

Mental Health Consumer Perceptions and Experiences of Services (MH-CoPES)

A partnership between the NSW Consumer Advisory Group - Mental Health Inc. and NSW Health, Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol Office



**Update #5,
January 2008**

Hello and welcome to a new year and the fifth update for the Mental Health Consumer Perceptions and Experiences of Services (MH-CoPES) Stage 2 Project. In this update you will hear about:

- How consumers' MH-CoPES feedback at pilot sites through MH-CoPES is leading to service improvements
- How MH-CoPES can assist services in satisfying the requirements for accreditation
- The pilot occurring in 2008
- Some statistics about the MH-CoPES Questionnaire
- Changes to the MH-CoPES Project Team

better services

better outcomes

**MH-CoPES Stage 2
Project Update # 5, January 2008**

Consumers' feedback through MH-CoPES helps services to improve

Our partners in Ryde and Orange have been developing plans in collaboration with consumers for Action and Change to improve services based on consumers' feedback through MH-CoPES.

Meg Simpson, Coordinator Health Promotion & Early Intervention, Mental Health & Drug & Alcohol Services, GWAHS tells some of the story in Orange:

"Staff at Greater Western Area Health Services were excited to be able to use the feedback through MH-CoPES to develop local service quality improvement projects. Although quality improvement projects were already in place, MH-CoPES feedback enabled staff to specifically look at how they might make improvements based on consumers' feedback. Staff were pleased that generally consumers were very happy with the service they received and they tended to agree with consumers in terms of the areas they thought could be improved. They realised that often there is a very small and easy change that can be made. Staff

teams met to discuss the feedback; the areas that consumers said could be improved and to try and identify strategies to address them. Staff and consumers have had a number of meetings where they have discussed these plans and in particular strategies that are relevant to a number of the service units that could be implemented broadly across the Area Mental Health Services.

A number of these strategies are currently being implemented, for example:

- *Staff realised that although there are display stands for brochures in the reception area of the acute admissions ward, they are not accessible for consumers. So, wall mounted brochure holders are now being ordered so that they can be installed in the recreation area accessible for consumers.*

Continued on page 2

Consumers' feedback through MH-CoPES helps services to improve ... continued from page 1

"While most of the changes require only small actions, they are a big step; services are listening to consumers and acting on their feedback."

- Way Ahead Mental Health Information and Services Directory NSW has been ordered for all wards to enable staff to provide consumers with up to date information about services.
- Plans are also in place to review and update the consumer rights and responsibilities information brochures, with one service immediately putting the information in positions more accessible to new and longer term consumers and families.
- One of the Community Mental Health Service units has also decided to make a priority of checking a consumer's literacy

level up front so that if reading is an issue staff can spend more time going through the information verbally with the consumer.

These are just a few examples of several strategies that services in Orange are implementing to improve services as a result of MH-CoPES."

While most of the changes require only small actions, they are a big step; services are listening to consumers and acting to improve services based on their feedback.

A pilot will allow a dry run of the recommended guidelines for the MH-CoPES Framework in preparation for its full implementation throughout NSW.

A pilot of MH-CoPES in 2008

In 2008 NSW CAG will continue to work with services and consumers in Orange and Ryde to further refine the guidelines and processes for each of the four steps of the MH-CoPES Framework. A pilot will commence in 2008 that will be based on the recommended guidelines developed during the trial. It will allow a "dry run" of these

guidelines for the MH-CoPES Framework in preparation for its full implementation throughout NSW, while testing the refined MH-CoPES Questionnaire. A three month pilot of Data Collection will commence in February, followed by each of the steps of the MH-CoPES Framework.

Changes to the NSW CAG MH-CoPES Project Team

As many of you will know, Gillian Malins, Executive Officer, NSW CAG will be taking maternity leave starting from Easter this year. Karen Oakley, currently MH-CoPES Project Officer, will take on the role of Acting Executive Officer. Rebecca Doyle, currently MH-CoPES Research Assistant will take on the role of Acting MH-CoPES Project Officer. We also welcome to the team Sylvia Kozlowski as MH-CoPES Research Assistant. With the knowledge Rebecca has from working on the Project, we envisage this will be a smooth transition.

MH-CoPES can assist services in meeting accreditation standards

Our partners in NSCCAHS and GWAHS have highlighted the usefulness of MH-CoPES for in meeting accreditation standards.

Consumer participation in service evaluation, improvement and planning are key standards of both the National Standards for Mental Health Services and EQulP. These are used by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards to assess mental health services.

The MH-CoPES Framework (which involves four steps - *Data Collection, Data Analysis, Reporting and Feedback and Action and Change*) and Questionnaires allow services to monitor their performance on compulsory key standards. The following are examples of how MH-CoPES achieves this.

The MH-CoPES Framework:

- Demonstrates a process for and commitment to continuous quality improvement of care and service delivery.
- Provides an opportunity for consumers to evaluate services through use of the MH-CoPES Questionnaire
- Provides a way to ensure improvements to systems of care are made based on consumer feedback

Based on your experiences with THIS community mental health service in the last THREE MONTHS indicate how much improvement is needed for the following items:



The questions in the MH-CoPES Questionnaire assist in measuring:

- Planning and delivery of care in partnership with the consumer and when relevant the carer (questions 9 & 8)
- Informing consumers about and gaining consent for treatment (questions 14 & 15)
- Processes for discharge/transfer to meet the needs of consumers (questions 23 & 24)
- Safety management systems for ensuring safety and well being of consumers (questions 11 & 12)
- Consumers being informed of their rights and responsibilities (questions 11, 15, 20, 12, 16 & 21)

(MH-CoPES Questionnaire for consumers of inpatient services & MH-CoPES Questionnaire for consumers of community services)

Responses given by consumers to the questions listed above allow the service to assess how they are performing in these areas. The MH-CoPES Framework also allows for the tracking of responses over time, providing evidence of whether or not any improvements have been made.

Responses to the MH-CoPES Questionnaire can also assist in identifying problems that need a quality or clinical practice improvement project to be set up.

The MH-CoPES Questionnaire includes a range of questions relating to compulsory assessment criteria from the National Standards for Mental Health Services and EQulP

Mental Health Consumer Perceptions and Experiences of Services (MH-CoPES)

A partnership between the NSW Consumer Advisory Group - Mental Health Inc. and NSW Health, Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol Office



The MH-CoPES Questionnaire - Understanding its properties

Through the research being undertaken by NSW CAG, we have come to learn about the MH-CoPES Questionnaire. Here are some of our findings:

Validity:

Validity refers to whether the Questionnaire is actually measuring what it says it is. Our findings are that both the MH-CoPES Questionnaire for consumers of community and inpatient services **are** measuring consumers' perceptions of the service. This was established through comparing people's responses to the MH-CoPES questions with another question asking about their perceptions of services (that is, the concurrent validity of the Questionnaire)

Concurrent Validity

Total scores from the MH-CoPES questions significantly correlated with responses to the question from the NSW Health Survey "Overall, what do you think of the care you received at this community health centre/hospital?" (Questionnaire for consumers of community services: $r = 0.559$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 107$; Questionnaire for consumers of inpatient services: $r = 0.684$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 106$).

Reliability:

Reliability refers to whether the Questionnaire produces the same results over time under the same situations. Tests of the internal structures (internal reliability) of the Questionnaires show they **are consistently** measuring people's perceptions of mental health services.

Internal reliability

The Questionnaire for consumers of community services had a *Cronbach's coefficient alpha* of 0.952, and the Questionnaire for consumers of inpatient services had one of 0.962.

More work is being done to answer the question: if the same person completes the Questionnaire twice within 2 weeks, and if no changes have happened at the service are their responses to the Questionnaire the same? (That is, finding the test-retest reliability of the MH-CoPES Questionnaires).

Factors:

An examination was undertaken to see if there are statistical groups that the questions on the Questionnaires break into (a factor analysis).

Factor analyses revealed that both of the MH-CoPES Questionnaires only break into one group (that is the Questionnaires are unidimensional). This shows that all questions on the MH-CoPES Questionnaires are asking about consumers' perceptions of mental health services.

Characteristics influencing responses to the Questionnaire:

The main characteristic found to be significantly impacting on how people respond to the MH-CoPES questions is whether the person is a voluntary or involuntary consumer. People who are involuntary indicate that services are more in need of improvements than people who are voluntary.

NSW Consumer Advisory Group—Mental Health Inc.
Suite 501, 80 William Street
Sydney NSW 2011
Ph: 02 9332 0243; Fax: 02 9332 0299
Email: rdoyle@nswcag.org.au

We're on the web:
www.nswcag.org.au go to
Projects then MH-CoPES

For more information about MH-CoPES in Orange - go to the Mid Western CAG's website: www.mwcag.org.au.