

4 March 2016

Brisbane to host significant mental health event

Some of the world's most progressive and influential mental health thought leaders will arrive in Brisbane to participate in the 12th Biennial Asia Pacific (AsPac) International Mental Health Conference on 24 - 26 of October 2016.

AsPac is widely acknowledged as the region's most significant mental health forum and has emerged over two decades as a key platform to challenge conventional thinking through inclusive dialogue, debate and cross-cultural learnings.

Hosted by RFQ under the auspices of the Richmond Fellowship Asia Pacific Forum and in partnership with the Queensland Mental Health Commission, the event returns to its inaugural location of Brisbane with a focus on the theme, **Recovered Futures: People, Practice, Partnerships, Policy.**

Queensland Mental Health Commissioner, Dr Lesley van Schoubroeck, said the event is an important opportunity for the Queensland mental health sector to showcase its advances in reform and best practice, and learn from experiences elsewhere.

"Significant conferences such as this enhance our collective knowledge of what works, and supports our drive towards innovative, recovery-oriented programs and services," Dr van Schoubroeck said.

Mr Kingsley Bedwell, Chief Executive of RFQ, a leading provider of psychosocial mental health recovery services in Queensland, said forums such as AsPac provide a wonderful opportunity to review and challenge service systems and practices to ensure services do benefit people and families.

"The AsPac event ethos is to inspire hope for the future and work hand-in-hand across the service system with the person in recovery at the centre.

"The conference brings together leaders across the mental health and related sectors where mental health has an impact. The forum engages with people in recovery, families, researchers and policy makers in an inclusive approach," he said.

Headlining the 2016 event is internationally reputed US Psychiatrist Dr Daniel Fisher, who through his experience of a diagnosis of schizophrenia developed the Empowerment Model of Recovery and the PACE/Recovery program that helped shift the US mental health system to a recovery orientation.

Another reputable keynote speaker is Dr Manaan Kar Ray, a UK psychiatrist who is joint lead for PROMISE, a framework transforming the nature of day to day interactions at the frontline.

Registrations are now open with an invitation for abstract submissions that explore the conference themes from the perspective of people with lived experience, clinical and rehabilitation services, primary health and human services, research and evaluation, public and social policy and workplace wellbeing initiatives.

“The conference theme brings together the concepts of wellness, hope and empowerment to enable people to reclaim their lives and futures.

“We are looking to incorporate a broad spectrum of knowledge, insights and perspectives to provide a depth of thinking that can influence change,” Mr Bedwell continued.

“AsPac provides an opportunity for Queensland to lead progressive thinking and improvement of recovery services for people.”

Dr van Schoubroeck said the Commission was proud to be a partner in the AsPac Conference.

“Mr Bedwell has been a great supporter in the establishment of the Commission through his role on the Queensland Mental Health and Drug Advisory Council and I look forward to continuing to work with him on this exciting opportunity.”

The AsPac conference program and speakers will be released in September. Abstract submissions close on 4 July 2016.

Visit www.aspacmentalhealth16.com.au for more information.

ENDS

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About RFQ

RFQ is a well respected not for profit company and leading provider of psychosocial mental health recovery services, serving the community for 40 years. Richmond Fellowship was founded in Richmond, England, in 1959 and became a worldwide mental health movement. RFQ is a member of the Richmond Fellowship Asia Pacific Forum and Richmond Fellowship Australia (RFA).

RFQ builds on its traditional values and strong mission focus with progressive thinking, advanced research and best practice service delivery. RFQ is committed to influential and lifelong learning and is proud of its relationships with six universities.

About Richmond Fellowship Asia Pacific Forum

The Richmond Fellowship Asia Pacific (AsPac) Forum was established in 1994 at the inaugural Asia Pacific Conference in Brisbane. The Forum consists of independent sister organisations throughout the region in India, Hong Kong, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Macau, New Zealand, Western Australia, Tasmania, Australian Capital Territory and Queensland. A key purpose of the Forum is to auspice the Asia Pacific International Mental Health Conference where members take turns to host the conference.

Recent conferences have been held in Sri Lanka (2014), Western Australia (2012), Tasmania (2010) and India (2008).

About QMHC

The Queensland Mental Health Commission is a statutory body established to improve the mental health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders by driving ongoing reform.