



Arafmi News

The Newsletter of
Mental Health Carers
Arafmi Queensland Inc

Providing support for carers,
 families and friends of people
 with mental health issues.

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Queensland Mental Health Commission (QMHC)

On Monday January 30, the Premier Anna Bligh received the First Report of the Queensland Mental Health Commission Advisory Committee, following extensive State-wide consultations held last year and early this year.

"This report sets out a blueprint to create a stronger and more responsive mental health system in Queensland," the Premier said.

"It contains 14 key recommendations to ensure the new Queensland Mental Health Commission can serve as a strong champion for people with a mental illness.

"The recommendations have been developed with input from people living with mental illness, and from service providers, clinicians, families and carers in all parts of Queensland."

The Premier said the new Queensland Mental Health Commission will:

- Be established as a stand-alone Department of the Queensland Government and manage a budget of about \$1 billion
- Perform all functions in relation to mental health, programs and services, including those provided in the community
- Include alcohol and drug treatments policy and planning,

formerly a separate unit within Queensland Health, as part of the responsibilities of the Commission

- Understand the people they seek to help with an advisory council for the commission which must include people who have suffered a mental illness and people who have experienced problem drug and alcohol use
- Help to ensure that those people experiencing mental illness are able to access services when they are a risk to themselves or others
- Promote social inclusion, tackle stigma and discrimination and raise public awareness and understanding
- Protect the rights of people in care

"The new Commission will provide strong leadership and advocacy to ensure that people with mental illness can access the services and supports they need.

"It will focus on streamlining the mental health and drug and alcohol service systems and continue the implementation of our three whole-of-government plans, namely the Queensland Plan for Mental Health, Supporting Recovery, the Mental Health Community Services Plan and the Queensland Drug Action Plan," the Premier said.



President's Piece....

Welcome to the February 2012 edition of *Arafmi News*.

Although we are well and truly into the New Year already; I'd like to wish you all a **Happy 2012** anyway. With Christmas and school holidays, it

has been a bit quiet over recent weeks but things have certainly been bubbling away under the surface.

As you can see by the front page article in this newsletter, things are moving ahead with the *Queensland Mental Health Commission* (QMHC). Shortly after receiving the first report on 30 January 2012, the Premier's office called for a second round of consultations.

There have been reports in the media of contention amongst mental health experts and those working in the industry with the major concern being there will be no new funding, that it will merely be a shift sideways and nothing will really change. Hopefully, once the data has been collated from the second lot of consultations, these concerns will be addressed or at least acknowledged for further discussion.

Having said that, I think with so many different organisations wanting their own needs met, the Commission is not going to be able to be all things to all people. As long as the Commission continues to listen to those directly affected by the issue of mental health, I think it should be considered a positive change by the Government.

With the Queensland state and local elections looming, unless a final decision is made before the Government enters caretaker mode (generally about 6 weeks before the election date) any firm decisions will be put on hold until after the result of the election is announced. (Should the current Government lose the election, the opposition has said it will also support the QMHC.)

Still on the subject of mental health commissions, I was curious to understand how the National Mental Health Commission (NMHC) would interact with the Queensland Mental Health Commission (QMHC) and that of the other states and territories. The following was taken from the NMHC's website:

"The work of Commonwealth, State and Territory agencies is varied and complex, and the design of the Commission is not intended to duplicate or take on this work of service delivery, data collection and program and policy implementation. The Commission was established to oversee Australia's mental health system and use this perspective to provide advice to Governments to inform policy directions. It will not be assuming responsibility for service provision or policy and program implementation."

I became aware of a very useful service called **Reunite Care Assist** late last year and thought it worth a mention.

The service is similar to the medical band service (eg. for diabetics or epileptics) where you register your details as the Primary Carer and those of the person you care for as the Care Recipient.

You are each issued with a Facecard or ICE bracelet (In Case of Emergency). These items then alert emergency services or medical staff of your situation (or that of the person you care for) and provide contact details for Reunite who can then take appropriate action for your circumstances.

The cost of the service starts from \$9.95 per annum for the Economy Package up to \$22.95 per annum for the Premium Plus Package.

For more information, visit www.reuniteservice.com.au

(We'll also post this link in the Information/Carer Links page of our website.)

Until next time, please take care, be safe and be kind to yourself.

Shoena McGonigle

*Focus on your potential
Instead of your limitations.*

Alan Loy McGinnis

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Research reveals the daily struggle with psychotic illness

A comprehensive study of thousands of people with psychotic illness provides compelling evidence of the need to provide more support and better co-ordinated community mental health services in Australia.

The *People Living with Psychotic Illness 2010* study, the largest of its kind ever undertaken in Australia, found that psychotic illness affects around one in every 200 Australians every year and that 90% of people affected report a deterioration in their ability to function in their daily life – be it cooking, cleaning, managing their finances or working.

“The report paints a pretty bleak picture for many people with psychotic illness who, despite treatment, continue to experience symptoms and ongoing disability. They also have much greater financial worries, homelessness, unemployment and loneliness, than the general population,” explains Barbara Hocking, Executive Director of SANE Australia, the national mental health charity which was an advisor to the study.

Focusing on clients of public mental health services, the study found that, despite being in treatment, four out of ten of the 64,000 adult Australians with a psychotic illness continue to experience delusions and a third currently experience hallucinations.

According to Ms Hocking this report, which follows a similar study conducted over a decade ago, provides some encouraging news with more people now experiencing periods of good recovery. In addition, hospital admissions for mental health reasons and involuntary admissions have both decreased by one-third.

“It’s a great concern however that there is a growing gap between the physical health of people with a psychotic illness and the rest of the population, with the finding that almost half of all Australians with a psychotic illness are obese, two-thirds smoke and over half have problems with alcohol and drug abuse and dependence.

“Particularly troubling is the finding that nearly a quarter of people with psychotic illness reported being lonely and one in eight had no friends at all. Social contact is important for all of us. It’s a cruel reality that mental illness so often leads to isolation,” Ms Hocking adds.

Around half of people with psychotic illness have attempted suicide at some time. This is over 10 times the rate in the general population.

Comments from participants highlight their struggle -

“I wish I didn’t have it but I do so I just have to deal with it. There is no magic wand that will make it go away”... “Acceptance is the hardest thing. Most people live in denial. Once you accept this, it

becomes easier.”...“It is hard some days. Sometimes it just makes you cry.”

“The study provides a sober reminder that there is still much more to be done to help people with psychotic illnesses live better lives,” says SANE’s Executive Director, who was an advisor on the study. Despite the hardship, three out of four people believed their circumstances would improve over the next year. As the authors of the study state, *“in the face of disability, disadvantage, stigma and social isolation, people with psychotic disorder display resilience and tenacity.”*

The study reveals changes in the delivery of mental health services since the previous survey in 1997-98, principally related to the ongoing, if uneven, shift from hospital to community-based care.

There have also been modest but real improvements including a halving of the number of people (with a mental illness) homeless in the last 12 months (from 13% in 1998 to 5%) and a 60% increase in the number of people using rehabilitation programs.

“There remains vast scope for improvement in physical and mental health services if we are to help people with these serious illnesses find somewhere decent to live, work to do and friends to share their lives with. In other words, live decent, meaningful lives.”

SANE Australia has identified several areas for action including:

- Wider education across the community to identify people who may be in need of assessment;
- More access to psycho-social rehabilitation/recovery programs to continue education and find employment;
- Focused assistance to help people manage and reduce symptoms and continued research to improve effectiveness of treatments;
- Regular focus on physical health including targeted quit-smoking resources;
- Simplify the system so people can connect with the support they need;
- More education and support to GPs treating people with psychotic illness;
- More public housing including supported accommodation.

“This is the challenge for all Australian Governments and there is certainly no room for complacency despite the recent and welcome Mental Health Reform package,” Ms Hocking concludes.

To view *People Living with Psychotic Illness – A SANE Response* go to www.sane.org



From the Carer Connect files

This is the fourth in a series of articles for Arafmi's Newsletter which give examples of the type of work I do in the Carer Connect Program.

***Myrtle is 84.** She cares for her ageing husband and her son who has schizophrenia. She has several physical health conditions.

She was referred to me by her son's caseworker, who felt she was struggling to cope with the enormity of her caring role at her advanced age.

Her son stays awake most nights, disturbed by hallucinations, and she sits with him to support him. He sees his doctor regularly and has fortnightly visits from his caseworker, but the voices persist.

I assisted her to apply for the Carer Allowance, but this was denied. She chose not to appeal this decision, so I looked at other ways I could assist to alleviate the burden of her caring role.

Neither her husband nor her son can drive very far these days, so she has to rely on public transport or taxis to get to her many medical appointments. She lives at the top of a very steep driveway at the top of a very steep hill.

I am now assisting her to apply for the half price taxi subsidy scheme by advocating to her doctors to write letters of support. I will continue to support her in any way I can.

Anna is 43. She lives with her husband, who has clinical depression, and their two children. They have been on the waiting list for housing for 11 years. In the 16 years they have been together, they have rented ten different houses. Each time the landlord decides to sell, they have to move again.

Recently the family was informed that their current home is to be sold. This instability is extremely detrimental to the husband's fragile mental health, and his weight has plummeted to a very dangerous level.

I wrote to the Department of Housing advocating for urgent approval of housing for the family, and received an almost immediate response – the family's needs are assessed at "high". I am assisting the family to appeal this decision to have the family's needs assessed at "very high" and to have this decision backdated to the date the medical reports were first delivered.

These two stories illustrate some of the practical ways that I can assist carers and make the job of caring a little easier.

Robyn O'Hare
Key Worker - Carer Connect

*Names have been changed

National Mental Health Commission

The Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, Mark Butler, launched Australia's first National Mental Health Commission on 23 January 2012.

The Commission is led by the Chair, Professor Allan Fels and eight Commissioners:

- Mr Peter Bicknell
- Ms Jackie Crowe
- Dr Pat Dudgeon
- Professor Ian Hickie AM
- Mr Rob Knowles AO
- Ms Janet Meagher AM
- Ms Samantha Mostyn
- Professor Ian Webster AO

The CEO of the Commission is Ms Robyn Kruk AM.

Speaking at the official launch in Sydney, Mr Butler said, "The Commission will put Australia's mental health services under the spotlight. It will bring much needed transparency to our system – it will give us insights into service gaps, where we need to do more and where services are working and working well."

"The new Commission will advocate for the needs of consumers and carers, which should be at the front and centre of policy making. We want to ensure these needs are given the priority they warrant by all levels of government.

"Governments need to do better in mental health. We hope to help them do that by more clearly identifying the gaps in the system.

"Our wide variety of relationships and our independence from the agencies that fund and deliver mental health services will give us a unique perspective from which to provide our public reports and advice," Professor Fels said.

For more information visit
www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au

A Story of Hope

In Wikipedia hope is defined as the emotional state, the opposite of which is despair, which promotes the belief in a positive outcome related to events and circumstances in one's life. It is the "feeling that what is wanted can be had or that events will turn out for the best" or the act of "looking forward to with desire and reasonable confidence" or "feeling that something desired may happen".

In terms of recovery from a mental illness research indicates hope is one of the things that supports recovery. Hope is a belief that change can happen. It focuses on today and tomorrow rather than yesterday. Hope means that we work with strengths rather than focusing on weaknesses.

It is the ability to believe that mental illness is not a permanent state and it need not control or decide one's future. It is to reach out to people who can be a holder of hope when one cannot hold their own hope. It is saying that people are entitled to their dreams and aspirations.

Following is a story of hope from one of our carers. Maybe you have one that you would like to share with us too. Please let us know.

I write this as a story of hope for families and friends who may have someone close to you who has been diagnosed with a mental health condition.

My son Strahan was diagnosed with a form of schizophrenia in his late teens, which led to many stays in hospital. As with many with similar conditions, he was reluctant to take medication which compounded his illness.

However, as Strahan has matured and with strong support from family and friends and excellent support from mental health staff, particularly in Victoria and at times in Queensland, he has recognised his condition and is now willing to take medication.

All this has led to Strahan living a fulfilling life in a country town in Victoria. His progress is such that he lives independently and works part-time in a small local business. He is often asked to do odd jobs in the area, like clearing land, gardening and working as a builder's labourer. He has become a bit of a handyman and has proved himself to be industrious and reliable.

He also acts as a mentor and assists in activities such as outdoor recreation for people with a mental health issue. In this role he has been to Philip Island for an excursion as well as participate in the Annual Murray River Marathon fundraiser.

Another one of his interests is the local Football Club where he is involved both as a player and an active supporter.

Along with all this he sits on mental health committees for government and non government organisations. Recently he was invited to be on a committee as a consumer representing his local area for a forum in Melbourne.

He is also taking courses that could eventually lead to other employment opportunities.

On a personal level, he has shown that he is not afraid to try new challenges as a big achievement for him was to go tandem sky jumping. He particularly enjoyed the adrenalin rush.

Strahan's future is bright, so for all out there, there can be hope with good support and health services.

David Anderson

Executive Committee

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| President | Shoena McGonigle |
| Vice-President | Claire Lees |
| Treasurer | Jean Platts |
| Secretary | Barbara Harvey |

Committee Members

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|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Fran Gallagher | Natasha Rodrigues |
| Deb Nizette | |

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|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Executive Officer | Marj Bloor |
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| Program Managers: | |
| Adina | Robyn Campbell |
| Coolibah | Debra Atkins |
| Jerendine | Mark Sullivan |
| Karinya | Deveena Singh |
| Kui | Sharon Gingell |
| The Hub | Glenda Cherrington |

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|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Financial Administrator | Genevieve Wells |
| Operations and Quality | Beryl Wogan |
| Systems Coordinator | Sandra Lennox |

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|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Carer Education Officer | Shidan Toloui-Wallace |
| Carer Support Worker | Ruth Hippisley |
| Key Worker-Carer Connect Administrator | Robyn O'Hare Julie Baker |

Patron: Professor Ross Young PhD

**Arafmi Services are funded by
Department of Communities (Disability Services)
and FaHCSIA**

Arafmi's Family Support Programs

There are four Family Support Programs in the greater Brisbane area that give carers respite from their caring role. Their aim is to support carers by providing a range of choices that meet the individual needs of both the carer and the person with the mental illness. To be eligible for this service, the guests needs to be between the ages of 18 and 65, have a primary diagnosis of a mental illness and have a voluntary carer. They offer short term breaks, respite support in the family home, and participation in community outings and events.

Call your nearest respite house and ask about our services.

Adina (Deception Bay) 3293 2538,
Coolibah (Lutwyche) 3857 0377,
Jerendine (Mt Gravatt) 3411 2777 and
Karinya (Ipswich) 3812 3358

SCHIZOPHRENIA BLUES

This marriage is horrible
Almost intolerable
But what is a man to do?
But hold fast because
There are simply no doors
That this restless man can walk through

And no other life
To escape the strife
Presents itself through all the years
Of his misery
He yearns to be free
But he is still trapped in the tears

For no matter what
Will e'er be his lot
His schizophrenia travels with him
And there's no escape
For illness's shape
Has moulded his future, so dim
And so he will bear
This sad life's share
Of trouble beyond compare
Like a man in a cage
Approaching old age
He suffers and struggles in prayer

One day he will die
And go to the sky
With the sun and the stars and the moon
And when that day comes
Adding up all the sums
He knows it won't come too soon

And that's how he feels
Tonight as he reels
Under burdens with no way to choose
But no doubt tomorrow
There'll be less sorrow
For that's the schizophrenia blues.

JERENDINE

Part of my role at Jerendine is to get in touch with families that may not have used our service for a while. Often these phone calls will turn into a booking for a stay at the house, or attendance at one of our many events or activities. Sometimes though, these calls can also turn into something quite surprising and uplifting.

I remembered recently one of our guest's first stay at Jerendine and how shy she was when we first met. Eventually, over time, she settled in and would stay regularly and occasionally attend some of our events. After a couple of years her bookings became less and less and she simply stopped attending the program. I would call regularly to see how things were and send our quarterly newsletter. She often responded by saying she was keeping busy and would like to stay on our books in case she needed us in the future.

It had been some time since we had last spoken so I decided to give her a call recently. I expected that I would just get a response of everything is fine and we don't need anything at this time. Instead I was really surprised when she answered the phone and told me she would not need to use the program anymore. She had been working for some time and was now living independently. She was involved in a number of community groups and her goal at the moment was to save for a holiday.



Jerendine at Mt Gravatt

It made me think a lot about what our role is and how we focus on people's needs, particularly in crisis. We often forget about the many people who have moved on and no longer need our support as things have improved so much for them. As a worker at the program, it is these stories that remind me what can be achieved, how important respite can be for families, and the small role it plays in recovery for many.

Adrian Bowler

Leanne Willian

CELEBRATIONS



Christmas at Karinya we had a ball
 There was plenty of juice and food galore
 We had Lorreto to thank for saying grace and remembering the poor
 Holly and Pipa had so much to eat that they nearly fell to the floor
 Carey cooked a massive feast and handed out presents to us all
 So if you're ever lonely over Christmas give Karinya a call
 Ryan cooked Christmas night and to him it was not a chore
 Nah came in on Boxing Day and took us for a drive and was stopped by a policeman for a breath test that didn't score
 Katrina worked last night and gave us enough food to snore
 Sarah worked today and she is never a bore
 Richard worked tonight and as usual gave a big roar
 The way the season went next Christmas people will be lining up at Karinya's door
 With my family being away I was happy to be here that's for sure
 Thank you to the staff for a happy occasion I can't say any more



Karinya in Ipswich

Thomas Weldon (pictured)

CLASSES

Here is a story written at Adina's creative arts group

I thought by this age (I'm nearly 53 years old) that having a mental illness would be easier or have gone away. When I was young my illness was a lot worse, I had no coping strategies back then.

I've recently been using CBT as a therapy – focusing on things. It does give me hope. I might at times only be well for a couple of hours. When I realise I'm coming unstuck again I hop into my bed, listen to my music and do relaxation.

In spite of having a severe mental illness, I was able to have three children. It's so hard looking after 11-year-old twin boys and they each have a disability.

It gives me great hope some days to think "Hey I'm looking after a family". I hope my illness subsides for a while. Maybe acceptance will have to be the way to go.



Adina at Deception Bay

Depression and hope can be very difficult. But I know there are people who are worse-off who do it tougher.

Adina for me is my saving grace.

Sharyn Gray

RESPITE

A carer tells her story of the welcome relief that respite brought to her and her son

"My 30 year old son has been diagnosed with a mental illness. As his mother and carer I found myself in a highly stressed situation trying to find respite for my son. I did not know what to do, was desperate and was advised of the existence of Coolibah. Coolibah came to the rescue.

My son was welcomed to Coolibah, shown his room and the facilities.

The kindness of staff and caring atmosphere at Coolibah had a positive and calming impact on my son. He is recovering well and stays at Coolibah for respite several times in a fortnight. He thinks the staff are awesome.

The ongoing kindness and friendship displayed by the staff has encouraged my son to move forward, every day is a new day. And I can sleep at night knowing that Coolibah is there for him when the chips are down, help is available.

I cannot begin to describe the absolute relief I felt when I saw my son settle into and accept the support at Coolibah. It is a haven for him to spend some time when he needs it. He is also being assisted to manage his life with more independence which is a relief for me and eases the stresses for me."



Coolibah at Lutwyche

Annette

Arafmi Carer Workshops

for those caring for and about people with mental health issues
to be held at New Farm

To register for these workshops please call Shidan
at Arafmi on 3254 1881 or email: carereducation@arafmiqld.org



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|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Wednesday 22 February 2012 | Fit for Caring 9am -12:30pm | New Farm Library 135 Sydney St New Farm |
| Saturday 24 March 2012 | Dual Diagnosis: Mental Illness and Substance Use 9am -12:30pm | Arafmi Office 237 Kent St New Farm |
| Wednesday 18 April 2012 | Suicide Awareness 9am -12:30pm | New Farm Library 135 Sydney St New Farm |
| Friday 20 April 2012 | Boundary Setting for Carers 9am -12:30pm | Sands Meeting Room 505 Bowen Terrace, New Farm |

Fit for Caring

This workshop is designed to give participants an opportunity to look at their own needs, discuss the impact of the caring role on carers and explore strategies to ensure good health and a positive sense of well-being.

Dual Diagnosis: Mental Illness and Substance Use

Based on our publication – *Dual Diagnosis – Mental Illness and Substance Use*, families can explore how to be most helpful in their role of caring for a loved one with this issue whilst caring for themselves at the same time.

Suicide Awareness

This workshop presents information on suicide – myths and facts, factors that influence suicidal behaviour, risk and protective factors, warning signs and useful responses.

Participants will be given the opportunity to have small group discussions to explore their fears, examine ways to keep their loved ones safe and prepare a plan in case of emergency.

Boundary Setting for Carers

Boundaries are limits we set with people in order to help us maintain a sense of ourselves as individuals, separate from others. Boundaries:

- Protect us
- Put us in charge of our own lives
- Promote healthy relationships
- Can promote independence
- Reduce stress and conflict

We will explore what boundaries participants would like to set in their relationships through practice exercises and small group discussions.

Workshop to be held at Adina in Deception Bay
To register phone 3293 2538

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| Friday 17 February 2012 | Understanding & Supporting Recovery 9am - 12:30pm |
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Workshop to be held at Karinya in Ipswich
To register phone 3812 3358

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| Wednesday 11 April 2012 | Effective Communication 9am - 12:30pm |
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Workshop to be held at Jerendine in Mt Gravatt
To register phone 3411 2777

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|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Tuesday 24 April 2012 | Effective Communication 10am - 2pm |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------|

Understanding & Supporting Recovery

This workshop assists carers in understanding what recovery-based practice and care is and how they can support their loved ones in their recovery journey.

Effective Communication

This workshop covers basic communication skills and strategies for communicating with someone experiencing mental disturbance. Attendees are encouraged to practice these skills at the workshop by participation in small group activities.

Some of these workshops are offered in one hour sessions. These work well in support groups and other similar settings. Let me know if you would like one of these sessions for your group.

As you will notice we have been exploring new venues in the New Farm area. When registering for a workshop, please take note of the venue.

Please take note



Arafmi's membership fees have been reduced.

The annual Membership fee is now \$10 (waged) and \$5 (unwaged or whatever you can afford).

Donations are still gratefully accepted and donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.



Your copy of *Arafmi's News* can be emailed to you. If that is your preference please email your request to: julie@arafmiqld.org.

Check out the *Arafmi's* Queensland website www.arafmiqld.org for up-to-date info on our activities as well as notices on relevant activities within the community under the heading "What's Happening"

Arafmi's Information Sessions on every first Tuesday of the month from 10am - 11am at the Arafmi office, 237 Kent Street, New Farm.

Please phone the office to register your interest on 3254 1881 or email Shidan at carereducation@arafmiqld.org



There have been some changes to *Arafmi's* Support Groups:

New support groups in **Logan** and **Sunnybank**

The **Logan** Support group will meet at:
The Study - Logan Central Library, 26 Wilbur Street, Logan Central from 10am on the second Wednesday of each month.

The **Sunnybank** Support group will meet at:
The SelfHelp Building, 121 Lister Street Sunnybank, from 10am on the second Thursday of each month.

The **Ipswich** Support group is now held in the morning from 10.30am on the first Tuesday of the month at the Humanities Building, cnr Nicholas & South Streets Ipswich.

The **Inala** Support group has not had many members since its inception and it has been decided to close this group.

The **Park** Centre for Mental Health Support group meets on the last Saturday of each month from 1pm. The Park group is specifically for carers who have loved ones staying at the facility. Interested carers should contact Ruth on 3254 1881 before attending a meeting.



Australia Day Awards

These awards are an opportunity to publicly acknowledge those who have made an extraordinary contribution to their community.

Arafmi would like to congratulate Dell Fagg from Bundaberg and Jillie Boyle from the Sunshine Coast.

Both women were nominated for their contribution towards supporting their community. Dell and Jillie are well known at Arafmi for their many years of volunteering as Carer Support Group Facilitators in their respective regions.

They work tirelessly in supporting carers in their journey and assisting to remove the stigma of mental illness by educating their communities and facilitating Carer Support Groups. Just by being nominated demonstrates that their community holds both women in high regard.

Both received a certificate acknowledging their great efforts and tireless work towards educating their communities on mental health issues.

We would like to thank the many volunteers, who have been essential to our growth and progress. These committed supporters are essential partners in our work to improve the lives of carers and their loved ones.

NOTICE BOARD

MI Connections

The Mental Illness Fellowship of Qld would like to advise that their MI Connections program is not yet full and are pleased to invite new participants into the program.

This program is a self-directed, community support service that provides individualised support to individuals with a carer over the age of 65 years.

MI Connections focuses on those things that the individual feels may be stopping them from living independently. Once established, these needs form the basis of the support provided to assist the individual in gaining further independence in the community. If you would like to become involved in this program please contact 3358 4424 for further information.

Unravel the Legal Minefield

Legal Issues for people who have a disability and their parents/carers

- Capacity to decide legal issues
- Wills
- Enduring power of attorney
- Advanced health directives
- Guardianship and administration (QCAT)

Thursday 23 February 2012
9:30am - 12:30pm
Currumbin RSL

Currumbin Creek Road, Currumbin
RSVP by Friday 17 February -
3245 6600

Wednesday 28 March 2012
9:30am - 12:30pm
Logan Diggers Club
Victoria's Room

42-48 Blackwood Road, Logan Central
RSVP by Wednesday 21 March -

Research on Living with Schizophrenia in the Family

My name is Rachel Morton and I am currently completing my psychology degree at QUT. I have an interest in helping people with severe mental illnesses like schizophrenia and their families. However, I feel that at university I have only gained a limited view of what family members of someone with an illness like schizophrenia go through themselves.

I am conducting my research project to better understand the experience of family members who have lived with a close relative diagnosed with schizophrenia. With this information I hope that in the future I and other health professionals may be better able to help other people in a similar situation. I am hoping there are some of you in the Arafmi community who may be able to help me with this project.

To help me on this project you need to be 16 years or older, have a first degree family member (such as a child or sibling) who has schizophrenia, and have lived with that person at some point after they were diagnosed. I will conduct an audio recorded interview with you taking about 60 mins and get you to complete a short questionnaire.

It is expected that this project may benefit you directly as I plan to provide targeted feedback about things that other family members suggest they found helpful when worried or stressed.

Your participation may also benefit others who are living with schizophrenia and their families, and help health professionals better understand how they can assist other in similar situations. To recognise your contribution, you will be entered into a draw to receive one of two \$50 Coles Myer vouchers.

If you are able to participate in this study, please contact me (Rachel Morton) on 0451 246 245 or rd.morton@connect.qut.edu.au

Mental Health Carers
Arafmi Queensland Inc Support Groups
Brisbane and Surrounds

| | | | | | |
|---------------|---------|--------------------|------------|------|---------------|
| Beenleigh | 10am | 4th Wednesday | Logan | 10am | 2nd Wednesday |
| Caboolture | 10am | 2nd Friday | New Farm | 10am | Last Saturday |
| Carindale | 9:30am | 1st and 3rd Monday | Sunnybank | 10am | 2nd Thursday |
| Cleveland | 10am | 4th Monday | Strathpine | 6pm | 2nd Thursday |
| Indooroopilly | 1:30pm | 1st Thursday | The Park | 1pm | Last Saturday |
| Ipswich | 10:30am | 1st Tuesday | Valley | 10am | 4th Tuesday |

Rural and Regional Queensland

| | | | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|
| Barcaldine | 4651 1314 | Gloria—Blue Care | Innisfail | 4061 5327 | Jennifer Jensen |
| Bundaberg | 4151 4605 | Dell | Mackay | 4951 2973 | Sandi Winner |
| Cairns | 4031 0163 | Barbara | Maleny | 5451 1882 | Eric |
| Caloundra | 5438 1048 | Jillie | Maroochydore | 5451 1882 | Eric |
| Charleville | 4650 5300 | Graham | Maryborough | 4122 3649 | Kathy |
| Chinchilla | 4632 8922 | Carers Qld | Rockhampton | 4930 7300 | Neville Williams |
| Dalby | 4662 3079 | Eric | Stanthorpe | 4681 5225 | Pam Taylor |
| Emerald | 4982 4062 | Debra | Theodore | 4993 1805 | Jennie Horne |
| Gladstone | 4972 8220 | Robynne | Toowoomba | 1800 35 1881 | Ruth |
| Gold Coast | 5591 6490 | Mental Illness F'ship | Townsville | 4725 3664 | Andy Froggart |
| Gympie | 0427 735 573 | Dianne | Warwick | 4660 3911 | Danielle |

These support groups are for families, carers and friends of people with mental health issues.
 For further information about the groups, please phone the office on 3254 1881

FREECALL regional areas 1800 35 1881 for carer support only

✂

To join or renew your membership, which is valid for 12 months, please return completed form to:
 The Treasurer *Arafmi* Queensland Inc. PO Box 248 New Farm Qld 4005

Annual Membership fee is - Unwaged \$5 (or whatever you can afford)
 - Waged \$10

Name.....

Address.....

Postcode.....Phone..... Are you a carer? Yes No (Please circle)

New Membership \$ _____ Renewal \$ _____ Donation \$ _____

Donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible. Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR ADDRESS?

Please write your new address below and return with the original label to:

Mental Health Carers , *Arafmi* Queensland Inc PO Box 248 NEW FARM Qld 4005

Name:.....

Address:.....



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Reminder

Copy for the May issue to be forwarded to the office by April 20

Send articles to:

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