



Mental Health Month
AWARDS

— **2022** —

*Recognising the achievements of individuals,
groups, organisations, businesses and initiatives
in the area of mental health in the ACT.*

Friday 14 October 2022

UH@Commons



Join the conversation

#MentalHealthMonthACT
@MentalHealthMonthACT

Welcome

There are many exceptional people and initiatives working to promote and improve mental health understanding, awareness, service provision and wellbeing in the Canberra community.

The ACT Mental Health Month Awards recognise the achievements of individuals, groups, organisations, businesses and initiatives in the area of mental health in the ACT.

The awards are a sector-wide initiative coordinated by the Mental Health Community Coalition ACT and implemented by the ACT Mental Health Month Advisory Committee.



We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the ACT, the Ngunnawal and Ngambri people. We recognise their continuing connection to land, sea, culture and community and pay our respects to their Elders, past and present. We acknowledge the impact of trauma and its generational nature that continues to affect our First Nations people.

We also acknowledge the individual and collective expertise of those with a living or lived experience of mental health. We recognise their vital contribution at all levels and value the courage of those who share this unique perspective for the purpose of learning and growing together to achieve better outcomes for all.

Mental Health Month AWARDS

2022

Order of events

Ceremony begins

- 4:30pm • Emcee: Genevieve Jacobs
- Welcome to Country: Aunty Violet Sheridan

- 4:45pm • **Guest speaker:** Mental Health Month Community Ambassador Yenn Purkis

- 4:55pm • **Keynote address:** Minister for Mental Health, Emma Davidson MLA

Presentation of awards and scholarships:

- Minister for Mental Health, Emma Davidson MLA
- 5:05pm • Coordinator-General of the Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing Dr Elizabeth Moore
- CEO of ACT Mental Health Consumer Network Dalane Drexler

- 6pm • **Ceremony ends**

2022 Award categories

Mentally Healthy Community Award

This award category recognises individuals, groups or organisations who have made a significant contribution using preventative approaches to improving the mental health and wellbeing of our community.

Innovated Person-centred Supports Award

This award recognises individuals, groups or organisations who have made a significant contribution to the delivery of innovative person-centred supports to people who experience mental health concerns.

Research Evaluation Award

This award category recognises an individual researcher, piece of research or project that has advanced and/or is working towards improvements, innovation and evidence-informed practice in mental health.

Mental Health Carer Award

This award category recognises unpaid carers (family or friends) of people who experience mental health concerns. It is designed to show appreciation for the contribution carers can make to the wellbeing of consumers, advocating on their behalf and often being the primary or only support person.

Community Connection Through Recovery Award

This award category celebrates individuals with lived experience of a mental health condition whose mental health recovery journey has led them to become more involved in their community.

Leadership through Lived Experience Award: Consumer

This award recognises an individual with lived experience of mental health conditions who has made an outstanding contribution to advocacy and social change benefiting people with lived experience. This can relate to a specific program the consumer has initiated/coordinated or ongoing work in this area.

Lived Experience Ally Recognition Award (LEARA)*

This award recognises an individual or organisation with a longstanding and exceptional contribution to mental health consumers and consumer-centred mental health services in the ACT. It acknowledges those who work collaboratively with consumers to achieve positive change.

David Perrin Award*

The award is presented in memory of David Perrin, an individual with multiple disabilities who made his mark in mental health services and was an inspiration to all who knew him. It recognises a mental health consumer who lives an independent and self-determined life beyond what they may have expected after diagnosis.

2022 Scholarship categories

ACT Mental Health Consumer Network Consumer Scholarship*

These scholarships (worth up to \$500 a year to a maximum of \$2,000 in total) recognise mental health consumers who are furthering their education. They are intended to cover general education expenses such as computers, course texts and course fees.

Rufus Scholarship*

Established in December 2019 by a private donor, this Scholarship provides an annual grant of up to \$600 to support a mental health consumer who would not otherwise have the financial means to do so to further or continue their education.

MHCC ACT Training Scholarships

These three scholarships provide grants of \$1000 each to smaller organisations whose main work is with marginalised and minority population groups, to be used to undertake MHCC ACT's mental health training.

* provided by the ACT Mental Health Consumer Network



2022 Award nominees (in alphabetical order)

A Gender Agenda

A Gender Agenda is a fully peer-led organisation that supports trans, gender-diverse and intersex people in the ACT.

Through a preventative model of social support, AGA tackles social isolation through a lively calendar of regular and special events for its community members, their allies, friends and family. AGA's peer navigators facilitate a safe space where members can access peer and social support and build community connections.

AGA's services include The Gender Center: a drop-in peer navigation service that provides trans and gender-diverse people with access to information and referrals to support them through social, legal, and medical transition pathways.

Dalai Byambasuren

Growing up in Mongolia, mental health was associated with shame and stigma. Dalai chose to challenge those taboos by moving to Australia to study mental health.

However, the challenges of being a migrant, including language barriers and lack of social network, led to Dalai experiencing mental health struggles first-hand.

After graduating with a Diploma of Community Services, Dalai recently started the Mongolian Association of Canberra ACT to support fellow Mongolians and empower them by sharing her lived experience, as well as break down the shame and stigma of mental health in their communities.

“
I want to continue my education in Mental Health and help my community as much as I can.
”

Elise Mariee Crouch

Elise has a passion for helping mental health consumers in the ACT. She has a long history of contributions in aged care, childhood education and care, nursing and volunteer work, reflecting her passion

for the greater good of humanity.

Having attained a Certificate II in Community work, Elise is now enrolling in a Certificate IV to enhance her ability to support her community.

Elise also sits on various committees for the ACT Mental Health Consumer Network and has completed advocacy and consumer representation certificates.

Felicity Maher

Felicity is a mixed media artist and creative designer. Everything she creates has a touch of fancy and a dash of sparkle.

As a mental health consumer herself, Felicity loves to create items and facilitate social opportunities for people with disabilities and mental health conditions.

Felicity recently joined the County Women's Association in Canberra and uses her creative skills to enhance the organisation's charity projects. She is also a member of Women with Disabilities ACT.

Her latest creative pursuits include cake decorating and music therapy for wellness, and she wants to share these skills with her community.

Jane Grace

Jane has made outstanding contributions as a lived experience consumer systemic advocate, having volunteered as a Consumer Representative for ACT Mental Health Consumer Network for over 10 years.

She has co-chaired the Mental Health, Justice Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs (MHJHADS) Seclusion and Restraint Committee, represented the ACT on the National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum for eight years, advocated for people in ACT mental health facilities, and been an active voice at the Mental Health Consumer Representative Forum.

Jane also volunteers with various charities and is establishing a community garden to improve people's mental wellbeing.

Joey Brogden

As the youth lived experience champion, Joey has been an integral part of the 'Right care, first time, where you live' research collaboration between the University of Sydney and the Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing.

Drawing on her lived experience of the ACT mental health sector, Joey has advocated for alterations in mental health initiatives in the ACT and effectively engaged with the research team and policymakers.

Joey's passion and commitment to ensuring other young people can effectively engage with the program and have their voices heard have been invaluable.

Leesa Mountford

Leesa's world changed when her son, Josh, died by suicide in April 2021. While packing his belongings, Leesa found a handwritten note that said, 'I got you'.

This sparked the idea for I Got You apparel, printing Josh's message on clothing to promote men's mental health, which expanded to organising social events for young men.

The business brought together a community and gave Leesa's family a way to honour Josh's memory.

Leesa donates a portion of all sales to OzHelp to support them in delivering health, wellbeing and suicide prevention programs to the Canberra construction industry and the wider community.

Liam Adams

Liam is a creative young man who lives with Autism and intellectual disability. A writer and cartoonist, Liam's first book sold out on its first day! A reprint is now available, and his second book will be available in November.

“
Joey's passion and commitment to enhancing the experience of young people accessing mental health supports in the ACT has been invaluable.”

Liam also creates and sells mugs, pens, notebooks, t-shirts, doggy t-shirts and zany original Christmas cards.

He recently started a business that he named Everyone Needs A Liam because of the nice things he would say and do for others. He launched his business at Smith's Alternative and has a casual stall at the Old Bus Depot Markets.

Lisa Anderson

Lisa is a private practice counsellor and tirelessly passionate supporter of women in need.

She has created groups to connect allied health and support practices supporting women in Canberra and to give professional mothers opportunities to network with their peers.

In 2022, Lisa identified a dire need for psychosocial and counselling support for women in Canberra struggling through divorce and separation. She developed an innovative program that combines supportive group work and one-on-one counselling.

Lisa also sits on the board of Mothercraft ACT and works with women-centric legal services to provide greater awareness around critical community issues, including domestic violence.

“
[Lisa] is not only an innovator and an entrepreneur, she is a real inspiration and bright light in the darkness for so many women in the ACT in need.”

Lucinda Renfree

Lucinda excels at caring for people and has an incredible capacity for kindness and empathy.

She consistently goes above and beyond to support both clients and staff. With unprecedented client numbers at Perinatal Wellbeing Centre (PWC) over the last two years and little to no increase in staffing or funding, Lucinda developed innovative, person-centred approaches to support clients. She also managed the move to a work-from-home environment and multiple state-wide lockdowns and established collaborative relationships to increase clients' access to supports.

Lucinda is a beaming light of hope, support, and stability for PWC staff, clients, and the wider community.

Marie Johnson

Marie has been the primary carer, emotional support, and advocate for her daughter, Belinda, for 20 years.

Marie's unwavering support, constant care, belief and encouragement have been critical to Belinda's recovery journey, helping her live a meaningful and rewarding life.

Marie and Belinda's father, Allan, have tirelessly fought for justice for their daughter. Their advocacy was instrumental in Belinda being accepted onto the NDIS after an adversarial 18-month ordeal. Marie continues to fight to maintain Belinda's NDIS access.

Marie has become a prolific public commentator on the complex systemic issues within the NDIS that marginalise people with disability. *“Thank you, Mum. I love you.”*

Matt Breen

Three years ago, Matt started to save lives from suicide after he lost his dad to suicide 10 years prior. Although he also lost his mum recently to cancer, Matt remains a positive and optimistic bloke who always makes time to help others.

Running 4 Resilience has over 100 runners and walkers every Wednesday, and over 40 each Friday. CEO of Mental Illness Education ACT, Heidi Prowse, recently said that the group had saved the lives of people she knows.

Maura Pierlot

Maura has worked tirelessly to promote young people's mental health awareness.

She wrote the play Fragments, highlighting youth mental health to reduce stigma and encourage conversations. After debuting to sell-out crowds in 2019, Maura adapted the work as a book for schools, web series and feature-length film.

Fragments resulted in many families speaking about mental health for the first time and led some people to seek professional help.

Maura recently started The Book Bench Project, putting books on park benches throughout Canberra to promote reading and a sense of community.

She also quietly and consistently supports other Canberrans, often strangers.

“I'm nominating my mother... because I have seen first-hand how tirelessly she has worked in promoting mental health awareness.”

Mental Health Foundation (ACT)

Established in 1984, Mental Health Foundation (ACT) (MHF) is a Canberra-based community service organisation providing supports to people with severe mental illness or psychosocial disability. Its mission is to “deliver quality mental health services in the ACT and surrounding region through innovative accommodation, outreach and support solutions”.

MHF provides NDIS-funded accommodation services, outreach services, support coordination, recovery mentoring and youth to adult transition services.

MHF's incredible team of mental health support workers also provide temporary accommodation to consumers being discharged from the acute mental health unit who would otherwise be released to homelessness.

Millie Corin

Millie has volunteered as a Lived Experience Educator with MIEACT since 2021, bravely sharing her story of anxiety, depression and eating disorders with hundreds of Canberrans to help eliminate stigma and reduce barriers to help-seeking.

Millie recently shared her story at the MIEACT Gala Ball and played a big part in raising \$125,000 for a new primary schools program. She has also actively worked with media to raise mental health awareness.

“She possesses a genuine passion for all things mental health.”

Millie has a genuine passion for all things mental health, and wants to help people learn from her experiences to better manage their own mental wellbeing.

My Mind My Voice

MIEACT's My Mind My Voice (MMMV) program works with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) organisations and communities to help CALD volunteers with a lived experience of mental health share their stories within their communities.

“
More individuals within our community are confidently speaking and educating about mental health in a safe and respectful way.

Volunteers in this innovative program have opened up conversations and increased mental health awareness on topics including stigma, self-stigma, self-care and help-seeking within their own and other CALD communities.

” The program has also produced a wide range of resources for CALD communities, all featuring MMMV volunteers, and has forged strong and lasting relationships between

MIEACT and various ACT CALD community groups and organisations.

OzHelp Foundation

The OzHelp Foundation delivers mental health and wellbeing services and suicide prevention programs to empower employers to build a stronger, more mentally resilient workforce. Their programs target people in high-risk, hard-to-reach, male-dominated industries like building, construction, transport and logistics.

OzHelp delivers screening and early intervention programs to identify physical and mental health symptoms, and provides support, counselling, and appropriate referral pathways as required. This includes the Tradie Tune Up and the Workplace Tune Up programs.

OzHelp's programs help individuals better understand and maintain their health and wellbeing, and know the signs that others may be experiencing mental ill-health.



OzHelp Foundation Health in Gear Program

Health in Gear (HiG) is a health and wellness initiative for people working in transport and logistics.

Truck drivers are the second-highest occupational group at risk of suicide. Risk factors include long and irregular hours, poor diet, lack of exercise, fatigue, relationship pressures, isolation, regulatory burdens and tight deadlines, as well as additional pressures from COVID-19.

HiG supports workers in transport and logistics to achieve optimal wellness through access to information and support. It includes a roadside early intervention/prevention health check, 24/7 telephone support and counselling, website resources, a podcast series and ambassadors who promote the program.

ReVive Ketamine

The ReVive Ketamine program at Calvary Bruce Private Hospital provides innovative treatment for veterans and first responders who have been diagnosed with Treatment-Resistant Depression and/or Treatment-Resistant Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. This population is significantly over-represented in national suicide statistics.

Over the last two years, they have treated over 150 veterans and serving Defence personnel. Initial data shows a significant reduction in symptoms, and the many patient testimonials demonstrate this is a life-changing program.

As a novel approach, there are many 'firsts' associated with its delivery, and it requires a dedicated multidisciplinary team including administrators, doctors (psychiatrists and anaesthetists), psychologists and nurses.

“
The ReVive Ketamine program is making a significant contribution to the prevention of suicide and the improvement of mental health in this at-risk population.”

Richard Stanton

Richard has been working to provide positive messages of support to our unsung heroes working in stressful occupations, such as carers, teachers, healthcare workers, nurses and emergency services, through

the social thanking platform Thank And Praise (TAP).

In addition to monitoring messages on the platform, TAP supports organisations in sending messages of thanks, including via an app and website widget.

Research by TAP and the academic community shows the impact that a simple message of thanks has on employees, increasing staff retention and improving morale and mental health in some of the most difficult jobs in Australia.

Sophie Mayer

As Team Leader of the Commonwealth Psychosocial Support Program (CPSP) at Woden Community Services (WCS), Sophie has steered the program seamlessly through these challenging times to meet the mental health needs of the community and provide innovative and person-centred services.

Sophie champions lived experience and is ever mindful of the needs of carers, family members and others in participants' support networks.

She serves on the Board of the Youth Coalition and leads regular collaborative engagement with WCS's Youth and Family services teams.

Sophie's innovative response to the challenges of mental health in our community is an inspiration.

Tim Daly

Tim founded This is My Brave, Australia (TIMBA), a 100% volunteer-run charity dedicated to generating mental health awareness and advocacy while reducing stigma.

Tim's motto is that storytelling can change a life. Having the opportunity to reclaim your story and share it in a supportive space can be an utterly transformative experience. Tim's encouragement and support of those contemplating sharing their mental health journey, and the long-term impacts this experience has on their lives, is nothing short

“
He is passionate yet humble and deserves to be recognised for his efforts in bolstering the Canberra Community through kindness, care and consideration.”

of inspiring.

Tim works tirelessly to coordinate projects supporting those experiencing hardship, loss, and health issues, with a focus on dignity and empowerment.

Wellcare

Wellcare is an outstanding provider of residential supports for people with mental health disabilities. They are creative, innovative and flexible in the person-centred, skills-focused supports they offer to achieve exceptional outcomes for participants.

Building on their success with residential care and in response to community need, Wellcare established an outreach service for people outside of residential care and a nursing service.

Wellcare staff are generous and proactive in promoting the interests of participants. They go out of their way to encourage and balance residents' choices and dignity.

“
My son has been nurtured and his talents discovered and fostered by Wellcare.”

Yohan Mathai

Yohan is a Service Manager at Wellcare with a long history of working in the mental health sector.

Wellcare specialises in mental health services for people experiencing psychosocial disability who have been denied appropriate support in our community.

Wellcare believes that mental health recovery is possible for all people from all walks of life and socioeconomic status by providing access to facilities and services to participants to achieve their goals through holistic, strengths-based and person-centred approaches.



Acknowledgements

The ACT Mental Health Month Awards are made possible thanks to the work of the 2022 Awards subcommittee, with representatives from:



ACT Health



mental health
community coalition ACT



Carers ACT

Gifts for award recipients included kind donations from:

GOURMET
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Mental Health Month ACT is coordinated by the Mental Health Community Coalition ACT (MHCC ACT) with funding from ACT Health and in partnership with:



Riotact
Local voices. Stronger communities.

The 2022 Mental Health Month ACT Advisory Committee includes representatives from A Gender Agenda, ACT Health, ACT Mental Health Consumer Network, Canberra Health Services, Carers ACT, CatholicCare, Grand Pacific Health, Mental Health Community Coalition ACT, Mental Health Foundation ACT, Wellways, Woden Community Service and YWCA Canberra.