



Mental Health Matters 2 Ltd

PO Box 5050, Centrepont, Midland WA 6056

Telephone: 0413 861 049

Email: mentalhealthmatters2@gmail.com

Webpage: www.mentalhealthmatters2.com.au

ABN 62647638444

Chairperson's Report Annual General Meeting 19th July 2022

This marks a historic and proud moment – the presentation of the first Chairperson's report for Mental Health Matters 2 Ltd (MHM2). MHM2 was registered as a Company Limited by Guarantee on 3rd February 2021 following eleven active years as a grassroots group originally convened in February 2010. On the 7th September 2021, MHM2 was notified by the Australian Taxation Office that MHM2 Ltd as a health promotion charity had been approved for Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status, backdated to 3rd February 2021. These structural changes and milestones for MHM2 indicated the beginning of a new era for the entity and laid the foundation for its success and sustainability while ensuring lived experience decision-making will lead the Board and entity.

The new entity and its ongoing development rest firmly on a strong values base which has guided MHM2 from its grassroots' beginning. That values base commits MHM2's people to work in ways that are Gracious, Just, Hopeful, Informed and Resolute. These values have been adopted by the Board and continue to provide a robust guiding framework for MHM2's activities. Since February 2021, examples of those activities have included:

- **Families 4 Families WA.** The volunteer, peer-led and organized bi-monthly program will celebrate its eleventh birthday in 2022. During that time, it has never missed a scheduled meeting even when impacted by the pandemic which saw the program move and remain online. Thanks go to two of the peer volunteer facilitators - Ann McGuire and Wendy Cream - who play a key role in keeping the F4FWA community engaged and connected.
- **Project partnership and leadership.** Specific projects undertaken are named in the Treasurer's Report to the AGM and detailed in monthly Chairperson's reports. Of particular note is the 2021/22 National Forensic Mental Health Principles research project, funded by the National Mental Health Commission (NMHC) in which MHM2 led the national Lived Experience consultations. As part of leading these consultations, MHM2 developed stronger links with disability and Aboriginal individuals and agencies to ensure that a diversity of perspectives informed the project.
- **Representation.** MHM2 members provide representation on a number of key sector committees including:
 - the WA Comms Group (led by the Mental Health Commission to inform the WA representatives to the National Consumer and Carer Mental Health Forum)
 - the WA Association for Mental Health NDIS Quality and Safeguards Sector Readiness Project Reference Group.
 - The Sector Reference Group for the development of the WA Lived Experience (Peer) Workforce Framework.
- **Strategic Planning.** The development of our Strategic Plan reflected the Board's commitment to privileging lived experience expertise while learning from other expertise. We even managed to fit the plan on one page! This reflects a desire to make our documents accessible and easy to understand.
- **Networking.** This has included a range of formal and informal activities including:
 - Guest speaker re MHM2 at the Family Leadership Forum in November 2021.

- Foundation member of the online Global Families for Dialogic Approaches group.
- Participation in a range of sector forums and consultations.
- Invitation to participate in the NMHC's Lived Experience Forum (July 2022).
- **Systemic Advocacy.** MHM2 continues to promote and advocate for the rights and needs of individuals, families and significant others in the mental health, alcohol and other drug and criminal justice areas. Examples of these activities include:
 - writing to the Honorable Jim McGinty, Independent Chairperson of the Graylands Reconfiguration and Forensics Taskforce (GRAFT) querying the lack of consumer or family/significant other membership of the Taskforce. His response indicated an understanding of the need for broader input including from people with lived experience and advised of the formation of a Lived Experience Advisory Group.
 - developing and writing a submission to the recent Independent Governance Review of the Health Services Act 2016.
 - Participating in national consultations as part of the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations' network, particularly around detention and economic neglect.

While project-related activities are resourced, it is not the case for all of the activities which are undertaken. I would like to thank the Directors who generously volunteer their time, energy, enthusiasm and expertise to ensure that MHM2 continues to be represented and promoted in key areas. I would like to acknowledge inaugural Directors Mike Seward, who resigned for family reasons in February 2022, and Bridget Silvestri who is retiring in July 2022 for their generous contributions to establishing MHM2 Ltd. It is appreciated that they have both flagged a willingness to be involved in MHM2's activities in other roles in the future.

The way in which the Board has approached *how* MHM2 will operate has been equally as important as identifying *what* it will do. In early discussions related to the development of the Strategic Plan, it became clear that operating an entity which seeks to challenge and shift power for its community members and prioritise lived experience perspectives and expertise in decision-making demands a modelling of those processes and practices in its governance structure. For example, the Board prioritised capacity-building investment from its reserves to provide AICD Foundations for NFP training to Board Directors who had previously not undertaken it.

This decision to 'do business differently' while building and embedding sound governance requires a commitment by all Directors to openness, reflective practice as individual members and as a Board, engagement in new ideas with curiosity and a willingness to learn and grow. It also requires engaging in respectful challenge as well as strengths-based practice. This work is not for the faint-hearted particularly when being pursued within a tight budgetary environment and the broader context of a pandemic. It is however, critical to the long-term success and impact of MHM2 as an innovative, values-based leader in the mental health, alcohol and other drug and criminal justice areas.

I would like to thank my Board colleagues for the willingness, focus and energy they have contributed to this important and foundational part of MHM2's development. These carefully crafted foundations will provide the launching pad for the innovative approaches and activities required of MHM2 to change the experiences of individuals, family members and significant others for the better.

Margaret Doherty
 Margaret Doherty
 Founder / Chairperson
 26 June 2022