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8 January 2022

With 2022 we are entering a New Year in a New World which could well be named A Brave New World – bravery to move on and hopefully to help the world around us to heal. Much as the past two years, were challenging, hopefully they have taught us some valuable lessons.

I'm pretty sure we all know individuals who have been struck hard by the pandemic and need compassion and understanding. They may need our tangible support, but to many a shoulder to lean on and an ear from someone who understands can be healing. The planet is also making it very obvious that healing is needed. Unless we heed 'Mother' Earth's many signals, the consequences may be tragic, with 'her' demise unlikely to leave lives and communities unchanged.

The really good thing is that we are leaving the *annus horribulus* of 2021 behind. While shutting the door on 2021 is a great pleasure, how to manage 2022 and our New World is something each of us needs to think about.

Our first two speakers are mothers whose perspectives as carers has led them to be long term members of our group while working via their professional lives to improving the lives of others,

The ISFAF committee looks forward to beginning the year sharing experiences, joys and challenges, compassion, caring and mutual support among friends old and new. The ethos of ISFAF is sharing and connection.

Although Zoom has enabled access by members who cannot attend due to distance or being unwell, it has been disappointing to the point of embarrassment that when contact was possible and at a time when speakers who have made the effort to come to us with carefully prepared material, we were at times faced with a greater audience on screen than at St. Kilda Road. If I had been one of those speakers, I would be asking myself why I also didn't have the opportunity to sit at home in comfort – or

perhaps even just to post a pre-recorded lecture online.

The fact is that there are a large number of sources of useful local and general information available on the internet. We encourage you to access them and to share them with us, as we share with you via our regular emails and newsletters. However, unless we meet face to face (even if masked!!), the camaraderie and connection that is the foundation of ISFAF will be lost and our current volunteers may feel there is no need to spend their time on yet another digital organization among the many well-funded government and NGO virtual groups.

Accordingly, committee will decide in early February regarding the future of hybrid meetings. Please check our website for the outcome. In the meantime we look forward to meeting face to face whenever possible.

ISFAF CARER SUPPORT GROUP MONTHLY MEETINGS

2nd Tuesday of each month Feb - Nov
Level 4, 549 St Kilda Road, Melbourne

From 7.15 pm, committee members provide a light supper which we look forward to sharing with you

TUESDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2022 AT 7.30PM

TOPIC: THE MANY CHALLENGES OF CARING - OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES'

**SPEAKER: DEBBIE WARNER,
FAMILY PEER SUPPORT.
AMAH, ACYMHS AND HEADSPACE**

TUESDAY 8 MARCH 2022 AT 7.30 pm

TOPIC: SCHIZOPHRENIA - PERSONAL CARER & PUBLIC HEALTH PHYSICIAN PERSPECTIVE

**SPEAKER: PROFESSOR ANNE-LOUISE PONSONBY
MB BS ,PHD, FAFPHM, RACP**

There is no charge for meetings,
but a small donation is greatly appreciated

Please ensure that you have proof of vaccination
with you when attending.

For help with transport, phone Judi:0425 723 746

FRIDAY 18 FEB TO MONDAY 21 FEB. 2022

ISFAF POST PANDEMIC RETREAT

PRESENTATION FAMILY CENTRE AT BALNARRING



Cost:

Booking Fee: \$15 pensioners \$30 non-pensioners **plus**
On arrival: \$15 pensioners \$30 non-pensioners.



We would appreciate your help in finalizing numbers asap for this weekend.

The event was originally planned for 2021 and we need to know your current plans.

Please email: judi.burstyner@gmail.com

ASAP:

...to confirm or cancel any booking you have made for this retreat,

or

...wish to book (if vacancy arises).

We thank the Victorian Government for their generosity in subsidizing this event via DHHS.



New Mental Health Lived Experience Leadership

[New Mental Health Lived Experience Leadership | Premier of Victoria](#)

To comply with a key recommendation of the Vic Royal Com. into Mental Health that the Vic Govt. Health System employs people with lived experience of mental illness or psychological distress in leadership positions within the Department of Health.

Mary O'Hagan has been appointed as the first Executive Director of Lived Experience. Ms

O'Hagan, is an internationally recognised lived experience executive and advocate whose 35 year passionate dedication to the lived experience movement has led her to many roles including as a Mental Health Commissioner of New Zealand, where she advocated as a strong voice for change.

This new leadership role will work to ensure that mental health and alcohol and other drug services respond to the needs of consumers and their carers by engaging their views and expertise in the development of policies and programs.

Born in New Zealand, Ms O'Hagan experienced psychological distress as a young woman and felt trapped in services that exacerbated her distress without considering her preferences for treatment and support.

Since this time, she has championed the insights and voices of people with lived experience to be embedded in mental health services and is passionate about transforming the mental health system from the inside.

A record \$3.8 billion was allocated in the Victorian Budget 2021/22 to start the critical mental health and wellbeing reform and to support the system now – to ensure all Victorians can get the treatment, care and support they need, when they need it.

Quote attributable to Executive Director, Lived Experience Mary O'Hagan

"I see so much hope for mental health reform here in Victoria. It won't be easy, but there's never been a more important time for people with lived experience – consumers, carers, families and supporters - to take on leadership roles to bring real changes to the new system and new services."

Having heard many stories since being Chair of ISFAF, I think most of us would agree that there is a lot of reform needed and *'it won't be easy!!'* Nevertheless I hold hope that with Ms O'Hagan and the others working on reform, there may be well deserved light for some at the end of a very very long tunnel. When considering the stream of tragic stories I hear of how individuals are treated within our 'mental health system' I always wonder whether if those individuals were being treated in any other health service, would there be any health system anywhere in the advanced world which would allow the tragedies to just keep rolling on.

TANDEM AWARDS

Tandem is the Victorian peak body representing family and friends who support individuals living with mental health issues. Tandem offers help to carers directly and works to advocate for the benefit of the community of carers in mental health. For further information: <https://tandemcarers.org.au/>

As usual, the prestigious Tandem Awards in 2021 included people you may recognize:

Clinical (Individual)	Ian Protheroe – St Kilda Road Mobile Support and Treatment Team
Clinical (Service)	The St Kilda Mobile Support and Treatment Team
NDIS Award	Alexandra McLeod – Specialist Support Coordinator, Therapist and Wellbeing Counsellor at Clarable
Carer Lived Experience Workforce (CLEW)	Nina Cook - the first Carer Consultant for Aged Persons Services and Senior Carer Peer Worker, Adult Mental Health, Eastern Health
Community (Individual)	Veronica Komodromou – Carer Wellbeing Group Coordinator, Northern Melbourne (Wellways)
The Office of the Chief Psychiatrist Award	Dianne Buis - Carer Peer Support Worker at Eastern Health Maroondah Inpatient Unit
The Safer Care Victoria Award	Maureen Swinson - Orygen Youth Access Team

Congratulations to all recipients, but special thank you to Ian, members of MST and Alexandra from Clarable, the organization founded and directed by our committee member, Tania.

New Victorian Minister for Carers

Congratulations to Mr Anthony Carbines who was appointed in December 2021 as the Minister for Ageing, Disability, Carers and as the Minister for Child Protection and Family Services. Mr Carbines comes to this role after having been the MLA for Ivanhoe since 2010 and his previous role as Parliamentary Secretary for Carers and Volunteers.

Support for Carers Programme

Carers Victoria <https://www.carersvictoria.org.au/> is the peak body for all Victorian carers – ie including mental health among the full range of carers. The Support for Carers programme provides respite and other services across a wide range of locations via a wide range of providers. For example, in our area, there are many organizations within the programme, of which provides a range of services. It is worth looking at the variety of support open to us locally, <https://www.carersvictoria.org.au/benefits/support-for-carers-program>

Online and Telephoned Support Programmes

<https://ffsp.com.au/>

A range of programmes and packages are available online, including specific help for individuals supporting a loved one using alcohol / other illegal drugs such as ice, dealing with family violence, the challenges of rural areas.

This service is federally funded and offered nationally via the universities of NSW and Newcastle.

<https://theloginlab.com/>

The website shows a range of completed and ongoing projects to help users of substances and their carers.

On the Line

Angus Clelland, the CEO of Mental Health Victoria is leaving MHV to become CEO of On the Line which provides 24/7 access online or via the telephone. Services include counselling support and case management for:

- Relationship issues
- Mental illness (e.g. depression, anxiety, PTSD)
- Domestic and family violence (using and experiencing)
- Substance abuse and addiction
- Suicide prevention
- Trauma-informed practice
- Social isolation and loneliness
- Low intensity support

To establish initial contact Ph: 8371 2800 during BH. or use the webpage.

ReachOut Australia

ReachOut claims to be the most accessed online mental health service in Australia for young people and their parents. They also claim to be the world's first online mental health service for young people.

ReachOut's trusted self-help information, peer-support program with referral tools to save lives by

helping young people to be and to stay well. UpToDate Information is also provided to help family and friends. They claim that in their 20 years of activity nationally, 2M individuals use their services annually ReachOut can be contacted M-F 9 am to 5 pm Ph:: 02 8029 7777.or click [About ReachOut Australia : Home](#)

Emergency help for children, teens and young adults and families is also available via Kids Helpline [Kids Helpline | Phone Counselling Service | 1800 55 1800](#)

CRISIS SUPPORT

Family Violence Support

If you are concerned about your safety and/or the safety and wellbeing of other(s) **leave immediately and contact the police.**

Family Violence - The Orange Door

[Family violence support and extra help for children and families \(orangedoor.vic.gov.au\)](#)

Ph: 1800 319 353 or 1800187 263

- free state-wide services to which you don't need a referral,
- Workers at The Orange Door will treat your situation sensitively.
- if necessary, use the Quick exit button to easily leave the website BUT this doesn't clear the website from your browser history.
- Websites you look at are stored in your browser. To clear these, click on:
[Clear your browser history | The Orange Door](#)

Some After Hours services listed at:

[Locations | The Orange Door:](#)

[Home | 1800RESPECT](#) -24/7 National - Assault, Family violence, Counselling **Ph: 1800 737 732**

[Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre](#) 24/7
Ph: 1800 015 188

[Child protection - DHHS Services \(dffh.vic.gov.au\)](#) **Ph: 13 12 78.**24/7 on weekends and public hols only. Otherwise 5 pm-9 pm weekdays

Men's Referral [NTV | Home](#) **Ph: 1300 766 491** – 8am – 9 pm Mon-Fri and 9 am to 5 pm Sat/Sun.

[Free help, support, referrals & counselling for men: MensLine Australia](#) - **Ph: 1300 78 99 78**

Rainbow Door [WithRespect](#) (LGBTIQA and family and friends) 1800 729 367 or text 0480 017 246

[QLife](#) 3 pm to midnight each night **Ph: 1800 184 527**
Victims of Crime for adult male victims **Ph: 1800 819 817**
or text 0427 767 891

[Sexual Assault Crisis Line » Sexual Assault Crisis Line \(sacl.com.au\)](#) Ph 1800 806 292 (24/7)

[Lifeline Australia - 13 11 14 - Crisis Support. Suicide Prevention..](#) 24/7 Crisis support **Ph 13 11 14**

[Anxiety, depression and suicide prevention support - Beyond Blue](#) Ph: **1300 22 26 36 or 1800 512 348**

[Mental health counselling & suicide prevention Suicide Call Back Service](#)—Ph **1300 659 467** - 24/7 if affected by suicide yourself or others around you

News from the NDIS -Release of the Psychosocial Recovery Framework

The NDIA has announced that the NDIS Psychosocial Disability Recovery-Oriented Framework has now been endorsed by all Commonwealth and State and Territory Disability Ministers. Mental Health Australia has worked closely with the NDIA in the development of the Framework and strongly supports its aim to ensure that participants living with psychosocial disability are supported in their recovery journey to live a meaningful life in their community and can access and choose supports that enable independence and social and economic participation. The Recovery Framework is informed by the experiences of participants and their families and carers, service providers and state and territory governments. To learn more, click on the link below:

[Mental Health Australia Welcomes Recovery Framework | Mental Health Australia \(mhaustralia.org\)](#)

\$308.6M. to Strengthening of Australia's primary care health system

A funding boost of \$308.6M to the primary health system was announced in December 2021. Improvements include:

- extension of the MBS subsidised mental health support to December 2022,
- enabling telehealth to remain permanently

According to Headspace CEO, Jason Trethowan, telehealth is a way to ensure young people can access support on their help-seeking journey how it best suits them. Not only has telehealth enabled important services, like GPs communities and at headspace centres, to continue to deliver support to young people during the COVID-19 pandemic, it has also opened up options for those individuals of all ages who ordinarily wouldn't have been able to access help or might've disengaged from help-seeking. [headspace welcomes Government announcement to strengthen Australia's primary care health system](#)

MH Australia: 2022-23 Pre-Budget Submission

Following the Productivity Commission's once-in-a-generation Inquiry into Mental Health, which shone an '*uncompromising light on the deeply flawed nature of the current mental health system*', MHA has prepared a Pre-Budget submission advising that '*it is now authoritatively clear that mental health requires billions of dollars of investment, not millions.*' The submission is available at: [2022-23 Pre-Budget Submission | Mental Health Australia \(mhaustralia.org\)](https://www.mhaustralia.org/2022-23-Pre-Budget-Submission)

It calls for investing in four key priorities to sustain momentum in mental health reform. These priorities have been identified through analysis of yet-to-be implemented recommendations from the Productivity Commission Inquiry:

1. lived Experience leadership,
2. government leadership and accountability,
3. codesign implementation of a community focussed mental health system,
4. the mental health workforce.

More support and relief for mental health carers (VIC)

The Andrews Government is boosting funding to assist carers of individuals with mental health issues.. Minister for Mental Health James Merlino announced \$16.8 million investment to help Victorian carers, either financially or with relief and respite from their caring roles. The support includes \$8.8 million for the Mental Health Carer Support Fund (MHCSF) to help more carers pay for expenses related to their caring role and support their own health - whether it's respite from their caring responsibilities, food and bills for their own family, or supporting their personal wellbeing through exercise or counselling.

Access to the MHCSF can be made via the public mental health services.

Walking Events Victoria | Pathways For Carers Program

<https://www.pathwaysforcarers.com.au>

Pathways for Carers is a Victorian Government funded program offering monthly walks among carers, thus providing the opportunity to socialise while connecting with nature and updating about services, available support and relevant news.

Various local government electorates host these uplifting free monthly events. Walking groups typically use a local trail in a casual, no-stress environment.

The regular event concludes at a local community hall or cafe where participants have the opportunity to hear from a guest speaker whilst sharing a delicious complimentary morning tea. Put simply it is fresh air, a friendly face and a hot cuppa at the end!

Walks are held regularly in a wide range of areas, which are listed on the website under "Find a Walk":

Are you a Carer who needs a holiday?

In addition to the ISFAF retreat starting 18 February, the Presentation Family Centre provides many opportunities for carers to holiday in Balnarring. For more details or to express your interest in attending, email Jade: programs@pfc.org.au

Lived Experience Psychology Report (livedexperienceaustralia.com.au)

Lived Experience Australia is excited to announce the launch of their report exploring consumer and carer experiences of psychology services in Australia. Psychologists are an integral part of Australia's mental health care landscape, with approximately 1.26 million consumers accessing the services of psychologists through Medicare each year. Throughout the pandemic, demand for psychologists' services has skyrocketed. The research aimed to understand psychological service needs of mental health consumers and carers and to provide a collective voice to government and service providers to inform service and policy design.

<https://www.livedexperienceaustralia.com.au/psychology-report>

Are you or someone you know Lonely?

Loneliness is more common than most of us realize, with one in four Australian adults reporting loneliness. Feelings of loneliness are personal and therefore everyone's experience is different. Even in a crowded room, a person can feel completely alone, emotionally and socially excluded. This affects general quality of life, including mental and physical health and in many cases has been increased by the pandemic.

Irrespective of your background, if you are feeling lonely, Griepline's free Care-to-Call service can provide a compassionate 'phone pal' to rely on for a friendly weekly chat.

To find out more about Care-to-call click [Care-to-Call - Griepline](#) or phone 1300 845 745

Have you settled your Advanced Care Plan?

<https://learning.advancecareplanning.org.au/index.php?redirect=0>

Advance Care Planning is a process that supports adults, at any age or stage of health, in understanding and sharing their personal values, life goals, and preferences regarding future medical care.

Advance Care Planning Australia Learning TM supports health practitioners, care workers, students, individuals and substitute decision-makers to learn about advance care planning.

Free Advanced Care planning modules can be viewed online and completed at your own pace.

To read more, click on: [Learning Advance Care Planning](#)

Securing The Future for your Loved One:

The Office of the Public Advocate has prepared a guide to help carers put in place some safeguards to ensure the person you care for is properly provided for, if something were to happen to you. A number of downloadable resources are available at: [Securing Their Future: Planning for the future when you care for a person with disability - Office of the Public Advocate](#)

Succession Planning and VALID - Victorian Advocacy League For Individuals With Disability

VALID has been advocating for people with a disability in Victoria since 1989.

Over that time, Valid has developed training tools, information and resources, and advocacy to help empower people with disability and their families.

Among their other workshops, in 2022 they are running courses via Zoom on succession planning to help carers consider how to best look after their loved ones when the carer(s) are unable to do so. Places are limited, bookings are essential. Contact Maree via [The-Succession-Planning-Puzzle-flyer-Regn-for-Courses-in-2022-2.pdf \(valid.org.au\)](#) or M: 0409 965 264

Integrating the voices of people with lived experience in mental health reform.

\$6.2M has been allocated by the Vic government to expand the work of the Vic Mental Illness Awareness Council (VMIAC) to ensure that the voice of individuals with mental illness is heeded in planning and functioning of mental health services. To learn more about VMIAC, phone 9380 9300 or click: [VMIAC Home Page](#)

Family Relationship Support for Carers (FRSC) - EACH

EACH is an organization based on a Social Model of Health, ie that health and wellbeing are determined by a combination of medical, behavioural, social and environmental factors.

EACH recognises that not everyone experiences life equally, by virtue of a range of factors including gender, socio-economic status, cultural background and education level. The focus is therefore about creating opportunities for equitable outcomes. No matter what someone's starting place, By providing a wide range of medical, allied health and social assistance such as housing and employment, EACH aims to assist individuals with mental health issues to fulfill their hopes and aspirations Their offices are located across NSW and Victoria. In Melbourne, their services are provided principally by outreach in the eastern suburbs and can be funded via the NDIS. Phone 1300 003 224 or click: [About EACH - EACH](#)

Victorian Disability Worker Commission can take complaints about disability workers

Established in July 2020, the Victorian Disability Worker Commission regulates all disability workers in Victoria, regardless of their funding. The Commission can take and investigate **complaints about Victorian disability workers**.

Complaints can be made by calling 1800 497 132 between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday or via an online form at: [VDWC Public Services](#)

Making a valid complaint is a great way to improve services for everyone.

Victorian Workers Disability Commission:

- **helping you choose a registered disability worker**

By choosing a registered worker, people can be confident the worker has the background to meet professional standards. To contact VDWC, phone 1800 497 or view the list of registered disability workers at [Victorian Disability Worker Commission \(vdwc.vic.gov.au\)](#)

Our Global Village

To join a wide range of online programmes click on: [Holiday hArts - An open peer-centred Art Space Tickets, Multiple Dates | Eventbrite](#)
Because the programmes are mostly run from North America you will need to convert the time. eg at: [Time Zone Converter – Time Difference Calculator \(timeanddate.com\)](#)

[Dear Landlord: A free online self-help resource for renters in Victoria – Justice Connect](#)

Justice Connect has a helpful and free online resource, to help renters negotiate the Victorian Government's latest rent relief grant worth up to \$1500.

[COVID-19 support payments for Victorians – Justice Connect](#)

As part of navigating the online tool, questions are presented in plain English, with tips along the way to help renters answer the questions based on their personal situation.

ISFAF DATES TO REMEMBER

URGENT: Please don't forget to email judi.burstyner@gmail.com with your plans regarding the ISFAF Retreat commencing 18 February.

Walks n Chats... 1st and 3rd Thursdays starting in Feb

Walkers meet outside Northpoint Café (beach end of North Rd, Brighton) at 1.30 pm. Non-walkers are very welcome to join us at 2.45 in the caf for a chat.
February 3, 17, March 3, 17 April 7, 21
May 5, 19 June 2, 16 July 7, 21

Tuesday 8 February: ISFAF Monthly meeting

Topic: The many challenges of caring- opportunities and resources'

Speaker: Debbie Warner,
Family Peer Support.
AMAH, ACYMHS and Headspace

Friday 18 February to Monday 21 February, 2022

Retreat in Balnarring :

Tuesday 8 March: ISFAF Monthly meeting

Topic: Schizophrenia - personal carer & public health physician perspective

Speaker: Professor Anne-louise Ponsonby
MB BS ,PHD, FAFPHM, RACP

ISFAF Monthly meetings...2nd Tuesday of the month,

Feb to Nov, 7.30 pm at 549 St Kilda Rd, Melb.

Supper served at 7.15 pm

Dec. Meeting: Our Annual End of Year Dinner

It's been a very difficult year for many. The current Omicron seems to be testing the patience of our community. Even though we have persevered reasonably well through the past two years, this last wave has caused havoc with the mental health of some of the most patient among us. As the other waves, it will pass and we will be able to settle into our new normal.

Hopefully you are all managing our current challenges and keeping hydrated in the very hot weather.

I look forward to catching up at our first 2022 Walk 'n Chat on Thursday 3 February and at our monthly meetings, on the second Tuesday of each month. My fingers are crossed that our extended weekend retreat, which has already been postponed three times, will finally commence on Friday 18 February in beautiful Balnarring, where the beach beckons.

In the meantime, I thought I'd share some interesting quotes I received from a friend. Of course, they only describe the past

Regards,
Judi
M; 0425 723 746.

Some men change their party because of principles; others their principles for the sake of the party.
Winston Churchill.

I don't make jokes. I just watch the government and report the facts. *Will Rogers (1879-1935)*

So if we lie to the government it's a felony. If they lie to us, it's politics. *Bill Murray*

Politicians are the same all over.
They promise to build a bridge even where there is no river.
~*Nikita Khrushchev, Russian Soviet politician*

Politics is the gentle art of getting votes from the poor and campaign funds from the rich, by promising to protect each from the other. ~*Oscar Ameringer, "the Mark Twain of American Socialism.*

I offered my opponents a deal: "if they stop telling lies about me, I will stop telling the truth about them". ~*Adlai Stevenson, campaign speech, 1952.*

I don't make jokes. I just watch the Government and report the facts! ~*Will Rogers (1879- 1935)*

A politician is a fellow who will lay down your life for his country. ~*Texas Guinan. 19th century American businessman*