

Mental Health and Wellbeing Capacity Building Project

Summary of 2016 events

The Queensland Mental Health Commission (Commission) has partnered with Maudsley International to design and deliver the Cross-sectoral Mental Health and Wellbeing Capacity Building Project (Capacity Building Project). The Capacity Building Project aims to enhance the mental health and wellbeing awareness, knowledge and skills of key stakeholders across community, non-government and government sectors. This includes personnel associated with the Regional Mental Health and Wellbeing Hubs; Queensland Government policy officers and service providers; and community and non-government service providers.

The Capacity Building Project is being implemented in three phases. In March 2016, Mr Tony Coggins, Lead for Mental Health Promotion, Maudsley International delivered a series of introductory mental health and wellbeing events in Brisbane. This included supporting the establishment and orientation of the Regional Mental Health and Wellbeing Hubs Initiative.

Between 28 August and 9 September 2016 Mr Coggins with his colleague Ms Neetu Sinha delivered the second phase involving a program of training in Brisbane and regional areas of Queensland on the **Wheel of Wellbeing** and **Mental Wellbeing Impact Assessment**. The following provides a summary of the events and outcomes.

Why mental health and wellbeing

Improving mental health and wellbeing is a priority of the Queensland Government. The *Queensland Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol Strategic Plan 2014-2019* aims to improve the mental health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders and includes actions focused on mental health awareness, illness prevention and early intervention.

The *Early Action: Queensland Mental Health Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention Action Plan 2015-17* (Early Action Plan) focuses on actions to:

- improve the mental health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders at all ages and stages of their lives
- prevent and intervene as early as possible where there is identified risk of poor mental health or mental illness due to individual, social, and/or environmental circumstances
- improve the mental health and wellbeing of people living with mental illness by supporting their recovery and removing barriers to full participation in work, education and community.

Good mental health and wellbeing supports improved social, educational and economic outcomes. It is associated with a wide range of positive outcomes including:

- improved physical health
- improved life expectancy
- better learning outcomes and educational achievement
- creativity
- increased productivity
- increased resilience and coping in the face of challenges and difficulties, and
- supportive and cohesive communities.

It is also recognised that mental health and wellbeing is shaped and affected by those settings of our everyday life – where we live, where we grow, where we learn, where we work. In this way the vital role families, schools, workplaces and communities play in supporting and protecting positive mental health and wellbeing is acknowledged.

The Early Action Plan therefore recognises whole of government and cross sectoral approaches are required whereby all sectors are supported and

equipped to contribute to good mental health and wellbeing of the population and key groups according to their role and their scope of influence. However, there is a need to develop a shared understanding within these groups of what mental health and wellbeing is, as well as building capacity to support them in playing their part. The Capacity Building Project contributes to this through building and embedding knowledge, skills and networks for improved mental health and wellbeing.

Target of August and September training

The initial focus of the Capacity Building Project has been on those sectors that, due to their role and scope of influence, have significant opportunity to deliver and embed actions to strengthen the mental health and wellbeing across the community and among key groups.

- The Early Action Plan acknowledges the vital role played at the community level in supporting good mental health and wellbeing. Under the Early Action Plan, the Commission is piloting the establishment of three [Regional Mental Health and Wellbeing Hubs](#) to plan and deliver locally-led solutions for ensuring individuals, services and agencies are informed and equipped to contribute to individual and collective wellbeing.
- In recognition of the established relationship between mental health and wellbeing and learning outcomes, the Department of Education and Training (DET) formalised a contribution to the second stage of the Maudsley International project. Through a funding contribution DET accessed a proportionate share of the training events described below for State and regional staff including Mental Health Coaches.
- During the development of the current training program discussions have also occurred with other government and non-government stakeholders. It is likely that engagement of these stakeholders will continue to develop with ongoing progress of the project and review of the priority groups and populations for capacity building.

Wheel of Wellbeing (WOW)

Developed by Maudsley International, the [Wheel of Wellbeing](#) (WOW) is a flexible framework that represents the six universal themes that contribute to mental health and wellbeing: *Body, Mind, Spirit, People, Place* and *Planet*. Better understanding of these six themes can enable us to lead healthier, happier and more meaningful, connected and productive lives.

The WOW framework links each of the six themes to positive action. Since its introduction in 2008, the WOW framework has grown to include a website, a Do It Yourself Happiness Game, and a series of workshops, including half day and full day introductory workshops and an eight week DIY Happiness course.

Intensive WOW training

Between 28 August and 2 September 2016 a group of 24 trainees identified through the Regional Mental Health and Wellbeing Hubs and DET were provided a four and a half day intensive WOW training program in Brisbane.

During the program the trainees were instructed on key concepts of positive psychology and their importance to mental health and wellbeing. This included supporting theory and practical actions relating to each of the elements of Body, Mind, Spirit, People, Place and Planet.

Trainee understanding and knowledge of positive and negative emotions and their impact on individual wellbeing, interpersonal relationships, functioning and productivity were strengthened. Experiential activities and reflection were used to deepen and embed knowledge and practice. Trainees were supported to consider how they will apply the concepts and activities in their own communities, services and workplaces.

All trainees rated the course as excellent. The future impact of the training was positively demonstrated with 78 per cent of the participants strongly agreeing that they would change their practice following the course. The remaining 22 per cent also agreed.

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Following completion, trainees are accredited to deliver the half-day and full-day WOW awareness workshops and will be given access to relevant lesson plans, resources and support through the Commission's agreement with Maudsley International. A network of WOW trainees and other interested practitioners will be established.

WOW awareness workshops

The one day *'Introducing the Wheel of Wellbeing Workshop'* is designed as an introduction to WOW so participants can use in their work or apply to their own lives. The awareness workshop:

- introduces an integrated approach to understanding mental health and wellbeing
- increases awareness of practical activities and attitudes that contribute to sustainable communities and flourishing lives
- provides an introduction to the WOW framework, the WOW website and its range of associated practical resources.

As part of their accreditation trainees co-delivered one of four WOW awareness workshops with the support of the Maudsley International consultants.

Central Highlands WOW workshop

On 8 September, the Central Highlands Regional Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub with support of the Central Highlands Regional Council (CHRC) hosted a WOW awareness workshop in Emerald. The workshop was attended by 36 government, non-government and community stakeholders. This included representatives from CHRC Community Reference Groups, neighbourhood and family support centres, other community services and DET regional office and schools.

Under the guidance of Mr Coggins the workshop was co-facilitated by:

- Victoria Homer (Central Highlands Regional Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub, CentacareCQ)
- Sally Anne Hanson (Blackwater community member)
- Kirsty Appleton (CHRC Community Development Officer)

- Christina Rigo (Mental Health Coach Central Queensland DET).

Workshop evaluations indicated that 80 per cent of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the workshop objectives were clear; 90 per cent agreed or strongly agreed that the facilitators demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the content; and 79 per cent made connections with people with whom they intend to collaborate with in the future.

For further information about the Central Highlands Hub and WOW workshop please contact CentacareCQ at www.centacare.net.

Logan WOW workshop

On 8 September, the Logan and Southern Moreton Bay Islands Regional Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub hosted a WOW awareness workshop in Loganlea. The workshop was attended by 17 government, non-government and community stakeholders. This included representatives from education, housing, employment services, family support services, and community organisations.

Under the guidance of Ms Sinha the workshop was co-facilitated by:

- Jan Elston (Logan and Southern Moreton Bay Islands Regional Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub)
- Andre Pirini (FSG Australia)
- Michael Roennfeldt (FSG Australia)
- Uani Edwards (Benevolent Society)
- Aneesa Kathrada (Mental Health Coach South East Region DET).

Workshop evaluations indicated a high level of satisfaction with all respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that the objectives were clear, the workshop was well organised and the facilitators had a thorough knowledge of their content. The majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they made connections with people they intended to collaborate with in the future (80 per cent) and planned to change their practice as a result of the workshop (77 per cent).

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For further information about the Logan and Southern Moreton Bay Islands Hub and WOW workshop please contact Relationships Australia Queensland at www.raq.org.au.

Townsville WOW Workshop

On 5 September, the Northern and Western Queensland Regional Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub hosted a WOW awareness workshop in Townsville. The workshop was attended by 23 government, non-government and community stakeholders. This included representatives from education, defence and community organisations.

Under the guidance of Ms Sinha the workshop was co-facilitated by:

- Aalden Pennington (SOLAS)
- Greg Latham (SOLAS)
- Melissa Freestun (Mental Health Coach North Queensland Region DET)
- Linda Shannon (Mental Health Coach Far North Queensland Region DET)
- Farvardin Daliri (Townsville Intercultural Centre).

Participants rated the workshop highly with 94 per cent strongly agreeing or agreeing that the objectives were clear and the facilitators had a thorough knowledge of their content; 82 per cent indicating that they intended to change their practice following the workshop; and 81 per cent making connections with people they intended to collaborate with in the future.

For further information about the Northern and Western Queensland Hub and WOW workshop please contact Solas at www.solas.org.au.

Department of Education and Training WOW Workshop

To support their student wellbeing strategic directions, DET convened a state-wide WOW workshop on 7 September in Brisbane. Thirty-six senior regional, central office and school personnel including school principals and senior guidance officers attended along with departmental leaders.

Under the guidance of Ms Sinha the workshop was co-facilitated by:

- Melissa Borzellega (Manager Student Wellbeing, DET)
- Jay Silver (Central Office Senior Guidance Officer DET)
- Greta Cooper (Central Office Mental Health Coach DET)
- Michael Hardie (Mental Health Coach Metropolitan Region DET)
- Marianne Eadie (Manager Safe and Supportive Schools DET).

Strengthening the links between the workshop and school business was suggested with 50 per cent of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that the objectives were clear. The potential to support and embed WOW concepts and activities in the curriculum was also revealed with 64 per cent indicating that they planned to change their practice following the workshop and 69 per cent indicating they had made connections with people they intend to collaborate with in the future.

Mental Wellbeing Impact Assessment

The second major component of the Capacity Building Project involves building knowledge and skills required at the planning and implementation levels. Mental Wellbeing Impact Assessment (MWIA) is a systematic approach to assessing how proposals, programmes, services, employers and projects can capitalise on opportunities to promote mental wellbeing, minimise risks to wellbeing and identify ways to measure success in achieving wellbeing. The MWIA uses Health Impact Assessment methods but focuses on the factors that are known to promote and protect mental wellbeing:

- a sense of **control** over one's life including having choices and skills
- communities that are capable and **resilient**
- opportunities to **participate**, for example in making decisions or through work
- being **included and connected**.

The MWIA toolkit, guidance and MWIA reports are available on the [Health Impact Assessment Gateway](#).

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MWIA Screening Training

On 5 September, 24 participants were trained to use the MWIA Screening Toolkit. This is an important desktop process which can assist organisations to make initial evidence based assessment of the impact of policies, programs and services on mental wellbeing. The workshop was designed to provide participants:

- knowledge of the model, stages and application of the MWIA toolkit
- understanding, experience and skills in applying the MWIA screening toolkit and writing an MWIA Screening report
- an ability to identify how they might apply the MWIA screening in their work.

Four trainees from each of the Regional Mental Health and Wellbeing Hubs along with four DET trainees and one CHRC trainee participated. Six policy advisors from Workplace Health and Safety, Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland, Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services and the Commission attended to observe the process and consider application of MWIA to Queensland Government priorities.

The trainees worked in small teams to prepare for three 'real life' screening practicals:

- Convened by the Logan and Southern Moreton Bay Islands Hub on 6 September, seven trainees applied the screening process with stakeholders to determine the mental health and wellbeing impact of the Logan Community Response to Domestic and Family Violence
- Convened by the Central Highlands Hub on 7 September in Emerald, five Hub and CHRC trainees applied the screening process with community stakeholders to determine the mental health and wellbeing impact involved with the current use of a community green space
- Convened by DET on 9 September, DET trainees applied the screening process with departmental stakeholders to determine the mental health and wellbeing impact on staff and school communities associated with establishing the mental health coach initiative.

Following the screening, all trainees received feedback from the Maudsley International consultant. Teams were required to submit a completed screening report within three weeks of completing the course. There is an expectation that trainees will independently undertake another screening within two months to consolidate learning.

Participants rated the workshop highly with 90 per cent of respondents reporting that the workshop objectives were clear; 89 per cent indicating that they intended to change their practice following the workshop and that the facilitator demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the content; and 79 per cent reporting they had made connection with people they intend to collaborate with in the future.

The contribution of local government to mental health and wellbeing

The valuable role of local government in improving and supporting mental health and wellbeing has been frequently highlighted throughout implementation of the Early Action Plan.

In collaboration with CHRC and the Central Highlands Hub, a Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Forum was held on 7 September in Emerald and attended by 62 community representatives. The forum was opened by CHRC Mayor Kerry Hayes followed by a welcome from the Mental Health Commissioner. Mr Coggins delivered a presentation on improving mental health and wellbeing and a short panel session presented the perspectives of Primary Health Networks, Hospital and Health Services, Central Highlands Hub and Ed-LinQ Cross sectoral Workforce Development Program on the importance of mental health and wellbeing to their respective roles. The Central Highlands Hub facilitated a session enabling participants to undertake practical activities relating to each of the elements of the WOW.

The following day on 8 September the CHRC convened 27 representatives including those from neighbouring Councils of Gladstone, Isaac, and North Burnett for a conversation about the

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role of local government. Mayor Hayes opened the proceedings, confirming his Council's strong commitment and demonstrated track record in community engagement.

The Mental Health Commissioner provided an overview of the Queensland Government's policy priorities with a focus on mental health and wellbeing and suicide prevention. The Commissioner described how the Regional Mental Health and Wellbeing Hubs Initiative was a response to the clear message that communities are well placed to identify and support local solutions if they are equipped to do so. In this respect the Central Highlands has been resourced through CentacareCQ as one of three backbone organisations across the State to work in partnership with all community leaders, services and members to identify and plan local approaches to supporting mental health and wellbeing across their regions.

The Commissioner also acknowledged the important partnership of CHRC in contributing to the Hubs Initiative so far, as evidenced by the three-day program of mental health and wellbeing events taking place as part of the Maudsley International visit. The Commissioner advised participants of the planned review of the *Queensland Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol Strategic Plan 2014-2019* and associated Action Plans and her interest in hearing what else could be done to support mental health and wellbeing in regional Queensland.

Mr Coggins presented on improving mental health and wellbeing and the WOW framework before a more in-depth presentation on MWIA. Small groups were assisted in applying the MWIA checklist in considering the mental health and wellbeing impact of the downturn in the resources sector.

Participants were invited to reflect on the role of the local government in supporting and improving mental health and wellbeing. Discussion acknowledged that whilst the focus in council business on physical safety is important, greater focus on mental health and wellbeing is necessary and beneficial. Involving the CHRC

Community Reference Groups for their views was identified as a tangible next step to maintain momentum from the day.

Representatives from the other Councils present confirmed the benefit of the conversation in shaping their thinking about potential ways forward in their regions. This included consideration of the Community Reference Group infrastructure as a valuable mechanism for community engagement and delivery of actions.

The value of WOW and MWIA frameworks was acknowledged for supporting holistic responses to community needs and the importance of connecting and integrating the various areas of Council business. The value of MWIA for internal staff wellbeing was also identified.

In closing, Mayor Hayes reflected on the strong alignment of the MWIA process to strategies for improving liveability of communities and its value for ensuring all important elements are given appropriate consideration.

Conclusion and next steps

The second phase of the Capacity Building Project was designed to upskill selected community and government stakeholders as a strategy to expand engagement, awareness and ultimately knowledge and capacity for improved mental health and wellbeing.

Deliverables include:

- 24 community, non-government and government personnel equipped with a depth of knowledge of the WOW theory and practice to integrate in their roles and service delivery and accredited to formally deliver the WOW introductory workshops
- 172 community, non-government and government personnel across the State participating in a WOW awareness session
- 16 community, non-government and government personnel trained in the MWIA screening process
- expanded engagement and reach of cross sectoral action for improving mental health and wellbeing across sectors and regional

areas of Queensland, including DET and regional councils.

The third phase of the Capacity Building Project is provisionally scheduled to occur in early 2017. The aim of this phase will be to further build on the achievements so far including supporting the Regional Mental Health and Wellbeing Hubs and DET trainees.

In addition, continuing the conversations with local government and key State government agencies regarding their role in supporting good mental health and wellbeing in Queensland will be a priority.

An area of emerging focus is the use of WOW in promoting and supporting the mental health and wellbeing of people with a lived experience of mental illness. There is growing interest and innovative application of WOW in recovery-oriented approaches in Queensland and elsewhere. Relevant stakeholders will be engaged to explore and exchange promising practice approaches.

The Commission would like to thank the following for their assistance in organising and promoting the schedule of activities involved in Capacity Building Project phase two in Brisbane, Logan, Emerald and Townsville:

- Central Highlands Regional Council and CentacareCQ
- Relationships Australia Queensland
- Solas and Mental Illness Fellowship North Queensland
- Department of Education and Training.

Further information

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