Introducing the Mental Health Commission of New South Wales

John Feneley
Commissioner
July 2013
NSW Mental Health Commission

- Established as a statutory body - July 2012
- Inaugural Commissioner appointed from 1 August 2012
- Based at Gladesville Hospital in Sydney
- One Commissioner and one or more Deputy Commissioners – at least one of whom must be a person who has or has had a mental illness
Deputy Commissioners

Four Deputy Commissioners appointed March 2013

- Professor Alan Rosen
- Fay Jackson
- Bradley Foxlewin
- Dr Robyn Shields
Community Advisory Council

- Appointment of the Community Advisory Council in March 2013
- The Advisory Council consists of the Commissioner and fifteen other members and is representative of the diversity of NSW community
- Its function is to advise the Commission on any mental health issue it considers appropriate or that is referred to it by the Commission
Mental Health Commission Act 2012

- Outlines the composition, objectives and functions of the Commission
- Primary objective is to monitor, review and improve the mental health system and the mental health and well-being of the people of NSW
- The Commission is subject to the direction and control of the Minister except in relation to the preparation and content of draft strategic plan or other report.
Principles governing the Commission’s work

- Access to best possible mental health care and support
- Treated with respect and dignity
- Supportive system enabling full community participation and meaningful lives
- Shared responsibility of government and non government sectors
- Co-ordination and integration with good communication and collaboration
Functions of the Commission

- Prepare a draft strategic plan
- Monitor and report on its implementation
- Review, evaluate, report and advise on services and programs
- Promote and facilitate the sharing of knowledge and ideas
- Undertake and commission research, innovation and policy development
Functions of the Commission

- Advocate for and promote: prevention of mental illness; early intervention strategies; general health and well-being
- Educate the community about mental health issues to reduce stigma and discrimination
- Other functions as prescribed by regulations
Considerations

- Focus on systemic issues
- Take into account co-morbid issues such as drugs, alcohol and disabilities
- The interaction between mental health and the criminal justice system
- Consult with whole of government and whole of community including families and carers
- Be representative and inclusive of NSW diversity including regional and remote communities
Commission’s frame of reference

- Powerful mandate from the community
- Independent, transparent and accountable
- A champion for person centered mental health reform
- Transforming the system focus from hospital to community
Key System Issues

- Shared Commonwealth and State responsibility
- National Disability Insurance Scheme
- ABF
- Medicare Locals and LHDs
Key System Issues

- Public perception of health system being the public hospital system
- Recruiting, supporting and retaining a skilled workforce including a Peer work force
- Good mental health and wellbeing is not just about health services
It’s about the Individual

- Prevention and Early Intervention
- Recovery focus
- True engagement of consumers, carers and families in treatment and service planning and delivery
- Physical as well as mental wellbeing
- Seclusion and Restraint
Progress on Strategic Plan

- Key principles
  - Whole person
  - Whole population
  - Whole system
  - Best use limited resources

- It's about building a strategy that supports people living working and thriving in the community
Progress on Strategic Plan

- **May**
  - Release of first issues paper
  - Consultation registration opens

- **June**
  - Consultations with key stakeholder agencies
  - Start of public consultation events, around key themes (e.g. parental and infant mental health, severe illness, mental health promotion)

- **July**
  - Release of second issues paper
  - Refinement of themes and universal issues (e.g. ATSI and CALD mental health, rural needs)
Tracking the Strategic Plan

- Register on our website www.nswmentalhealthcommission.com.au to participate in the process and receive e-mail updates