



Supporting Communities Forum

Role in Western Australia's Recovery

Meeting #3 – Young People Priority Framework

Tuesday 13 October | 9:00 – 10:00am | MS Teams

This report is a summary of the discussions and is not intended to be a verbatim record. The summary also includes comments and questions from the MS Teams chat room.

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Meeting #3 Theme | Young People Priority Framework |
| Date | Tuesday 13 October 2020 |
| Time | 9:00 – 10:00am |
| Location | MS Teams Meeting + option to attend in person at Level 4, Yonga meeting room, Dumas House, 2 Havelock St, West Perth |

Supporting Communities Forum Attendees

Co-Chairs

1. Ms Michelle Scott, Director, McCusker Centre for Citizenship
2. Ms Jodi Cant, Director General, Department of Finance

Members

1. Mr Dan Minchin, CEO, Chorus WA
2. Ms Louise Giolitto, CEO, WA Council of Social Services (WACOSS)
3. Mr Ross Wortham, CEO, Youth Affairs Council WA (YACWA)
4. Ms Felicite Black, CEO, Women's Health and Family Services
5. Ms Kate Chaney, Director, Innovation and Strategy, Anglicare WA
6. Ms Justine Colyer, CEO, Rise Network
7. Ms Emma Jarvis, CEO, Palmerston
8. Ms Kelda Oppermann, CEO, Zonta House Refuge Association
9. Ms Julie Waylen, State Manager, National Disability Services WA
10. Ms Melissa Perry, CEO, Communicare
11. Dr Adam Tomison, Director General, Department of Justice
12. Ms Jennifer McGrath, A/Commissioner, Mental Health Commission
13. Ms Michelle Andrews, Director General, Department of Communities

Member Apologies

1. Ms Lisa Rodgers, Director General, Department of Education
2. Dr David Russell-Weisz, Director General, Department of Health
3. Mr Duncan Ord, Director General, Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries
4. Dr Adam Tomison, Director General, Department of Justice
5. Ms Rebecca Brown, A/Director General, Department of the Premier and Cabinet
6. Ms Sharyn O'Neill, Commissioner, Public Sector Commission
7. Ms Kate George (Deputy Chair)
8. Ms Tricia Murray, CEO, Wanslea
9. Mr Denver D'Cruz, General Manager, Inclusion Solutions
10. Ms Maria Osman, Multicultural Advisory Group member
11. Ms Debra Zanella, CEO, Ruah Community Services

Invited Guests/ Presenters/ Observers

- Kim Lazenby, Head of Systems Development, Mental Health Commission
- Emma May, MHC (Observer/Scribe)
- John Brearley, MHC (Observer/Scribe)

Introduction

- Both the Western Australian Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Services Plan 2015 – 2025, and the Commissioner for Children and Young People’s (CCYP) ‘Our Children Can’t Wait’ report from 2015, highlighted the need to improve services available to support young people with mental health and/or alcohol and other drug issues. Young People are identified as a priority cohort in the [WA State Priorities Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs 2020 – 2024](#) document released by the Minister for Mental Health in March 2020.
- According to the [WA COVID-19 Recovery Framework](#) published by Youth Affairs Council of WA (YACWA) in August 2020, mental health is the issue of greatest concern to young Western Australians, with 88% of all survey respondents saying they were concerned about their mental health.
- In response to growing community concerns and expectations of urgent action, the Mental Health Commission (MHC) is developing a Framework to guide the mental health and alcohol and other drug sector, and State Government agencies, in supporting and responding to the mental health and alcohol and other drug needs of young people aged 12 to 24 years. This Framework will inform the development of new initiatives for investment and consideration by Government and new ways of working across existing services to achieve better outcomes for young people.
- The Framework will build on existing knowledge, modelling and reports, primarily through consulting widely with young people and their families and carers, clinicians, service providers and all other relevant stakeholders and seeking to update data wherever possible.
- The Framework aims to address the whole mental health and alcohol and other drug service system from prevention and early intervention, through to more acute treatment within the hospital setting. This includes considering the primary care setting and services for young people.
- There is a considerable body of knowledge from a wide range of reviews, surveys and reports that highlight gaps in the system and suggested solutions to improve the mental health and wellbeing of young people. The MHC will use this body of knowledge as a base for a brief but comprehensive period of stakeholder engagement to gain a consistent, clear and current understanding of the issues and gaps and prioritise suggested responses.
- The Mental Health Executive Committee (MHEC) and Community Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Council (CMC) will form part of the governance structure for this project to deliver the Framework. A Directors General Steering Committee and an associated senior officers working group have been established as the mechanism for engagement with Government agencies which are not represented on the MHEC and CMC.
- Youth Affairs Council of WA (YACWA) will undertake the direct engagement of young people and their carers and NOUS will facilitate four workshops for other stakeholders from 12-15 October 2020.
- The **Young People Priority Framework** is planned to be completed and released by the end of 2020. More detailed implementation planning for the Framework will be ongoing during the life of the Framework, with any new services to be developed being co-designed with people with lived experience.

Feedback on development of the Young People Priority Framework

- MHC will be considering the needs of children under 12 years in 2021. The final Young People Priority Framework will have a narrative on children under 12 years and the work planned for 2021.
- YACWA will undertake the direct engagement of young people and their carers to learn about their experiences, challenges and how services can be designed to respond to their needs. Consultation has occurred with over 70 young people with a target of 100 expected to be completed by end of October 2020.
- YACWA shared key insights from work undertaken through direct engagement with young people. Accessibility to services (clearly demand is not fully met); parenting and early intervention services is a key requirement; and there is a high need for skill training and development.
- Mental Health issues is a real challenge for children in the regional and remote areas.

Input and advice provided by members to key questions include:

For Question 1 – How might we intervene early and prevent young people from entering the mental health, alcohol and other drug service system?

- One of the systemic issues is on how we ‘value’ prevention and early intervention, and promote the benefits of investing in the mental health, alcohol and other drug service system.
- Members agree that early intervention needs to look at how we as a State are ensuring great early childhood experiences, great parenting, pro-social activities and positive transitions through school.
- It is important to support children and families early from the moment of conception. There has been a huge gap in tailored support for young people who have experienced or been exposed to and/or perpetrated by family and domestic violence. Further mental health support is needed for young people in the youth justice system.
- It is important to look at the entire trajectory when looking at early intervention and prevention of young people from entering mental health, alcohol and other drug service system.

For Question 2 – How might we improve the availability and accessibility of mental health and AOD treatment and supports for young people that meet their needs in the right setting?

- Mental health and AOD treatment and support for young people should be culturally specific.
- It is important to look at regional need and how to respond to such regional needs. For example, in the Peel region, there is an increase in the use of alcohol and other drugs due to COVID-19. Further due to COVID-19 and lack of employment opportunities, young people are increasing their use of alcohol and other drugs.
- MHC is accessing qualitative data from a number of sources including data from the Commissioner for Children and Young People (CCYP) report, from clinicians and general practitioner, survey by YACWA, Department of Education, and from advocacy groups such as WA Networks of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies (WANADA) and Western Australian Association for Mental Health (WAAMH).
- Members suggested asking young people directly for best sources of data, e.g. for data on number of suicide attempts, self-harm and information on different indicators of stress and anxiety experienced by young people.

For Question 3 – How might we ensure that the diverse needs of young people are recognised and met and improve the experiences of all young people accessing mental health and AOD treatment and supports, regardless of race, religion, culture, gender identity or social circumstances.

- It is important to examine the needs of different groups of young people to make sure their needs are met. These groups, also include young people with disability, young people from CALD and multicultural communities.
- MHC is doing a lot of work to connect with people with disability as well as with communities from diverse backgrounds and cultures. MHC will meet with the Multicultural Advisory Group in November for their input and advice on the Young People Priority Framework, and to hear the views of people representing the Muslim, Arab, Chinese, Indian and other communities.
- Young people face racism, discrimination based on their cultural background, which must be addressed. Additionally, exclusion takes places based on regional and digital divide. There is a need to tackle inclusion from all angles.
- Children and young people in detention need to be considered.
- Schools are a huge part of the solution. More support and education on mental health should be delivered in schools.

For Question 4 – How might we improve the integration, and coordination of services within the mental health and AOD services system for young people?

- Conditions need to be created that bring down barriers to communications, and encourage/ empower people to collaborate in a culturally responsive and secure manner.
- Integrating services is very complex to do. However, making it all in one place helps to simplify things. There is a need for capacity in the system to curate it.
- A lot of services have a lot of restriction. There is a need to ensure that mental health and AOD services are inclusive and accessible to all young people.
- One pathway into work for younger people is via volunteering. Chorus is keen to support the Department of Communities three-year program “Volunteering as a Pathway to Youth Employment”, in any way by offering volunteering services for example in gardening, kitchen and/or food delivery services.
- Increasing the leaving care age from 18 to 21 would make a big difference to the mental health of young people leaving out of home care.
- We need to make sure we include capacity building for ‘frontline’ support services including youth justice, child protection, schools, refugees etc. Consideration needs to be given to minimum standards and leading practice for responses including for therapeutic approaches.
- Impact of trauma also needs to be considered. In the services provided, often symptoms are addressed and not the causes. WAAMH should be able to assist.
- The ‘Collaboration Report’ produced by the previous SCF 2081 – 2019 is a useful resource to refer to. The report includes 32 collaborative exemplar case studies with themes being fairly consistent including the important of trust between parties and challenges of change management. The report suggests practical tools, strategies and 10 recommendations to support behavioural change and improve collaboration and effectiveness.

ACTION 1: SCF secretariat to share the previous SCF’s ‘Collaboration Report’ with MHC.

ACTION 2: SCF secretariat to share feedback from members to MHC to inform development of the Young People Priority Framework.