



Queensland
**Mental Health and Drug
Advisory Council**

Queensland Mental Health and Drug Advisory Council meeting communiqué

Brisbane, Queensland, 29 September 2020

Discussions about seclusion and restraint in mental health facilities featured at the September meeting.

The Queensland Health's Chief Psychiatrist, Dr John Reilly gave an overview of some of the key challenges and improvements with relating to restrictive practices, and outlined the promotion of whole-of-unit and multi-component approaches under the [Safewards](#) consumer-centred care model.

The Council discussed seclusion and restraint data, and the importance of understanding seclusion and restraint patterns, as well as the influence of patient demographics (age, gender, ethnicity, dual diagnosis).

The Council noted Queensland's rates of involuntary patients and questioned correlations with reported increases in rates of aggression, violence and self-harm, community and police incidents, and use of seclusion and restraint.

Council members discussed the Queensland Government directive (issued in 2013) to lock all inpatient mental health facilities, noting that not all inpatients are involuntary and the policy's negative effects on safety and the maintenance of therapeutic environments.

It was agreed that recovery-oriented, trauma-informed and least-restrictive therapeutic approaches was best practice; and that there was a need to balance human rights with best treatment practice and support for individual needs.

Dr Reilly gave an update on amendments to the *Mental Health Act 2016* relating to the Chief Psychiatrist, and temporary amendments to the Chief Psychiatrist Policies in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Other meeting discussions

Mental health community support services sector (NGO) growth

Queensland Mental Health Commissioner, Ivan Frkovic gave an update on the proposed needs-analysis for the mental health non-government community services sector. The project will work to improve understanding of the current environment, strengths, challenges, barriers and opportunities experienced by the sector. The project will inform the future growth and sustainability of the NGO sector.

A steering committee will be established to oversee the project and will include representatives of the broader non-government peak bodies, service-providers, funders, and people with lived experience.

The Council agreed to consider and provide formal feedback at the next meeting.

Mental health consumer peak

The Commission's Program and Policy Delivery Director, Kylie Barnes gave an update on the [Queensland Mental Health Consumer Representative Peak Establishment Project](#).

She noted a recruitment plan for a board and an interim chief executive officer was under way and that the process was expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2021.

Council members will have an opportunity to provide their views on the approach, including the use of lived-experience researchers at the next meeting.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Awareness and Capacity Building

The Commission's Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention (PPEI) Manager – Dr Simone Caynes gave an overview of the Commission's PPEI program to support and protect mental health and wellbeing through cross-sectoral engagement and capacity building.

Dr Caynes said a key feature of the Commission's work is focused on leveraging opportunities, aligning work priorities, and establishing and building collaboration partnerships. She outlined how the Commission had partnered with the Queensland Department of Health to create a second phase of the [*Dear mind*](#) campaign to support mental health and wellbeing during the pandemic.

She also reported on the implementation and uptake of Wheel of Wellbeing (WoW) concepts and the Commission's plans for a WoW challenge (beginning in October).

Next meeting

The next meeting is planned for December 2020. Inquiries about this communique can be made to the Council Secretariat on council@qmhc.qld.gov.au.