

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WA MENTAL HEALTH COVID-19 RESEARCH
PANEL, HELD VIA ZOOM ON 16 JUNE 2020**

ZOOM Link:

<https://uwa.zoom.us/j/559040219?pwd=bJqenFtTEJNNlhNcmRGejVqNVY0dz09>

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<http://rebrand.ly/wamhcorp>

PRESENT:

Professor Sean Hood (The University of Western Australia) Chair
Dr Jacquita Affandi (Curtin University)
Professor Rosa Alati (Curtin University)
Wendy Cumming-Potvin (Murdoch University)
Ms Evenda Dench (The University of Western Australia)
A/Professor Joanne Dickson (Edith Cowan University)
Dr Ali Fardinpour (Wise Realities)
Caitlin Fox-Harding (Edith Cowan University)
Professor Gary Geelhoed (WA Health Translation Network)
Mr Stuart Hicks (Mindful Margaret River Alliance)
Dr Salam Hussain (The University of Western Australia/Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital)
Dr Judy MacCallum (Murdoch University)
Professor Peter McEvoy (Curtin University)
Professor Helen Milroy (University of Western Australia)
Professor Vera Morgan (University of Western Australia)
Professor Andrew Page (The University of Western Australia)
Professor Christopher Reid (Curtin University)
Professor Anna Waterreus (The University of Western Australia)
Mr Michael Wood (Mindful Margaret River Alliance)

Executive Officer (Leanne Hall)

APOLOGIES:

Ms Miriam Avery (Mindful Margaret River Alliance)
Dr Michelle Olaithe (The University of Western Australia)

Previous minutes: accepted

1. WELCOME

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting, and introduced Mr Michael Woods and Mr Stuart Hicks from the Mindful Margaret River Alliance. Welcome to Professor Gary Geelhoed from WA Health Translation Network.

Mr Hicks gave an overview of the Mindful Margaret River Alliance. The Alliance formed following the conclusion of the Lishman Health Foundation Report into the Mental Health and Wellbeing of the Augusta-Margaret River community. The Alliance is comprised of community representatives, mental health professionals, government agencies and the Shire of Augusta-Margaret River.

In relation to COVID-19 the Alliance is working on issues relating to access to mental health support, building knowledge and resilience within the community, collaboration between practitioners, and sustaining mental health and wellbeing.

2. PLANNING FOR NATIONAL COVID-MENTAL HEALTH GRANT

Professor Hood invited discussion on a potential WAMH-CoRP coordinated submission to the MRRF Coronavirus Research Response 2020 COVID-19 Mental Health Research Grant.

There are a number of projects in the group that might be considered for submission to the COVID grant, and that would potentially match with the priority areas identified. Would need to be mindful of duplication with other submissions.

Professor McEvoy suggested using the workstream option to bring together the group on a broader CIVIC project. The workstreams currently identified are:

- CIVIC Communities – adult populations using the WA electoral role
- Health care workers
- Tertiary students
- Educators
- FIFO workers
- First responders
- Health care needs assessment of people with lived experience
- Clinicians and health care providers (Delphi Study)
- Vulnerable Populations
- Severe mental illness
- Aged and disability carers

In this way it would be possible to package together all the areas of expertise and interest within the WAMH-CoRP group into a single application, as there is strength in the numbers and the platform being used to collect data. Within the different workstreams there may also be interventional aspects that could be tied in.

Professor Hood commented that there could possibly be another workstream relating to rural and community around improving systems deliveries and coordination/provision and access to services.

Dr Hussain suggested approaching Dr Danny Rock, who was working with Professor Ian Hickie on a similar project around health system accessibility and modules such as mental health and digital health.

Ms Dench mentioned a forecast opportunity from MRFF Digital Health/Health Services Improvement scheme coming up.

Group to meet again next week to work through a whole-of-WAMH CoRP submission.

3. DIRECTORY OF MEASURES

Professor McEvoy advised that the measures have been submitted for ethics approval by Dr Affandi. They are not quite the final order, but most of the questionnaires and items are the same as those that have been approved.

Met with WACHS to ascertain what questions they may be interested in. They are particularly interested in beliefs around COVID, its causes, the trustworthiness of communications from politicians and healthcare workers, and whether there is a willingness to accept vaccination if/when one is developed.

The plan at this stage is to go monthly with administration, rather than fortnightly, so any additional measures can be added in if required.

Also have been meeting with Dr Daren Gibson regarding developing a mental health research strategy in WA. The plan is to run a Delphi study of people's lived experience in collaboration with Mr Ben Horgan. Will also approach health providers, mental health researchers and funding bodies across the state to identify their mental health research priorities. In addition a survey of mental health clinicians is to be conducted – in WA mental health clinicians are not involved in research as much as clinicians in other areas of health – to better understand and identify enablers and barriers to mental health clinicians getting involved in applied/translational research. Identifying strengths in WA mental health research. A proposal is currently with Dr James Williamson, Assistant Director General, and waiting for feedback.

4. WORKGROUP UPDATES

a. CIVIC

Professor Reid informed members that the CIVIC project is progressing and is now well established. The focus of the last week or two has been around FIFO workers. Also progressing with adding researchers from across the WA Universities to the CIVIC protocol.

b. Digital Telehealth

Nil.

c. Workforce

Dr MacCallum updated members on the progress of the Workforce working group. To date four different surveys have been developed - Educators, Health Workers, Tertiary Students, and General. The next phase is requesting reciprocal ethics approvals and inviting participants. Appearance of the survey/invitations and associated documentation (participant information sheets) – originally CIVIC out of Curtin University, but need to clarify so participants know what the source of the survey is. Sean commented that it usually a combination of all i.e.: each University's logo, and WAHTN should be included as the parent group. Jacquita advised that all the logos can be put on the website/landing page.

5. PROJECT UPDATES

Professor Morgan; update on audit of staff involved in care of people with severe mental illness in community mental health. Professor Anna Waterreus has developed the questionnaire with input from Professor Morgan, Professor Flavie Waters, and Dr Ajay Velayudhan. Professor Waterreus is working with Dr Velayudhan, to run it in South Metro. Have also provided a copy to North and East Metropolitan Health Services in case they wish to run the audit, with a further possibility to run in regional centres but more funding would be required.

8. NEW BUSINESS

Professor Hood mentioned a recent announcement that his project "Mental health of healthcare workers during COVID19 crisis" has been selected for grant support from the WA Government (JTSI & WA Chief Scientist) COVID19 Research Grants scheme.

Dr Fardinpour advised that they have been awarded an Innovation Grant from the WA Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation for their CARLA project. The aim of the project is to create a virtual learning tool that can be used by therapists for group or individual therapy.

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 23rd June @ 8.30am

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