

Project Communiqué

Issue 1 – September 2011



A key action of the *Fourth National Mental Health Plan* (the Fourth Plan) endorsed by all governments, is:

...the development of a national service planning framework that establishes targets for the mix and level of the full range of mental health services, backed by innovative funding models.

The National Mental Health Service Planning Framework (NMHSPF) Project is a 2 year (2011 to 2013) national project that will progress this key action. The NMHSPF Project will be co-jointly led by NSW and Queensland Health, using funds provided by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.

Project Charter

Governance of the project will be guided by its 'Charter' which, among other things, outlines the NMHSPF project goals and objectives, scope, deliverables, governance and organisation.

Project Management

The project will be supported through an Executive Group, made up of senior (Director level) mental health representatives from all Australian jurisdictions; a Modelling Group; and three Expert Working Groups as follows:

- Primary Care / Community / Non Hospital Expert Working Group;
- Psychiatric Disability Support, Rehabilitation and Recovery Expert Working Group; and
- Inpatient/ Hospital Based Service Expert Working Group.

Members of the Groups will be experts and leaders in mental health, and will provide the clinical and expert advice required to deliver a National Mental Health Planning Framework.

A National Framework

Extensive modelling work will be done at a national level, building on the established NSW Mental Health Clinical Care and Prevention model and additional service modelling work done in Queensland. The NMHSPF will have the following characteristics:

1. **Nationally Consistent** - The NMHSPF will provide an 'Australian average' estimate of need, demand and resources for the range of agreed mental health services required across the lifespan and across the continuum of care from prevention to tertiary treatment;
2. **Flexible and Portable** - The Framework will be flexible to jurisdictional adaptation, and will be presented in a user friendly format. However, some technical aspects cannot be altered or the validity of the product will be compromised;
3. **Not all, but many** - To ensure national viability, the Framework will not account for every circumstance or service possibly required by an individual or group, but will allow for more detailed understanding of need for mental health service across a range of service environments;
4. **Not who, but what** – The NMHSPF will capture the types of care required, but will not define who is best placed to deliver the care. Decisions about service provision will remain the responsibility of each State/Territory and the Commonwealth; and
5. **Evidence & Expertise** - The Framework will be based on contemporary mental health practice through the use of epidemiological data and through working with key stakeholders with diverse expertise to develop the technical, clinical and social support mechanisms that will form the content of the Framework.

Where is the Project Up to?

The NMHSPF Project commenced in July 2011 and preliminary project activity is underway. The first meeting of the NMHSPF Executive Group was held on 20 September 2011 to consider the Project Charter and other fundamental aspects of the Project. Other items discussed including the Project's objectives, governance, communications, deliverables and meeting cycles.

What can we expect in the next 6 months?

The NMHSPF Project Team is currently developing a jurisdictional survey to map the range of services provided in jurisdictions. The objective of this exercise is to collate the jurisdictional services to develop a national service framework that is inclusive of all the main elements of Australia's mental health service system.

Once the range of services currently available is described, consideration will then be given to services that are not yet represented in the model but may need to be considered.

At the end of this process, a nationally agreed comprehensive service framework will be established from which the next task of modelling care packages can be performed. This Framework will provide the foundation for the work undertaken by the Modelling Group and Expert Working Groups.

How can I keep up to date?

Due to the complexity of the Project structure, the NMHSPF Project Team is the primary communication point for the Project. All enquiries regarding the Project can be directed in writing to:

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Alternatively, biannual Project Communiqués and other project material will be made available on the Mental Health Standing Committee website at www.health.gov.au/mhsc for general public access.



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Mental Health Service Planning Framework