

Coordinating Committee: ACT Child and Youth Mental Health Sector Alliance

MINUTES

9:30am –11:30am, Thursday 12 November 2024
Online via Teams

Chair: Stephanie Lentern

Attendance:

- Erin Barry, Youth Coalition of the ACT
- Prof Alison Calear, ANU
- Lee-Anne Rogers, OMHW
- Samantha Gill, Marymead CatholicCare
- Sam Thomas, Youth Lived Experience
- Shannon Lanza, Youth Lived Experience
- Stephanie Lentern, Capital Health Network (Chair)
- Vikki Radford, Grand Pacific Health

Apologies:

- Joan Webb, ACT Education Directorate
- Carrie Coghlan, CAMHS
- Mahri Henderson, Conflict Resolution Service

Welcome and Introductions

- a. The Chair welcomed members and provided an Acknowledgement of Country and Acknowledgement of Lived Experience.
- b. The Committee endorsed the Minutes of the previous meeting.

Update on Alliance Activities

- a. **Working Group:** Has met twice since the last meeting. A contract has been signed with Dr Alyssa Morse at the ANU to conduct three pieces of work:
 - Literature review on best practice and principles for collecting and using feedback from young people (adolescent and young adults) – to be completed within 3 months;
 - Scoping review of existing experience measurement tools for children and young people – to be completed within 6 months;
 - Literature related to young people’s preferences for informed consent and information-sharing (e.g. in referral processes, safety and wellbeing planning, and reducing retelling of stories).

The Working Group is also designing a processes to scope, examine and ‘translate’ relevant ACT legislation and policy related to privacy and information-sharing for children and young people.



- b. **Forum:** To be held on Tuesday 26 November, including a consultation on the forthcoming ACT Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Strategy, and CAMHS exit processes for young people turning 18.
- c. **Community of Practice:** Held in November on 'Gender-Affirming Care Guidance', in partnership with A Gender Agenda. The session was fully booked out and well-attended by representatives across community and government services.
- d. **TheMHS Conference:** Lead agencies presented about the Alliance at the national Mental Health Services Conference in August.
- e. **Future Funding:** The Alliance is currently funded until June 2025, and is uncertain for the 2025-26 financial year. The Labor Party committed to re-funding the Alliance if elected in October.
- f. Members discussed a range of current and emerging issues and initiatives related to mental health in the ACT, including:
 - Promotion and Prevention: Prevention United was commissioned by OMHW to produce an ACT-specific paper focused on promotion and prevention of mental health. This will be available in early 2025, and available for services to use.
 - Members discussed the importance of services being able to demonstrate what is working and that services are meeting intended outcomes; and if not, how they can be refined to work better; and changing approaches as needs change.
 - Members discussed that there is a lot of evidence about what promotes positive health and what is driving poor mental health. Social media is not a huge driver, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) are a driver of poor mental health, but initiatives need to acknowledge the pressures upon parents and consider how we can better support parents, so they have more time and capacity to engage.
 - Members discussed the opportunity to build on actively involving schools and education institutions in creating preventative measures; as well as parents/carers, and the voices of children under 12.
 - ACT is a tertiary education and public service city, with a highly transient population of students. Many young people are working in or studying with big institutions.

Governance Framework for the Alliance

- a. Members discussed that the broader system of governance across the ACT mental health system includes multiple groups that are not currently well connected or mapped. In the context of this, it would be helpful to understand the end-goal of creating 'reporting/informing' mechanisms for the Alliance, based upon the outcomes we want to achieve.
- b. In 2025, we will return to the Program Logic and update the outcomes of the Alliance, and revisit the Alliance activities.
- c. The ACT Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Strategy is the next key piece of work, committed to by government and the sector. The Strategy will go through Cabinet, and there is an opportunity to embed youth mental health within the Strategy. The Strategy will be high-level; followed by more targeted plans.
- d. Members discussed that the Strategy provides an opportunity to:
 - Improve data regarding needs, gaps and priority populations within the broader sector
 - Create a more efficient and effective system
 - Create enabling structural environments to reduce fragmentation, and be better informed by data, provide system-wide planning
 - Strengthen lived experience involvement



- Understand contemporary experiences of children and young people within a dynamic and changing environment, impacted by global megatrends
- e. The Alliance CoP has changed and evolved over time. Members discussed that if it becomes too targeted there would be a lot of drop-off.
- f. Members discussed the need to consider how we can better integrate the parts of the Alliance, and relate this work to mental health programs. It was discussed that this is actively progressed through the Working Group, which brings service providers together to identify shared priorities and work together towards solutions.

Other Business

No other business was raised.

Next Steps

It was proposed the next meeting be held in late February or early March 2025, in order to progress planning.

Meeting Close