



⚠️ CEO Snapshot ⚠️ MHCC ACT Update ⚠️ Sector Highlights ⚠️



Dear Sector Partners,

It's been an eventful time in the community sector as the ACT Government has **delivered on** a number of **election promises, budget announcements** are coming out, and we start to wrap up the current stage of **commissioning**. It is also the time where we start wrapping up activities for the current financial year and start preparing for the next. Generally, June can be an unsettling time, and it is poignant to be reminded that we

need to take care of ourselves and our colleagues now and always.

While I've only been in this hot seat for a few months, I bring over twenty years of community sector leadership and knowledge to the table and have hit the ground running to advocate for our sector and have pulled together an extraordinary team who I look forward to introducing in due time.

Firstly, reflecting on observations made in recent months there are a number of current and emerging sector issues on my mind, some of which include mounting pressures from **ongoing NDIS reform delays** that impact eligibility, levels of support, service continuity, and overall viability, particularly for consumers with psychosocial disabilities.

It is evident that disagreements on funding and implementation of foundational supports have **delayed access** for people not eligible under the NDIS, increasing demand on non-NDIS services. As access to NDIS-funded services decreases, more **people with complex needs** are presenting to services that are already at **capacity** or **not designed** for acute or enduring mental illness.

Workforce shortages, especially in peer roles without appropriate frameworks, are **compounding stress** across the sector. Increased demand, combined with workforce attrition and retention challenges, are leading to delays, burnout, and limited early intervention.

Changes in Ministers, Directorate structures, Bureaucrats and a focus on **commissioning** is not helping and has resulted in a sense of stalling rather than progress.

While we will always have challenges, we also want to acknowledge the **many wins and**

incredible hard work of our sector in recent months.

I'd like to take a moment to **cast a spotlight** on some **positive news** that you may have missed.

☀️ **The ACT Government** committed a **\$10 million funding boost over two years** (2025-26 and 2026-27) for eligible community services sector partners. Over 150 organisations are eligible to receive part of this funding boost. To qualify, organisations must be providing services under multi-year funding agreements with ACT Government that receive Community Sector Indexation (CSI).

☀️ **The ACT Government** through the Minister for Mental Health is making a **\$9.4 million investment** into child and youth mental health services. Delivering on an election commitment that ensures stability for core building blocks of an effective mental health service system for children, young people and families.

☀️ **In May, Mental Health Australia** and all state and territory mental health peak bodies incl; MHCC ACT wrote to all Health and Mental Health Ministers encouraging **decisive action** on investment in **psychosocial support** outside the NDIS to meet need. View the letter [here](#).

☀️ **New Bulk Billing Doctor for Young People** - headspace Canberra has a bulk billing (FREE) doctor available for young people aged 12-25. If you work with a young person who has concerns around their physical, mental, or sexual health they can book in to see Dr Ron at headspace Canberra. To book call 02 6113 5700

☀️ **ACT Youth Trauma Service Grant** is open, visit ACT Gov Grant page or email the Youth at Risk Project team at youthatriskproject@act.gov.au for more info

MHCC ACT Team Update



✨ In recent months we have welcomed our newest staff member Jess Whaler (because one Jess is never enough), who joins us as our Member Engagement Specialist. You can find out more about Jess and our other amazing staff members on our [website](#).

✨ We have reinvigorated our regular leadership group for our members, the aptly named Think Tank holds monthly sessions for sector executives where we cover prickly issues and share in a knowledge exchange focussed on strengthening our sector. This project is run by Jess W.

✨ ATODA Bus Tours have been popular, Jess T has been busy selling out tickets in advance. If you would like to learn more about other services in the Community Sector, visit our website and register interest at admin@mhccact.org.au.

✨ Smera and our wonderful trainers have delivered 11 sessions of Connecting with People. Next sessions will be in August and will be announced soon, in the meantime we recommend selecting 2-3 Compassion champions from your organisation to attend and keep your eyes peeled.

✨ We have started collaborating with Mental Health Consumers Network and Carers ACT to plan out what Mental Health Month might look like this year, Jess W is taking the lead on this, stay tuned for more info.

✨ We have been listening to the sector on the Commissioning Strategic Investment Plan and providing input into the deliberations of the Minister and Directorate. We have clearly heard and provided feedback that there is a lack of clarity on what is being purchased, a lack of consideration as to the best type of procurement process to meet the desired reform principles, the need for more time to consider the complexity and the changes in the sector landscape over the past 2 years.

We recommend:

🔗 **Spaces to Grow:** a community-wide report about Peer Workers in the ACT. It looks at how peer work is used in mental health and related services and was created by Peer Workers and the ACT Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing. It shares what is working well, what is not, and what we need to do to build a strong and safe peer workforce in the ACT, check it out [here](#).

🔗 **Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Association ACT (ATODA)** have shared their submission for The Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services (OICS), Healthy Prison Review of the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC). View the submission [here](#).

🔗 **University of Sydney's survey:** "What people think about changes and proposed reforms to the NDIS for people with mental health support needs?" To take part in this study or find out more info visit [this website](#)



Job Vacancy: ANU is seeking a Counsellor, view the advertisement - [Counsellor - Canberra / ACT, ACT, Australia](#)

Upskill: Health Care Consumers Association have just released a "Self-Advocacy in Healthcare" training module, you can access for free [here](#)



A big shout out to our wonderful trainers Regan from YWCA and Ananya who also works with MIE ACT!



We recognise that Reconciliation Week took place in May, during this period we reflected on the importance of acknowledging the past, fostering understanding, and building respectful relationships.

Sorry Day also served as a poignant reminder of the journey toward healing and reconciliation, we pay our respect to those impacted by government policies that have led to the separation of families and loss of culture, we pay our respect to the Stolen Generations.

As we settle into our winter warmers this June, we hope that you stay warm and continue to fight the good fight.

Yaluu! (Farewell in Gamilaraay)

Our mailing address

Lvl 1, 20 Genge St, Canberra City, ACT 2601

Acknowledgement of Country

MHCC ACT acknowledges all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Custodians and Country and recognises their continuing connection to land, sea, culture and community. We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present.



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