MEDIA RELEASE
Organisations coming together to stop stigma
20 February 2018

People living with mental illness often experience stigma that prevents them from seeking the help and advice they need. These statistics are alarming, given that 50 per cent of Australians will experience a mental illness in their lifetime and one in five will need to take time away from work.

Murray PHN created the Stop Mental Illness Stigma Charter to help workplaces understand and develop supports that value employees and customers experiencing mental illness. More than 50 organisations have now signed up to the charter, making workplaces safer across our region and Australia.

Murray PHN CEO Matt Jones said that the most important thing to any organisation is its people. He believes that helping staff to be the best they can, both physically and mentally "is an investment worth making in any workplace".

"People should be celebrated for their differences and not defined by them," he said. "Too often people experiencing mental illness are labelled by their diagnoses, rather than being seen as people who also happen to have a mental illness," Mr Jones said.

Murray PHN's focus on consumer-led and co-designed projects means that people with mental illness are involved in the planning, designing and commissioning of health programs and services.

This month, Murray PHN is hosting Stop Stigma workshops in Bendigo, Mildura, Shepparton and Albury to hear from individuals and organisations committed to stopping mental health stigma in their communities.

In Shepparton on Wednesday, more than 12 local organisations are coming together for the first time, to share ideas on what has and what can be done in workplaces across Goulburn Valley.

"This information will also be used to develop future resources," Mr Jones said. "It is very moving to see something that we created being embraced by so many organisations. It goes to show how mental health is becoming accepted as a significant factor in creating a health workforce."

For more information on the Charter: www.murrayphn.org.au/stopstigma

Workshop details

Wednesday 21 February
Department of Rural Health, 49 Graham Street, Conference Room 2, Shepparton
Media are welcome to attend during the break (11.15am).
The full agenda is attached.

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Stop Stigma Workshop Program:
Wednesday 21 February

Department of Rural Health, 49 Graham Street, Conference Room 2, Shepparton

9.45	Registration
10.00	Welcome ***Liz Chapman***
10.05	An overview of the Charter ***Jodie Rasmussen***
10.20	Lived experience perspective ***Guy McIntosh***
10.35	Implementation of the Charter. Goulburn Valley Office, Murray PHN ***Emma Knapp***
10.45	Reflections exercise – Motivations and aspirations for signing the Charter
11.15	Break
11.30	Lived experience perspective ***Jacinda Ryan***
11.45	Workshop What do you currently do to implement the charter? What could we do to implement the charter?

- o Look at each commitment from both internal and external perspectives (as both an employer and a service provider)

Bright ideas (Use the commitments as a guide)

- o Dream big, what would you do if there were no barriers?

12.15	Share ideas
12.30	Summary and evaluation

Contact details

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