



Mental Health Week ACT 2017

Coordinated by:
Mental Health Community Coalition ACT

Mental Health Week Awards 2017

Winners Announced

Release date: Tuesday 10 October 2017

This World Mental Health Day 2017, the efforts and achievements of outstanding individuals and programs in the ACT focused on improving the mental health of Canberrans have been recognised at the annual Mental Health Week Awards.

“Today’s award recipients are a representation of the level of commitment to mental health issues, mental health promotion and innovative support approaches that exist within the ACT”, said MHCC ACT Executive Officer, Simon Viereck.

Genevieve Jacobs, host of ABC’s Mornings Program, delivered the opening address and stressed the need for people to talk openly about mental health issues to break down stigma. Genevieve highlighted the shortage of clinicians and psychiatrists in Canberra, saying that people need ways other than threatening self-harm or suicide to get a ‘foot in the door’ of preventative or early-intervention treatment programs.

This year’s awards attracted nominations from public, private, community and not-for-profit sectors.

Fox Fromholz, recipient of the 2017 Volunteer of the Year Award, is a passionate advocate for the young LGBTIQ+ community in Canberra and has been instrumental in setting up the *Youth Ambassadors Program* at Headspace Canberra. Fox teaches educational workshops to improve the mental health of school students in the ACT and set up an initiative that sees provision of hygiene disposal services to homeless women and teens in Canberra.

Joanne Smith, the Coordinator of the Detention Exit Community Outreach (DECO) program at Wellways, is the recipient of the 2017 Reciprocity Award. DECO provides support and assistance to people in the justice system experiencing mental illness to reintegrate back into the community. Joanne’s work has seen the program expand to double its previous size over 3 years and has significantly reduced recidivism rates among program participants.



Mental Health Week ACT 2017

Coordinated by:
Mental Health Community Coalition ACT

Other award recipients include:

- ❖ Sophie Hope: a passionate and dedicated volunteer at *Headspace Canberra*, *Lifeline* and the *Youth Coalition*; current advisor to the Minister on the Youth Advisory Council to the ACT Government; and prominent advocate for better suicide prevention strategies especially for young men; and
- ❖ The *School Youth Health Nurse (SYHN)* program, an ACT Health and ACT Education Directorate initiative providing psychosocial support to young people struggling with mental health issues including anxiety, depression, suicide, bullying and family violence in schools.

The official awards ceremony took place at 2:00 pm on Tuesday 10 October at the ACT Legislative Assembly.

The awards are just one event taking place in the ACT throughout Mental Health Month. The Mental Health Month event calendar features 24 events funded by the ACT Government's Mental Health Week Grants Program, administered by the Mental Health Community Coalition ACT (MHCC ACT). The calendar is put together by MHCC ACT and is available at mentalhealthweekact.org/calendar.

Media Contact: Emily Roser, 02 6249 7756, emily.rosier@mhccact.org.au

Alternative: Simon Viereck, simon.viereck@mhccact.org.au