



MHCoPES

**better**services **better**outcomes

partnership

ACCESS TO SERVICES

recovery

expertise

guidance

consumers

consultation

Mental Health Consumer Perceptions and Experiences of Services

# bettterservices betteroutcomes

## THE MH-CoPES VISION

- Consumers' voices will be recognised as essential in guiding services
- Consumers' views will be incorporated into Mental Health Service improvement
- Mental Health Services and consumers in NSW will work together in partnership to address issues important to consumers
- Mental Health Services will have better processes to be more responsive and accountable to consumers.

For more information about MH-CoPES:



- Please see the NSW CAG website [www.nswcag.org.au](http://www.nswcag.org.au)  
Follow the link "Projects" and then click on "MH-CoPES";
- Contact one of your local MH-CoPES Coordinators; or
- Contact the NSW CAG MH-CoPES Project Team

**NSW CAG–Mental Health Inc.**

Suite 501, 80 William Street

Sydney NSW 2011

E: [koakley@nswcag.org.au](mailto:koakley@nswcag.org.au)



## WHAT IS MH-CoPES?

MH-CoPES, or Mental Health Consumer Perceptions and Experiences of Services, is a project that aims to develop a statewide process for consumers to express their views and experiences of mental health services in NSW and for this feedback to direct the way services improve.

MH-CoPES is being conducted by the NSW Consumer Advisory Group–Mental Health Inc. (NSW CAG) in partnership with the Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol Office, NSW Department of Health.

The first stage of the MH-CoPES Project started in 2004. Based on the work completed and recommendations made to NSW Health at the end of Stage 1, a second stage of the project has commenced.

## WHAT HAPPENED TO MH-CoPES STAGE 1?

MH-CoPES Stage 1 included a literature review and consultations with key stakeholders across NSW. A Technical Working Group of consumers, service providers and a methodological consultant guided the project.

MH-CoPES Stage 1 produced:

- the draft MH-CoPES Framework for Consumer Evaluation of Mental Health Services;
- two versions of the MH-CoPES Questionnaire: one for use by consumers in current/recent contact with inpatient services and the other for consumers in current contact with community services; and
- ten specific recommendations to NSW Health and identification of issues that need further consideration.

*Measuring and Responding to Consumer Perceptions and Experiences of Adult Mental Health Services, Stage One: Final Report and Recommendations* can be found at [www.nswcag.org.au](http://www.nswcag.org.au)

Follow the link "Projects" and then click on "MH-CoPES".

## THE MH-CoPES FRAMEWORK FOR CONSUMER EVALUATION OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

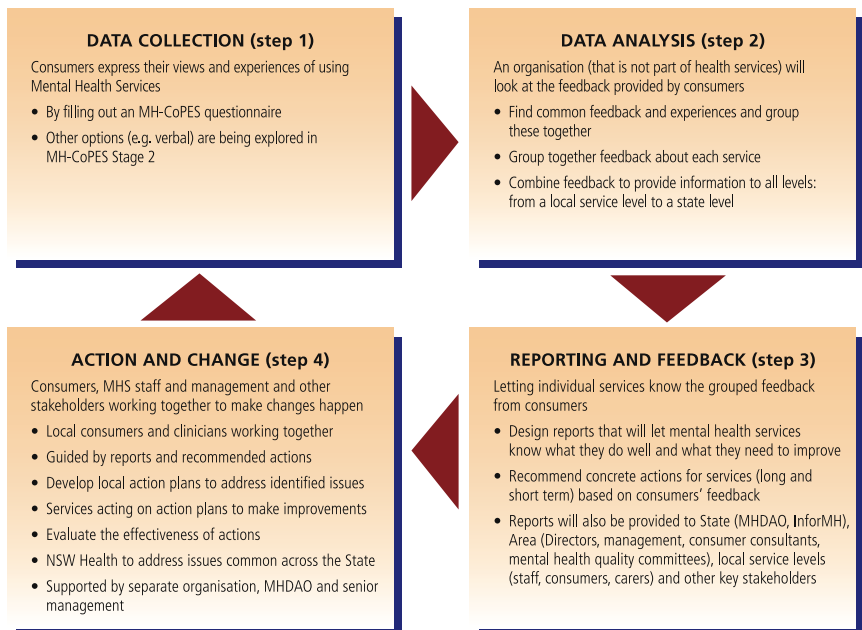
The MH-CoPES Framework was designed to support consumer participation in the evaluation and improvement of mental health services. It aims to assist mental health services to both **listen** and **respond** to consumer perceptions and experiences of services. The MH-CoPES Framework from Stage 1 will be implemented and developed further over the next two years.

The Framework has four steps that make up one complete evaluation cycle and then the process starts again from step 1. Completing the steps repeatedly will:

- show if the changes put in place in the previous cycle are working to improve the service; and
- provide an ongoing process for consumers to provide their feedback and for services to improve.

Stage 2 of the project will look at how much time is needed for each cycle.

- **Step 1.** "Data Collection" involves consumers providing their feedback about services through using the MH-CoPES Questionnaires and other data collection methods.
- **Step 2.** "Data Analysis" involves grouping together common feedback from consumers.
- **Step 3.** "Reporting and Feedback" is where the grouped information from Step 2 is put into reports and provided to services, NSW Health and consumers ready to direct "Action and Change".
- **Step 4.** "Action and Change" is the last step in the cycle where changes and improvements in services happen.



## THE MH-CoPES FRAMEWORK IN PRACTICE



### IS MH-CoPES A NEW CONCEPT?

Consumer participation in service evaluation is not a new concept. Many services throughout NSW already have their own surveys for consumer evaluation of the service; however some do not. MH-CoPES aims to create one mechanism that is consistent throughout NSW for consumers to provide their feedback about services. This will make things easier for consumers and assist services to know what they are doing well, and where things need to improve.

The MH-CoPES Framework describes the process for Consumer Evaluation of Mental Health Services. This Framework is consistent with the principles of Continuous Quality Improvement currently used by services.

### WHO IS MH-CoPES FOR?

At this stage, MH-CoPES has been developed for trial for:

- current or very recent adult consumers of mental health services
- public sector Area Mental Health Services.

At the end of Stage 1, recommendations were made to NSW Health for future work to be conducted to develop the MH-CoPES Framework for use by other population groups, services and stakeholders. Examples included were older people, children, adolescents, indigenous people, and culturally and linguistically diverse groups.

# THE MH-CoPES QUESTIONNAIRE

The MH-CoPES Questionnaire has been developed to be used in Step 1, the Data Collection phase of the MH-CoPES Framework. This involves consumers completing the questionnaires to provide their feedback about their perceptions and experiences of the mental health service. Getting this feedback regularly will help services to identify what they are doing well and where they need to improve. The MH-CoPES Questionnaires will be developed further during MH-CoPES Stage 2.

Other ways for consumers to provide their feedback will also be evaluated during MH-CoPES Stage 2.



## WHAT IS HAPPENING IN MH-CoPES STAGE 2?

Stage 2 is a three year project, continuing until December 2008. The Project will further develop and refine the MH-CoPES Framework and Questionnaires ready for full implementation across adult public Mental Health Services in NSW. To achieve this NSW CAG will be conducting a trial of the Framework, including the Questionnaires in partnership with services in Orange, Greater Western Area Health Service and Ryde, Northern Sydney Central Coast Area Health Service. While this is happening InforMH, NSW Health, will be setting up MH-CoPES across the state based on the first stage of the Project.

During the trial NSW CAG will be working closely with consumers and mental health services in Orange and Ryde to better understand all four steps of the Framework. This will build an understanding of the full cycle of evaluation from consumers providing feedback through to action and change. The trial will involve:

- Consumers in selected services providing their feedback using the questionnaire
- The MH-CoPES Project Team looking at:
  - a) what other options besides the questionnaire are needed in Step 1 (Data Collection) for consumers to provide feedback;
  - b) the best methods for consumers to receive and return the questionnaire;
  - c) what support is most useful for consumers in completing the questionnaire;
  - d) the best way to report consumers' feedback so it can be used to improve services; and
  - e) making sure the feedback provided through questionnaires is representative of consumers' perceptions and experiences of services.
- The MH-CoPES Project Team supporting services to develop plans to improve in response to the feedback from consumers

At the same time InforMH will introduce the first three steps of the MH-CoPES Framework to services throughout NSW. This will involve:

- Distribution of questionnaires by the Areas to consumers currently/recently using adult public mental health inpatient and community services
- Providing reports based on questionnaire responses to each Area Mental Health Service
- Refining how MH-CoPES is implemented based on recommendations from the trial described above.

This will ensure mental health services across NSW are prepared and ready to put into practice the final recommendations and guidelines for the MH-CoPES Framework. These will be provided to NSW Health at the end of 2008.

**better**services **better**outcomes