, Mr Michael Berkman MP.

## **Emerging issues**

### ***New Health and Wellbeing Agency***

The Council noted that the Queensland Government has recently approved the establishment of a health and wellbeing agency – Health and Wellbeing Queensland (HWQ). HWQ will be an independent statutory body, bringing together the community, private sector and all levels of government to drive collaboration and change.

The Council noted that the agency will work in partnership with stakeholders and government departments to provide input into policy development and future strategies.

The Commissioner acknowledged that at this stage HWQ is focused on tackling obesity and general health but may have the potential to support mental health promotion in the future.

The Council was advised that the Commission plans to connect with the new agency, when established, to discuss how they can work together.

### ***Community trauma from recent tragic events***

The Council discussed how the recent tragic events in Sri Lanka and Christchurch have had a significant impact on several local migrant communities, with a number of people; especially those that have been exposed to war-related trauma expressing their distress.

The Council acknowledged with concern how events of extreme violence can trigger feelings of distress and insecurity and agreed that collective action and support is required from the broader community during this difficult time.

The Council discussed the need for systemic thinking regarding the short- and long-term impacts of such events; and agreed for this issue to be a standing agenda item for future Council meetings.

### ***Update on the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)***

The Council discussed some of the current issues expressed by the community about the NDIS implementation, including:

- Impact on people that are not eligible to receive an NDIS package.
- Impact on the sector and workforce due to services shifting to a market-led approach.
- Poverty as a major issue faced by people with a psychosocial disability.
- The lack of cultural considerations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander NDIS clients.

The Commissioner encouraged the Council to continue providing feedback on issues for psychosocial disability and NDIS for him to raise at the upcoming National Reference Group meeting, hosted by NDIA.

## **Next meeting**

The next meeting of the Council is planned to be held during the Council's visit to the Sunshine Coast region on 1-2 July 2019.

If you have any enquiries relating to the communique, please contact the Council Secretariat via email at: [council@qmhc.qld.gov.au](mailto:council@qmhc.qld.gov.au).