

## Contents

1. Getting younger and wiser
2. Update from the CEO
2. Mind challenges the next Victorian government
3. We're getting engaged!
3. Returning home after 33 years
4. Staff profile:  
Denis Hajrulahovic,  
Program Manager
4. Coming events
5. Jesse's story
6. How do you say 'bipolar'  
in Greek?
6. Get Together FaST: putting  
learning into action
6. Strategic Plan launch: Victoria

Open Mind:  
writer and editor Christine Misso



## We're getting younger and wiser

**Our data is telling us that the average age of the people using Mind's services is getting younger and younger. Mind is constantly learning new ways to offer the best possible support to young people.**

'People are being identified as needing assistance earlier, and they're being treated earlier,' says Judy Hamann, Mind's General Manager, Victorian Operations. 'There's a far greater awareness of mental illness and young people on the part of GPs and the general community now than there was ten or fifteen years ago.'

Mind supports around 160 young people in residential services, but works with over 500 young people a year. The services Mind offers 16 to 24 year-olds in 2010 have come a long way since the first youth residential rehabilitation programs were set up in the 1990s.

'Our experience with youth residential rehabilitation services formed a platform for us to build on. We've developed an orientation to youth, because of the increasing numbers of young people coming to us for help', says Judy.

Changes in Mind's services have come about by looking at the literature and evidence around working with young people, and heeding the current wisdom and experience that early intervention is vital.

'We start with the client first, not pre-programmed solutions. We assist them to work out what their goals are, and to identify what they think they need—then we offer it to them, working with them to achieve their goals. They are the ones to make the choice,' says Judy.

'It's a matter of matching your service to the needs of the client. The more options and approaches you

have, the better—young people vary so much in their needs, their journey, and their own issues. There's no such thing as "one size fits all",' says Judy.

The following are some of the programs through which Mind offers itself as a 'resource to recovery' for young people.

### Residential rehabilitation programs

'Narana' opened its doors in 1999. Nine young people share three units on the property, which sits in an ordinary suburban street.

Like all residential programs, people can live here for up to two years—time to learn about who they are, and build relationships with their families and community. Learning the practical skills of daily living is also a major focus.

Residents consider their goals, and identify what they need to do to reach them with one-on-one support from their key worker.

'We've become even more focused on the journey of the individual,' says Program Manager David Noel. 'In light of "recovery", some things seemed a bit "institutional", like everyone going to the park, or on camps, or eating meals together.'

'We continually review our program structure to accommodate the individual,' he says, 'but one constant—our residents say they want it—is the community meal.'

It's not obligatory, but everyone comes. Together, residents budget, shop, plan menus, prepare their place for guests, and eat together—a practical and social activity.

'Narana encourages the young people to participate and take ownership of decisions that affect the residential community,' says David. 'We want them

continue on page 5



## Update from the CEO

Dear friends,  
I hope this newsletter finds you well.

I've recently been to Adelaide where Mind held the South Australian launch of our strategic plan. Bill Healy, Mind Chair, officially presented the plan to more than 90 people representing consumers, families and carers, staff, our fellow professionals, and government. So, we have now officially launched our plan in both states, and have received strong support for its thoroughness and relevance from both South Australia and Victoria—particularly encouraging given the enormous amount of work that went into developing the plan.

We're thrilled with our recent success in winning tenders for three new youth Prevention and Recovery Care services (PARCs), which will be located in Bendigo, Frankston and another suburb in Melbourne's south. They are planned to open in 2011, and will provide short-term intensive assistance to over 600 additional young people each year. We are excited about working with clinical services and our partner organisations, and further expanding our services to young people, which is so important.

This brings me to a beautiful letter I received this week from the mother of a former Mind client, who says:

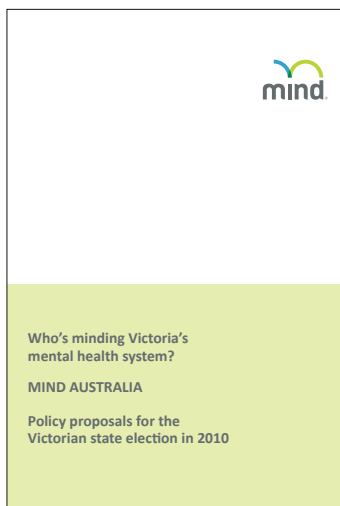
'We are writing to thank Mind for restoring and enriching the life of our son. When Mind starting providing support, my son was extremely unwell and floridly schizophrenic. He is now totally independent, rents his own house, has full-time employment, owns a car, and is incredibly well and happy.'

'This transformation is largely due to [Mind] with its flexible, innovative and stimulating program. Your staff provided expertise, loving care, life coaching and were fine examples and role models.'

'We are unable to express our gratitude enough ... what price a life! We can only say: "what a wonderful organization Mind is" providing a safety net for young people in trouble who are falling through the cracks.'

The above story is about Jesse, who also recently caught up with David Noel (Narana Program Manager) and his story can be found on page 5. I wanted to share this with you because it's one of many stories about the tremendous work our staff do with the clients they support. It reminds me of the real difference we are making in many people's lives.

Gerry Naughtin



## Mind put's priority to politicians

Mind continues to deliver and improve on services for individuals and families affected by mental illness. As part of this we need to play a key role in advising governments at all levels on areas we see as crucial in further developing the way we approach mental illness.

That's why Mind has formally put together a set of proposals about improving Victoria's mental health services in the lead up to the November state election.

The proposal document, 'Who's minding Victoria's mental health system?', was sent to the Premier and all political parties. It focuses on the action needed in six priority areas:

### 1. Housing and support

- **Invest in social supports** because people with serious mental illnesses do not get their fair share under Victoria's social housing strategy. An integrated approach in which social housing is accompanied by properly resourced support services is vital.
- **Encourage a system-wide approach** with more Prevention and Recovery Care (PARC) programs. Continuing Care Units, residential rehabilitation programs, and housing and support services must also coordinate their support to people as they move through the system.

### 2. Youth-specific services

- **Invest in new multi-skilled area teams** built on an integrated model—a range of professionals engaged in holistic practice who will reshape youth services, not simply 'add' to existing service systems.
- **Create complementary youth service networks** that encompass the currently fragmented mental health, drug and alcohol, and child protection services.
- **Extend intensive recovery support** to the young people who do not receive it while living in the community or with their families.

### 3. Family and carer support

- **Expand the range and availability of services for families** by offering programs that engage as early as possible with families facing mental health problems. These programs must also provide information, skills and

support, and work with families to rebuild supportive relationships.

### 4. Engagement with peers

- **Promote independent organisations** 'owned and operated' by people living with mental health challenges.
- **Create hubs and access points** where people can meet, connect and access support services in an integrated and safe environment.
- **Establish structures and requirements** to ensure that services provide meaningful opportunities for peer engagement.
- **Fund ongoing training and research** that focuses on building the effectiveness of peer support.

### 5. Community inclusion

- **Resource community development** to enable local areas to deal with issues of access, participation and respect.
- **Strengthen the responsiveness of services** to the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- **Resource Aboriginal communities** to better respond to the needs of their members with mental health challenges.

### 6. Service and system improvement

- **Design a new service system for the future by:**
  - Ensuring that service delivery organisations have a range of competencies to address the differing needs of individuals
  - Reducing the distinction between clinical and recovery services, and

consolidating residential services to effectively resource recovery

- Focusing on services in people's homes and communities, and not in facilities
- Creating area level coherence and comprehensiveness between clinical, recovery and primary care services
- Developing the capacity to manage shared client information
- Increasing organisations' capacities to work with Aboriginal communities
- Building skills within the workforce.

The full document is available on Mind's home page at [www.mindaustralia.org.au](http://www.mindaustralia.org.au)

## We're getting engaged!



Photo (L to R) Nadine Cocks, Anthony Stratford, Michela Cardamone, Steve Morton, Michael Stylianou

Mind knows how vital it is that our service development is based on strategies that engage the people we support. The Consumer, Carer, Family and Peer Engagement Unit has been set up to do just that.

Formed in June this year, the unit is made up of individual specialists who work together to support change throughout the organisation. The unit's work includes:

- **Promoting** and strengthening consumer, carer, family and peer engagement in the sector
- **Contributing** to developing strategies that align consumer, carer, family and peer engagement with Mind's strategic plan
- **Advocating** for and promoting the recognition of lived experience in Mind services
- **Researching** current best practice models to inform and enable Mind service development.

'It's a huge area and we're poised at the beginning—it's really exciting,' says the unit's manager, Steve Morton. 'It will mean changes in the way that our services operate.'

*To identify areas of change, and to determine the resources and support the organisation needs to achieve those changes, the unit is currently consulting with Mind's staff, consumers, carers and families.*

'We're asking people how they see things at the moment at Mind. We're trying to get a picture of that, so we've got a base to build on,' says Steve.

The unit will initially focus on three major projects: building on the existing Consumer Engagement Strategy and the Carer and Family Inclusion Strategy, and developing a Peer Support Strategy. A recruitment process is underway to employ staff to work on these projects.

But why a unit? Mind has consumer and carer consultants and strategies in place. Why not create a peer consultant position and develop an engagement strategy?

'Because, together, the people from the three different areas give combined perspectives,' says Steve. 'When we talk together as a group, we come up with ideas that we wouldn't have if we worked in isolation. We also achieve more as a unit, than as individuals—I guess you'd call it "synergy".'

Although it's early days for the unit, they've already achieved some successes.

'One example of something that we've already done is the training with the CRG—the Consumer Reference Group. It ran for two days, and was designed specifically around their role. We opened it up to all Mind clients in Victoria, and we had some people come who were interested in being part of the CRG,' says Steve. 'The feedback was excellent—over half of the participants said that they did the training because they hoped to gain employment or further experience in peer support in the mental health sector.'

Engaging consumers, carers, families and peers is a key goal of Mind's new strategic plan. This unit represents the ideas, needs and concerns of all these groups, and is dedicated to achieving that goal.

### The members of the Consumer, Carer, Family and Peer Engagement Unit are:

- Steve Morton, Manager (03) 9455 7954
- Nadine Cocks, Consumer Consultant (03) 9455 7957
- Michael Stylianou, Consumer Consultant (03) 9455 7941
- Michela Cardamone, Carer Consultant (03) 9455 7953
- Anthony Stratford, Senior Training & Development Officer (03) 9455 7935

## Returning home after 33 years

**Glenside Hospital is still 'home' to people with serious mental health issues, some of whom have lived there for decades. The South Australian Government has made a commitment to returning people to the community, through the successful 'Returning Home' program.**

Returning Home began in 2005, as a partnership between Glenside Hospital, community mental health services, and the non-government mental health sector. Mind is one of three key providers of this program in South Australia.

Janice Hogan, Mind Area Manager, has been there since the beginning. Back then, Mind was known as Richmond Fellowship, and had just started up in South Australia—an exciting time with a whole new team recruited to provide this service.

*'Since then, a phenomenal culture's developed with our Returning Home staff,' says Janice. 'They're cohesive, connected, respectful and committed—an amazing team.'*

The team works with consumers returning to Adelaide's southern region. Their preliminary work happens inside the hospital, where they develop transition plans with consumers, Glenside staff and community mental health.

Mind staff begin working with consumers inside the hospital, supporting them to establish a new life in the community. This also includes taking them out to visit and get acquainted with their new community—a stage that can take from weeks to months. After Mind finds them suitable accommodation, and the consumer is ready to take the first step, they start to spend time in their new home—perhaps for only one or two nights a week to begin with.



Janice Hogan, Mind Area Manager (South Australia)

After years of institutional life, many find it hard to adapt to community living. To tackle this problem, Mind has set up social, recreation and arts groups specifically for consumers. These groups themselves are 'transitional'. Eventually, consumers are encouraged and supported to move on to groups in the broader community.

Returning Home has transformed many people's lives—creating community connections, improving physical health, and building relationships with family and friends. So far, 45 people have settled back into the community.

'We have a man in his early 30s,' says Janice. 'The Mind worker helped him to find a job, and would go to work with him at five a.m. until he was used to going by himself. I've got to say, they're a fantastic workplace—very supportive, understanding and caring people. Doing a regular job and riding a bike to work—a great story for a man who'd spent his last five years as an inpatient,' she says.

The program has many such inspirational stories, from people who have gone back to study, to those who have reunited with their children.

'It's never easy though, and some people's journeys are more difficult than others,' says Janice. 'For example, one man we're supporting now has lived in Glenside for 33 years. His transition is likely to be slow and painstaking. But that's okay because there'll always be support for him.'

There are still people to move from Glenside to the community, and when they do, Mind will be there for them, every step of the way.

Go to [www.mindaustralia.org.au/contact-us-south-australia.htm](http://www.mindaustralia.org.au/contact-us-south-australia.htm) for information on all Mind's services in South Australia.

## Staff profile:

**Denis Hajrulahovic,**  
**Program Manager**  
**Seaford & Nette Court**  
**(Youth Residential**  
**Rehabilitation Programs)**



### How long have you worked at Mind?

I've been here for a year now. When I first started, I was Program Manager of Nette Court, and then, after three months, I was also managing Seaford.

### What's the most valuable part of your job?

I would say the ability to make partnerships. Building those relationships in the first place with clients. Then the partnerships with staff, with management colleagues and with external agencies—we need these partnerships to assist the young people on their way to recovery.

### You mentioned clients. How do you build partnerships with clients?

What you're asking me is the million-dollar question. Building a partnership—it starts with taking people as they are, taking them as equals, respecting them. It's also empowering them—I believe that power is at the core of all our relationships. Respecting their intelligence, knowing that they'll come up with ideas that are good, and being persistent—even when they're going through hard times, you don't abandon people. You stay with people when the risks are high. You do all you can do to show you are going through those hard times with them. Then when they come out, the bond—your relationship—is that much stronger. This is how you build a partnership.

### Given your leadership role as a manager, how do you manage to have 'partnerships' with your staff?

Managers must have good partnerships with their staff, and they're built on many of the aspects I just mentioned. I respect my staff for who they are, for their intelligence and expertise. I acknowledge their individual differences, and I value my staff for the way they work as a team—their communication and the trust they have in each other and in me.

But, yes, as a manager you need to show leadership in times of crisis or when changes need to be made. Sometimes you simply have to step up and make a decision on what needs to be done. But, as a manager, you make decisions based on the advice given. You don't go in and claim to know everything. You rely on the advice of those experts you have working for you. As a manager, you cannot function without good staff.

### What about external agencies? How are the partnerships you're building out there assisting the young people in your programs?

Well, at the moment, what's very exciting is our DVD project.

### Yes, I've heard something of that. Did you come up with the idea?

No. It was Hans [Southern Regional Manager]. I must give him credit—he's really very innovative! It's a partnership with Headspace and Frankston City Council's Arts Centre to produce a DVD with three purposes.

First it will enable our young people to tell their stories in their own way to an outside audience. The second purpose is that the stories can be shown to students and other young people so they can understand what it is to have a mental illness, and so they know where to look for help if they need it. The stories will be told in the language of young people.

But, this is not where it stops! We don't want people just to say their stories, but we want them to learn, so they can use those skills later in their lives if they want to. We hired professional movie-makers who are leading the workshops. So a group of young people will come, and these guys teach them how to film a movie, do the sound, write a script. The idea is that the young people will learn, and then decide what the DVD will look like. Pretty much what we're doing in the background is supporting them with resources and if they need further guidance—a youth advisory group from Headspace actually has the role of coordination.

And the next step is to have the capacity within, so those young people could train others in those skills they've learnt. That's what we're looking at when the DVD is finished.

The beauty is that you don't have to be a Mind client to join in. For example, we have a young man who moved out from Seaford who's been a part of it from the beginning. He's decided to stay involved in the project. He goes there when the advisory group meets—totally independently from us. This is empowerment!

### You're very enthusiastic about the work you do. Have you always worked in mental health services?

No. I have a mixed background. I started in the criminal justice field working with people with intellectual disabilities and dual disabilities. I've worked with adolescents as well as adults. I've been a residential worker, an outreach worker, I was a team leader, and I've also done research.

Once I studied business—marketing and management. I had a stint in the commercial field, but I didn't like it. It was really hard for me to work for someone when the main goal is to create profit for the owner of the business who is already making millions. It didn't sit well with me so I decided to move on from there. I decided to do further studies in social work—a masters and so on. Then I wanted to specialise in intellectual disabilities, then dual disability—in the end I specialised in mental health. Finally I decided that I wanted to use my experience in management, and couple it with my knowledge of human services. That's why I came to Mind.

### You've had a lot of experience working with young people growing up in Australia. What was it like for you, growing up in Bosnia during the war?

You could say I saw some things that you don't see everyday. It affected me a lot. The war showed me the bad side of people—when best friends became worst enemies. But it also showed me how good people chose not to go down that path. People like my dad—he risked his life to save his friends. I guess, for me, I learnt that only people matter. So now as an adult, if someone asks me for assistance, I will advocate for them and get them what they need—it's something I can't compromise on.

## Coming events

### > VPS Mental Health Week Festival: 11th – 15th October

A full week of events have been organised by the Victoria Public Service as part of mental health awareness week. **For the full range of these events please visit [www.vpsopenminds.com](http://www.vpsopenminds.com).**

### > Sprout Garden Party: 16th October. Free event, including live bands & DJ, information & talks on well-being, Art & Gardening workshops and much more

**When:** Saturday 16th October, 1pm – 4pm

**Where:** Cnr of Watt & Clapham Street, Thornbury

### > Art of Giving: 15th to 17th October

Over eighty pieces of art will be available for you to buy—all generously donated by some of Victoria's most prestigious artists. All proceeds from the exhibition go towards Mind's Ambassadors of Hope program. **You can find out more about the exhibition by contacting Shanta Parker on 0410 696 037 or [parker@bigpond.net.au](mailto:parker@bigpond.net.au)**

**When:** Fri. 15th: 10am – 3pm; Sat. 16th: 10am – 4pm;

Sun. 17th: 11:30am – 1pm

**Where:** Liddiard Gallery, Oakleigh Anglican Church

### > Streets aHEAD Mental Health Week Festival 2010: 16th October

Featuring free music, market stalls, Harley rides, animal petting zoo, jumping castle, sausage sizzle and much more. Bring your family and friends and have a great day!

**When:** Saturday 16th October, 10am – 3pm

**Where:** Commonwealth Reserve, Williamstown

### > The Role of Family and Carers in Mental Health Care: Tuesday, 19 October 2010

Mental health carers and consumers... don't miss this opportunity to hear a leading expert in the mental health field talk at a FREE public forum focused on you, the carers, and the people you look after. Featuring Professor Patrick McGorry. **No bookings are required but for more information ring Jenny Burger on 9355 9741.** Immediately following the forum will be an Action for Change workshop being presented by the Mental Health Carer Services Network – Northern.

**When:** 9:30am for a 10am sharp start

**Where:** Darebin Arts and Entertainment Centre, cnr Bell Street and St Georges Road, Preston

### > Annual General Meeting: 16th November

The Darebin Arts and Entertainment Centre will again open its doors to host Mind's Annual General Meeting. **Invitations will be mailed out or distributed through programs in October.** The Annual General Meeting is an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the past year, and to enjoy the company of all the people who make up the Mind community.

**When:** 11am, Tuesday 16th November

**Where:** Darebin Arts and Entertainment Centre, cnr Bell Street and St Georges Road, Preston

continue from front page



to express their uniqueness—it's all about growing towards an independent life.'

Narana also provides outreach, drug and alcohol, and intensive support to young people living in the community.

### Scholarships program

'One thing we know is that a job is really important to recovery,' says Judy Hamann. 'Usually you need training or education to have a job—that's where our scholarships program came from.'

Mind clients can apply for scholarships of up to \$1,500 for studies or training that will help them to improve their chances of employment. This is the second year of the program, which is funded by grants and donations. The scholarships provide funds that may not otherwise be available to the applicants.

### *Mind's scholarship program bears a direct relation to the journey of recovery for young people.*

'They think about what's right for them, and they choose,' says Judy. 'It's that notion of choice. They've got their own goal, we don't impose it on them—that's a recovery principle. So they put forward an application, and the panel assesses it and comes to a decision' she says. In the past two years the scholarship program has supported 70 young people to train or study.

Most of the recipients were young people wanting to complete Year 12, short courses, apprenticeships or university studies.

### Youth PARCs: Prevention and Recovery Care programs

The new Bendigo, Peninsula and Southern Youth PARCs are expected to open in late 2011. While PARCs are not new to Mind, these will be the first set up exclusively for young people.

PARCs support people experiencing mental illness to prevent them from having to enter hospital, or to assist them to settle back into their community after leaving hospital. PARCs are about intervening early, and supporting people to live in their own communities.

'The major differences between PARCs and other Mind services is "time" and "intensity",' says Ruth Davenport, Mind's Regional Manager, Hume and Loddon Mallee Regions. 'PARCs are staffed 24 hours a day for stays of up to only four weeks.'

'Mind staff won't have to change their "thinking"—the practice is still recovery-based,' says Ruth. 'But they'll need to focus intensely on the young person's recovery in relation to their community, and they only have 28 days to do it.'

Importantly, at Bendigo the Youth PARC integrates different service types: Bendigo Health for clinical services, and Mind and St

Luke's Anglicare for recovery-based support. Specifically, Mind's residential support workers will focus on recovery within the PARC environment itself, while St Luke's will concentrate on the external environment—that is, creating the links to strong, ongoing community support.

'The integration and diversity of support that PARCs offer is really valuable,' says Ruth. 'The client has a lot more choice than if one organisation tried to do everything.'

### Ambassadors of Hope

In this program, Mind clients take their stories of recovery to the broader community.

'They've spoken to all kinds of people from Victoria Police recruits to members of the Australian Club,' says Jon Martin, who coordinates the program. 'They're also getting media coverage—some of their stories have featured in the press.'

There are four young people in the Ambassadors of Hope program. They're raising awareness around mental illness, and building their self-esteem and confidence at the same time. They also get to develop valuable skills in managing projects, speaking in public, giving presentations, and dealing with the media.

The Ambassadors of Hope are gearing up to take their message out to where young people really need to hear it—secondary schools.

'They'll give a first hand account of what it's like to live with a mental illness, and what you can do about it,' says Jon. 'The stories will be positive—it's all about trying to take the stigma out of mental illness, and encouraging young people to get help as soon as they think they need it.'

### *Mind's Ambassadors of Hope have two important messages for young people—believe that recovery is possible, and get help as early as you can.*

The program began in 2009. It receives no government funding, and depends on donations to continue operating.

### Box Hill youth hub

'It hasn't got a name yet,' says Julie Lengyel, Regional Manager, Eastern Metro, Barwon South West and Central Highlands. 'We're going to leave that up to the young people who use it.'

When she says 'young,' she means it—the client range is from 0 to 25, but Julie anticipates most users will be 12 to 25-year-olds.

The hub opened in July in a commercial space opposite Box Hill Station. It's open during business hours, and is a joint project of Mind and Eastern Health Child, Youth and Family Mental Health Services.

Between the Mind staff and the clinicians from Eastern Health, young people can walk in off the street and get just about any sort of help they need.

'We've got a "no wrong door" policy,' says Julie. 'No matter what they come in for, they'll get help and support.'

The hub streamlines access to the mental health system for young people—they can be assessed and set up with supports on the spot, or quickly referred on to the most appropriate service

provider. Referrals may be to other mental health services, general practitioners, or drug and alcohol support services. The hub will also help young people to access education, employment and social agencies.

'It's all about early engagement and intervention,' says Julie. 'Making sure that young people get the right care, in the right place, and at the right time.'

**For further information about Mind's youth services, go to our website at [www.mindaustralia.org.au](http://www.mindaustralia.org.au)**

## Jesse's story



When Jesse first entered the Narana residential program in 2008, it was a new page in his story of recovery. Jesse's journey was a familiar one—experimenting with drugs and alcohol from 15, and leaving home at 18. When he returned home, Jesse was a 20-year-old with the onset of a psychotic illness.

While his family were incredibly supportive, loving and robust, the fatigue they experienced in battling with his increasingly psychotic symptoms was taking its toll. Eventually Jesse was diagnosed with schizophrenia. After a time, his doctor hit on the right medication, which had immediate positive results. It was then that his family approached Narana.

Jesse entered the program when he was 22, and never looked back.

'At Narana, there was always someone supporting me, encouraging me,' says Jesse. 'And cooking and sharing food with housemates didn't make me feel too lonely.'

By the time Jesse left Narana, he'd finished school, bought a car, and started work.

'Narana helped me in carrying out tasks,' says Jesse. 'For example, in starting a routine such as going to school or starting a job—the initial stages are often difficult.'

His parents attribute the way his life turned around to Narana, but it's not that simple. It was the joint effort between Jesse, his family and the program that paid off.

Jesse now rents a place of his own, which he shares with his dog. He works two jobs and spends his spare time doing work on his house and garden, and visiting his sister or his parents.

'Narana continues to support me through their outreach program, which really helps,' he says.

And so for Jesse, the adventure continues.

Written by David Noel, Narana Program Manager

## How do you say 'bipolar' in Greek?



It's a first in Australia—a consumer reference group all from different language and cultural backgrounds.

'Lots of people don't know what CALD CRG means,' says Maria Dimopoulos, a member of the group, which was set up in March this year.

Many people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds miss out on the information that the broader community receives. Also, when it comes to mental health problems, they may seek out a senior community figure rather than a GP or other health professional.

The CALD CRG works among these communities to try to de-stigmatise mental illness, and to give positive messages about what can be done to support people with mental health issues.

Maria recalls her recent talk at a meeting of older members of Melbourne's Greek community.

'It was the first speech I'd ever made in Greek, but it went really well,' says Maria. 'There were lots of questions, and they kept asking me to explain things like bipolar and depression.'

To contact the CALD CRG, call Maria Dimopoulos on 0438 087 941 or Evan Bichara on 0411 054 882. Alternatively, you can email the group at [cald.consumer.reference.group@gmail.com](mailto:cald.consumer.reference.group@gmail.com)



## Get Together FaST: putting learning into action

**It's a course that promotes carer and family sensitive practice in programs, but it's not your regular training course.**

The Get Together FaST training is special for two reasons.

Firstly, the course is action-focused. As a core component of the training, staff develop projects for change at their programs. So, while staff learn about family sensitive theory, they also get to put that theory into practice.

A second standout feature is that carers and consumers participate alongside staff. They share their thoughts and experiences, and give feedback on the usefulness and appropriateness

of the proposed projects. This course is not simply about learning from an 'expert'—staff learn about the experiences of carers and consumers first hand.

Project plans have ranged from including carers and families more effectively in the referral process, to improving the atmosphere of physical environments to make the first visit to a program more welcoming.

Get Together FaST is delivered by the Bouverie Centre. The three-day training course runs over two months giving participants time to fully develop their project plans.

To find out more about Get Together FaST, call Julie McNally, Mind Project Officer, on 9455 7937 or go to the Bouverie Centre's web site at [www.bouverie.org.au/programs/mental-health-team](http://www.bouverie.org.au/programs/mental-health-team)



## Broadmeadows PARC (Prevention and Recovery Care)

The Broadmeadows PARC at 6-10 Talgarno St. Broadmeadows is to be opened on Thursday October 14th.

The PARC is funded by the Victorian Government and is a partnership between North West Area Mental Health Service (NWAMHS) and Mind with the aim of improving service system capacity and responsiveness, and to foster improved interface across the continuum of care.

The PARC is a 10 bed Prevention and Recovery Centre (PARC) for consumers in the cities of Moreland and Hume. The focus of PARC is at the acute end of the service continuum, designed to meet the treatment needs of consumers who are "stepping down" relatively early from the inpatient facility as well as being responsive to the needs of known consumers who are "stepping up" and are being diverted from admission or readmission to acute beds. The NW PARC approach is underpinned by principles of recovery and individual resilience-building and is a collaborative partnership between NWAMHS.

Clients can stay at the PARC for up to 28 days. An important aspect of one's stay at the PARC is the development of community linkages to support the client's treatment and recovery goals. Referrals will be accepted from all parts of NWAMHS, general practitioners, carers and clients. Referrals to PARC are made through North West CATT on 0400 557 142.

**Please Call Fionna Madigan, Mind Manager, Broadmeadows PARC, if you have any queries on 0430 768 307**



(left to right) Terry Laidler, Dr Karleen Edwards, Bill Healy and Dr Gerry Naughtin

## Strategic Plan launch: Victoria

Mind Chair Bill Healy and Chief Executive Dr Gerry Naughtin spoke about the direction that Mind will be taking over the next five years to improve its recovery support services.

Mind's thanks go to Dr Karleen Edwards, the Executive Director, Mental Health Drugs and Regions, Department of Health, and Terry Laidler, Chair of the Victorian Mental Health Reform Council. Dr Edwards formally launched Mind's Strategic Plan, and Terry Laidler spoke about the importance of Mind's work. In particular, he encouraged Mind to strengthen its role in advocating for equitable outcomes for people living with a mental illness.

The plan was a year in the making. Mind's management, staff, families, carers, consumers and external stakeholders participated in the organisation-wide review, discussions and consultations. The result—a bold and ambitious plan.

Importantly, the launch allowed Mind to make public its commitment to providing flexible, responsive and innovative services into the future, making it a true 'resource to recovery'.

You can find Mind's 2010 - 2015 Strategic Plan at [www.mindaustralia.org.au/publications.htm](http://www.mindaustralia.org.au/publications.htm)



For more information on Mind and its services, please contact

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