

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WA MENTAL HEALTH COVID-19 RESEARCH
PANEL, HELD VIA ZOOM ON 1 SEPTEMBER 2020**

ZOOM Link:

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

Or use this link to the same room:

<http://rebrand.ly/wamhcorp>

PRESENT:

Professor Sean Hood (The University of Western Australia) Chair
Professor Jo Badcock (The University of Western Australia)
Professor Romola Bucks (The University of Western Australia)
Dr Travis Cruickshank (Edith Cowan University)
A/Prof Wendy Cumming-Potvin (Murdoch University)
Dr Ali Fardinpour (Wise Realities)
Dr Sandra Hesterman (Murdoch University)
A/Professor Caroline Mansfield (Notre Dame University)
A/Prof Nahal Mavaddat (The University of Western Australia)
Professor Peter McEvoy (Curtin University)
Professor Andrew Page (The University of Western Australia)
Professor Christopher Reid (Curtin University)
Dr Ajay Velayudhan (Fremantle Hospital)
Professor Anna Waterreus (The University of Western Australia)

Executive Officer (Leanne Hall)

APOLOGIES:

Dr Judy MacCallum (Murdoch University)
Jacquita Affandi (Curtin University)
Dr Rhiannon Halse (Curtin University)
Mr Mike Wood (Mindful Margaret River Alliance)
Dr Michelle Olaithe (The University of Western Australia)

Previous minutes: accepted

1. WELCOME

The Chair welcomed members.

2 DIRECTORY OF MEASURES (MCEVOY)

Professor McEvoy advised that they are currently deciding what measures to include in the 1 month followup survey, and requested feedback from members regarding what may be useful.

The candidate measures being considered are:

Sleep quality, along with Depression & Anxiety, weight concerns, brief coping strategies (Brief-Cope), Social Networks (Lubben Social Network Questionnaire), Beliefs about COVID-19 and a few additional questions around perceptions of vaccine safety & norms, occupational burnout (educators & healthcare workers only), behavioural activation, repetitive thinking, and resilience. Total of 110 items.

Also requested members to consider if missing anything that might be important, what should be the frequency of administration, and should suicide risk and non-suicidal self-injury be assessed?

Professor Badcock queried whether a loneliness item had been considered, and advised that in her work with “Ending Loneliness Together” there is strong indication that loneliness is a big issue. The UCLA Loneliness Scale is being used in Victoria (20-item).

Professor Page commented that with regards to self harm & suicide, there is interest in suicide in relation to longer-term effects of COVID-19 lock-down, and it would be worth considering even though it will add some complexity to the study. It may also be worth considering items that are being used by other groups, such as those in the Eastern States, in order to compare WA to other the States.

A/Professor Cumming-Potvin queried if there would be interest in comparing the COVID-19 vaccine responses to cohorts that are against vaccinations for children, i.e.: are they similar people, from similar postal codes?

With regards to frequency, there was consensus among members present that 3 months would be reasonable. Professor Page commented that as there is no current transmission in WA, interest in completing the survey would probably be low. Rather, once the questionnaires and ethics are in place, have the ability to turn the survey on/off if the situation in WA changes.

3 WORKGROUP UPDATES

a. CIVIC

Professor Reid advised that the FIFO work is continuing. In a recent conversation with members of the Doherty Institute regarding surveillance strategy for FIFO workers in WA, there was a high level of interest expressed in the measures being used.

The Education Survey is progressing well, with good support from the WA Universities.

Ongoing discussions with the Aged Care Services Group in regards to a project proposal, which Angelita Martini will be leading.

b. Digital Telehealth

Dr Cruickshank advised that they are working with various consumer networks to develop a survey, and subsequent follow-up workshops, around the publics general perception of using e-health for management of health/health conditions. Will update members on progress at the next meeting.

c. Workforce

Professor McEvoy informed members that he recently spoke with Professor Stephen Houghton in relation to WA public schools and using existing cohort studies. Professor Houghton advised that the WA Education Department is not open to collaborating on any additional research projects.

A/Professor Cumming-Potvin reported that the CIVIC-Mind survey invitation went out on the 21st August, and will follow-up in about 3 weeks time.

A/Professor Mansfield advised that the CIVIC-Mind survey has also been distributio at Notre Dame University, and also included the Education Postgraduate students (who are teachers in schools). Suggested that perhaps the Deans of Education could send out the survey to

their Alumni, as a way of reaching school teachers without involving the Education Department.

4. PROJECT UPDATES

Professor Waterreus advised that SMHS Community Mental Health Workers survey has now closed, with over 60 respondents. Thanks to Dr Ajay Velayudhan for promoting.

5. EVENT: MENTAL HEALTH IN MINING PRESENTATIONS AND PANEL DISCUSSION

Friday 4th September 2020, 3.30pm – 5.00pm.

Registration via: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/mentally-healthy-and-resilient-workforces-event-tickets-116698162345>

6. NEW BUSINESS

Nil

NEXT MEETING

22nd September 2020