

Minutes for the NHHIN:

9/4/15

Chair & Minute taker: Astrid Gearin (Community Youth Development Project)

Attendee's:

Maria Malcom **Nova**, Kelly Cook **Nova Student** Joel Shakespeare **Samaritans Youth SHS**, Sandra Feltham, **Newcastle City Council**, Lisa Smith **Allambi Youth SHS**, Jay Peake **Allambi Refuge**, Emma Hawke **Lake Mac Council**, Travis Borg **Carries Place SHS**, Kerry Wade **Compass Housing**, Katherine Pelc **Mission Australia**, Richard Harrison **Human Services/ Centrelink** ; Rachelle Wills **Samaritans Work Development Orders** , Astrid Gearin **CYDP**, Dani Ind **CYDP Student**

Apologies:

Lee Liewes **Nova**, Marcia Chapman **Jenny's** Liann Taffe **Warlga Ngurra**

*Reminder why we do the work we do <https://open.abc.net.au/explore/26713>

Previous Minutes- No actions

- **Habitat for Humanity** New South Wales- gave overview, see link

http://habitat.org.au/?gclid=CL7UnJnA6MQCFdd6vQod_a0Ayw – Building homes, communities and hope; Our vision is a world where everyone has a safe and decent place to live. Our work extends beyond building and repairing houses – it also addresses land security, gives communities access to clean water and sanitation, provides education and training, and offers families in desperate need real hope for the future. <http://habitat.org.au/nsw/> - Habitat for Humanity NSW, with the assistance of our generous sponsors and volunteers, helps low-income families achieve the dream of building and owning their very own safe, secure home.

ACTION- Astrid to talk with Lee and find out angles for raising this and if there have been discussion previously that NHHIN wasn't aware of.

➤ **How are SHS services going 6 months down the track? Referrals? Is anyone working with intact families in Newcastle/Lake Mac areas? What is the Link to home experience?**

- ✓ General feedback in Link2home are still not on top of referring or using their own systems,
- ✓ They are still making phone call referrals to services and not using the VMS.
- ✓ Services are all at capacity ' though there is no waiting list or capacity'
- ✓ Needs exceed staff capacity
- ✓ Still making referral to services that don't exist any more however this is decreasing
- ✓ Hospital and other external Gove and Non Govn't SHS services are not aware of GSH reform, new services and referral process and are still sending 'services users' to services
- ✓ Service users are still calling or attending old unfunded organisations
- ✓ Human Services stated that frontline staff are using the Link2home to give to 'service user's' but there is a question if it is actually creating outcomes for 'service users'
- ✓ Human Services Outreach team provide warm referral to agencies and doesn't use the Link2Home,
- ✓ Swamped
- ✓ Complaints are being made to Links@Home around staff giving out service confidential details to 'service users' or agencies. An example was given where a young person from out of area presented to a refuge at midnight seeking support, others stated that HousingNSW and other services have also been at fault of doing this
- ✓ Links2Home not following up on the referrals they make to check on outcomes
- ✓ Still conflicting work practices around engaging clients, working out of area and when to pick up clients
- ✓ Org's are not filtering down system changes CIMS (that is usually sent to one staff member) to required staff on the ground and this is creating confusion as they are not being updated with required info, suggestion that services discuss this internally and raise with their management (maybe changes could be an agenda item on weekly meetings)
- ✓ Services are doing a lot of non SHS work more EIA work, housing paperwork and Housing NSW rent arrears forms. One service has employed a staff member to work solely with this group.
- ✓ Referral are coming from Out of area and org's must work with them until another 'in area' service can pick them up
- ✓ Many services are working with intact families however they are only able to count the client they have a package for, services have stated they are talking to CPO's about this and seeking support in how to count these numbers
- ✓ Still no places to house men
- ✓ Council raised the increase of homeless in Hamilton, (mostly men) with removal of train line, raised that it may be more difficult to get to services such as soul café and MacKenzie centre, someone raised they had spoken

Rev Kevin and he had stated that attendance had not decreased since the rail closure.

- ✓ Others are informing that Link2Home is successful for them , the people they support and their own services.

➤ **Work Development Orders-** Rachelle Samaritans

Work and development orders (WDO) are made by us to allow eligible clients reduce their fines through unpaid work with an approved organisation and through certain courses or treatment. You are an eligible client if you:have a mental illness, intellectual disability or cognitive impairment are homeless have a serious addiction to drugs, alcohol or volatile substances are experiencing financial hardship to satisfy their fines through unpaid work with an approved organisation or through certain courses or treatment. For information about WDOs and the activities you can do contact Rachelle wdo@samaritans.org.au or 4922 1500 <http://www.sdoro.nsw.gov.au/fines/eo/wdo.php>

➤ **Youth Week Events-**

Newcastle - <http://www.rydon.org.au/news/youth-week-Newcastle>

Lake Mac- <http://www.lakemac.com.au/youth-week>

Maitland -<http://www.rydon.org.au/news/youth-week-maitland/>

Updates:

➤ **Boarding house sub group:**

No one to represent, I passed on that Tenants Union would like to come and meet with the group and can offer information and resource.-

Action: Can NHHIN please have outlined in next minutes what the purpose of the Boarding House Sub group is, have they got planned meetings, who is steering the group?

- Homelessness NSW are interested in presenting at the May meeting, it would be good to have a broad representation at the meeting so it's worth their while coming here, NHHIN suggested that SHS training is on in May and NHHIN will not have attendees if training conflicts with this, Also has there been any action on changing the day away from Thursdays?

➤ **District Homelessness Implementation Group DHIG-**

It is not yet confirmed if DHIG meetings have commenced in our local area However concern was raised around how the DHIG committee members and representatives are being selected, there was an mention that rep's were being selected out of a hat. It was also highlighted that the only the only representative are at the table are SHS . RYDON & YFoundations raised that they haven't been invited to join.

Action: RYDON & YFoundations Reps will write a letter to the DHIG suggesting they are invited and additionally that the youth SHS representative be

selected through a process and not pulled out of a hat. Send letter to Andrew Hunter or Michelle Ireland

NHHIN was informed that there were issues raised at the SHS operations group about Housing NSW having inconsistent responses around policies and services esp Rent arrears, NHHIN was informed that a email/letter went out to all call center staff stating Housing NSW was ceasing Rent arrears payments'. All housing rent arrears are lodged locally and processed within a service center in Sydney. They will automatically be declined if the house is not affordable or they owe rent arrears and re-location is being sought. Advice from local Housing NSW representative have explained that we should escalate if we are told that rent arrears application are declined, as a client centered individual approach to each case.

Action: NHHIN will request a letter in writing about the policy and the importance of flexibility and client centered individual approach to each case.

- **Hunter Homeless Connect Day -**
TAFE have committed to being the location for HHCD in 2016
- **This Way Home Project Report -**
Expanding to Bailey Street Adamstown.(lead agency for support been decided). Also have Turton Road Waratah which is for men and lead support agency is Mathew Talbot Centre and also Maitland road Islington which is for youth who are supported and either working part time or going to TAFE
Andrew has left the position of managing TWH, Carrie Bock is currently being trained to fill his role, Carrie will be attending NHHIN in the future

New Business

- Raised where is Housing NSW at the NHHIN, it was suggested and supported by the groups that NHHIN invited Housing to meetings
ACTION-NHHIN to Invite Paul and Natalie to attend the NHHIN
- Samaritans is now providing brokerage across the Hunter New England to prevent under 16's homelessness, this is a staged pilot. NHHIN would like to hear more about this at the next meeting.
ACTION-NHHIN To Invite Samaritans Brokerage Rep to come and talk in more detail about this.
- In the spirit if Tiny Homes and Habitate for Humanity - This New Zealand family created something truly unique when they bought a nondescript truck and transformed it into a fold-out castle. The truck-castle has it all: A kitchen, a full bath, a living room and even place to dry their clean clothes using the heat absorbed by rooftop solar panels. <https://youtu.be/CnHGKUh-504>
- Also check out <http://www.theshelterblog.com/>

END OF NHHIN ORDINARY MEETING 11.15am

Next Meeting - May- Date to be confirmed re outcomes of minute enquires