

Media statement

22 July 2016

Grants for mental health and wellbeing open

Locally-led, collaborative initiatives that seek to improve the mental health and wellbeing of Queenslanders will be supported with grants of up to \$50,000 from the Queensland Mental Health Commission.

More than \$1.48 million has already been provided to community and local government organisations to support 60 projects in more than 50 locations across the State as part of the *Stronger Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Grants Program* in the 2014-15 and 2015-16 financial years.

In 2016-17 a further \$500,000 in grant funding will be available through individual grants of up to \$50,000.

Initiatives that are successful in receiving a grant will seek to achieve at least one of the following:

- support social inclusion for those experiencing mental illness, mental health problems and problems related to alcohol and other drug use by fostering opportunities and removing barriers for individuals and groups to develop and maintain supportive relationships and a sense of community connection and connections to others
- support community participation by providing opportunities and removing barriers to undertaking activities which are meaningful, engaging and which enhance feelings of confidence and self-worth
- improve the physical health of people living with mental illness through integrated, evidence-based community programs

Queensland Mental Health Commissioner Dr Lesley van Schoubroeck said the 2016-17 grants would support innovative, locally-led and collaborative initiatives.

“I want to particularly encourage organisations and local councils in rural and remote areas of Queensland to apply for funding,” she said.

“We believe local councils are well placed to take a lead role in supporting mental health and wellbeing and would like to see more partnerships at this level with community organisations.”

The grants program will focus on the needs of vulnerable groups including:

- people living in rural and remote Queensland
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- people who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or Intersex (LGBTI)
- other groups who are at risk of marginalisation (for example, older people).

Dr van Schoubroeck said emphasis would be placed on supporting initiatives that address physical as well as mental health and wellbeing.

“We know that people living with mental illness have a reduced life expectancy from preventable illnesses such as cardiovascular disease, cancer and diabetes,” she said.

“Improving the physical health of people with a mental illness is vital to increasing life expectancy and improving quality of life.”

The Grants Program is open to incorporated bodies including non-government organisations, local government and companies.

Previous initiatives funded through the program have included:

- Recruitment, training and support for volunteers to partner people living with mental illness
- A mentoring program to support people with eating disorders
- Establishment of a speakers bureau for people with lived experience of mental illness
- A local government program with activities targeted at young people and providing a focus on wellbeing, resilience and stress management
- Wheel-of-Wellbeing training to front line staff and community members.

Applications close on 31 August 2016 and will be announced during Queensland Mental Health Week 9-15 October.

Further information and application packs are available at www.qmhc.qld.gov.au

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About QMHC: The Queensland Mental Health Commission was established to improve the mental health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders by driving ongoing reform.