

Media statement

5 February 2016

Commission saddles up for Mustering Wellness campaign

Drought-stricken Queensland farming families will benefit from a \$50,000 boost to mental health and wellbeing information in remote areas.

The Queensland Mental Health Commission today confirmed a grant towards the *Mustering Wellness* campaign and website, offering a greatly expanded platform for information, community connection, service access and activities.

Centacare Cairns has partnered with the Gulf Cattleman's Association to deliver the wellness project that will provide direct and confidential information to farming families and communities hard-hit by drought.

With more than 80 percent of Queensland still drought declared, the *Mustering Wellness* campaign and online platform provides a lifeline to reach remote individuals and those often hesitant to seek help.

Queensland Mental Health Commissioner Dr Lesley van Schoubroeck said the joint Centacare/GCA campaign, with support from local government and other agencies, would provide a family and community approach to understanding the importance and impact of mental wellbeing.

"It has the potential to change the lives of people struggling to cope, particularly during drought," Dr van Schoubroeck said.

"The Commission is pleased to support this program as research points to rural communities experiencing lower wellbeing, accompanied by higher suicide rates.

"Communities in all parts of Queensland deserve access to information and ways to improve their mental health and wellbeing.

"The best way to learn about the needs of farming communities is from the community members themselves. This is why *Mustering Wellness* can have a significant impact."

The QMHC funding will contribute to better and more information about mental health and wellbeing including tailored information for men, women and children living in remote farming communities.

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