

panorama

People share their stories of mental health recovery in work and life

**From the top of
Australia: RUOK?**

**Flourish
Australia at
Mardi Gras
2017**

**Readers' surveys:
What you said**

**Families and
carers: Anne
Deveson**

**More green,
less blue:
Go Bushwalking!**

**Go Swimming!
Go to market!**



Flourish Australia

About us

Flourish Australia is committed to walking alongside people with a lived experience of a mental health issue as they progress along their recovery journey. We passionately believe in mental health recovery. We are committed to providing the best possible support and encouragement for people to achieve their recovery goals across all of our 64 services in NSW and Southern Queensland.

Flourish Australia

Chair: Prof Elizabeth More AM

CEO: Pamela Rutledge

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Panorama

Founded in 1996 in one of Flourish Australia's predecessor organisations (PRA), Panorama has grown to become a lifestyle magazine dedicated to informing and encouraging the recovery journey of readers. Panorama is written, designed and produced almost entirely by people with a lived experience of mental health issues.

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Panorama #64, June 2017

Contents

4-5 Hard-Won Knowledge

6 Are the voices of people with a disability going unheard?

7 HANNAH goes to market

8-9 Sport-o-rama Go swimming, with Haydn and Michelle

10-11 Flourish Australia at Mardi Gras

12 From the top of Australia: RUOK?

13-20 See Supplements below

21 Sport-O-Rama: Nepean YCLSS goes Bushwalking

22 Moneyrama: Wish you could afford to StepUP to better things?

23 Moneyrama: Resolve Program, "a win for social wellbeing, a win for taxpayers, a win for investors."

23 Moneyrama: What are social impact bonds?

24 Families and Carers: A Debt to Anne Deveson: Understanding homeless people and mental health issues

25 What YOU said: Future Panorama, Recovery Radio, and Seven Questions about Panorama

26 The 27th TheMHS 2017 Summer Forum

27 Minister at Figtree Conference Centre

27 Flourish Australia CEO Pam Rutledge announces move towards retirement

28 Putting pen to paper: Steve Anthony's Story

29 Recovery forum hits the road

30 B.O.T.H. Your physical health and wellbeing

ACTION Supplement 13-14,19-20

CANSAS theme #10, "Safety to Self"

13 (Action 1) Personal Safety

14 (Action 2) How to NOT be a statistic

19 (Action 3) Water Safety

20 (Action 4) Some safety precautions for Bushwalking

EMPLOYMENT Supplement 15-18

15 (Employment 1) Archives and Records jobs

16 (Employment 2) What kinds of Archives and Records jobs are there + What employers are looking for

17 (Employment 3) Your wellbeing is literally worth billions

17 (Employment 3) Things that look good on your resume: Volunteering

18 (Employment 4) There's an app for the maths gap, too!

18 (Employment 4) Out go the 457 visas

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Milin Thaker took many of the great photos in this issue, including many of those from the Mardi Gras. He works in Flourish Australia's finance section.

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Thanks also to our interviewees, Hanna, Tricia, Jaimie, Melanie, Steve and others for sharing your stories with us. If you have a contribution to make, please do not hesitate to contact us on 02 9393 9021 or the email addresses listed on the left.



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Supporting Mental Health & Wellbeing

"SHATTERED" BY JAIMIE CAMPBELL (PHOTO BY BRETT RUTOWSKI)



HARD-WON KNOWLEDGE

By Grant J Everett

Last year, JAIMIE CAMPBELL helped to open the BRUSHES WITH LIFE art exhibition held at Flourish Australia's Taree service. A photographer, Jaimie has also shared her story at forums such as those conducted by the Australian College of Applied Psychology and The Australian and New Zealand Eating Disorders and Obesity Conference. As eating disorders like Anorexia Nervosa are still a total mystery to many people, Jaimie decided to use her experiences - and her art - to help spread awareness.

PANORAMA: Jaimie, you have been involved in the "Brushes with Life Exhibition" at Taree for two years in a row. Please tell us about your involvement.

JAIMIE: The 2015 "Brushes With Life Exhibition" was the first time that I'd publicly showcased my photography project. At the 2016 exhibition, though, I was invited to do the official opening speech by their committee. Once

again, the talent of the artists and their courage to showcase their work blew me away.

I didn't showcase any [of my own] work in the 2016 exhibition. I'm currently working on a new photography instalment that I'm hoping to submit in the next (2017) exhibition.

P: What is your connection to Flourish Australia's Taree service

JAIMIE: I first heard of Flourish Australia through a good friend of mine who was working there. I had recently moved back to Taree after living in Sydney for four years, and was in the process of completing my photography project. She told me about "Brushes With Life" and their upcoming exhibition, and she asked me if I'd be willing to showcase my work.

P: We understand that you've been working on a major photography project about what it's like to experience Anorexia, especially the psychological aspects. Where did you get the idea for this?

JAIMIE: The idea to photograph "It" (my eating disorder) came from a link I stumbled across on Facebook where a college student had photographed her mother's mental illness (bipolar) for her major work. This gave me an idea, and I went through my diary and tried to imagine ways to convey my voice - not "Its" voice - through images. My hope is to use photography as a platform to bring about a deeper level of understanding of what an eating disorder is really about. My experience is that society, and the health profession, still don't understand this illness. There is too much emphasis put on the physical state and not the mental state, which is where it derives.

P: We noticed that you are the star of many of your photos. Do you have somebody helping to take some of the shots exactly as you specify?

JAIMIE: I do appear in a few of the photographs, but I consciously made the decision not to be in all of them. So while my work depicts my experiences with an eating disorder, I didn't want people to just associate the illness with me. For instance, my sister and my best friend appeared in some of the photographs, too, and the three of us look very different to each other (hair colour, body type, etc). The statement I was making is that this illness does not discriminate. I didn't want people to associate Anorexia with a certain demographic.

I did hire a photographer for some of my photographs. I knew what I wanted, but he was the one with the experience to help my message come to life.

P: Why do you use photography as your artistic medium?

JAIMIE: As I mentioned

previously, my photography project began because of the struggles I was having with writing in my diary. Initially, it was never my intention for my work to be seen publicly. It was only when

"There is too much emphasis put on the physical state and not the mental state, which is where it derives."
-Jaimie

Recovery Story

the opportunities arose, and I was encouraged by people close to me, that my work took on a different approach.

P: Have you had any formal training in photography or photo manipulation?

JAIMIE: I don't have any formal training in photography.

P: Your "Shattered" photo was extensively Photoshopped. Do you tend to use a lot of filters and other effects in your photos?

JAIMIE: We did use special effects for a few of my photographs. This was purely to portray a message in a way that would resonate with people. We didn't use any enhancements for the purpose of changing the way that we looked or the size of our bodies. This project was done on a tight budget, so a lot of the images were captured at my house or my sister's house, which proved to be a challenge with lighting at times.

P: When it comes to your writing, what form does it take? Is it usually poetry, short sayings or something else?

JAIMIE: A lady I know referred to my written work as "hard won knowledge". I think that's the best way to describe my writing. It's raw, honest and vulnerable.

P: Could you give me an example?

JAIMIE: Sure! "Both physically and mentally, 'It slowly and inconspicuously constricts who you are, until you're in a position where you're compromising your morals and values. You lie to your 7-year-old niece, who so desperately wants you to have a sleep over, about having to work, but really 'It' won't allow you to stay because that would mean that you would have to eat dinner. You become apathetic. You drop out of University because your starving brain struggles to understand the bus timetable let alone write an essay on developmental psychology. You steal

laxatives because you can't afford your 240 tablet a day addiction. You defer university again because your electrolytes get so low that you end up in ICU. 'It' narrows things so minutely until you're all consumed and your capacity to focus on anything other than 'It' is nonexistent."

P: So there is writing and photography. Have you always been a creative type? Did you express yourself in other ways besides photography art?

JAIMIE: I suppose I've always been creative. I used to dance, and at one point I'd teach it 6 days a week. Dancing is something that I'll always love. I've recently started to learn guitar, too, and although I'm no Adele, I do love to sing (mainly in the shower). I'm still exploring photography and learning about the many possibilities involved in this platform of expression.

P: Have your creative projects generally been an ongoing source of help for you over the years? Do you find it "therapeutic," so to speak?

JAIMIE: For years, dancing was a way to express myself. It was a way to communicate without having to speak. It's only in the past year and a half that I've been doing the same thing with photography.

P: You were invited to present your work to The Australian College of Applied Psychology (ACAP) in Sydney. How did that happen?

JAIMIE: The offer to present at ACAP came about through a lady that I met at a mental health conference. She is a teacher at the college and she asked me if I'd be willing to present my work to the students.

P: Do you think that your presentation made an impact? For instance, did you get a chance to clarify a lot of questions, and did you get any good feedback?

JAIMIE: I got some great feedback and people were overwhelmingly encouraging and supportive. I was invited to do a second presentation to their Alumni in October and, again, the response was great.

P: We understand that you also presented your work to The Australian and New Zealand Eating Disorders and Obesity Conference on the Gold Coast. Did this presentation make a splash, too?

JAIMIE: Showcasing my work at the conference was a daunting experience but one that was very empowering. There were a few presenters that I was very impressed with but for the most part, I found that there was still a strong focus on the physical side of the illness, which isn't getting us anywhere. I received some great feedback and have recently been contacted by 'The Australian and New Zealand Mental Health Association' to write an article for them as a follow up. A friend and I are currently working together on submitting an abstract for this year's conference.

P: Do you have a day job? As would-be novelists, the Panorama staff know very well that art doesn't always pay the bills!

JAIMIE: Haha, it most definitely doesn't! I co-ordinate an Indigenous-based youth program and I've just taken a position with an organization that works with children and adolescents who are in residential care.



"The Safe" by Jaimie's sister

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Would you like to make a small donation to support Jaimie's photography project? These photos will take the viewer through the journey of an eating disorder in an empowering way.

www.gofundme.com/7m3ugwec



Are the voices of people with disabilities going unheard?

Grant J Everett

While we've seen marked improvements in recent years, minority groups are still relatively underrepresented in Parliament. However, there's no law preventing Australian adults from any demographic running for their local council, or even the Senate, so it's not a matter of deliberate, legal exclusion. Politicians with a visible disability, though, are borderline mythical. We found a grand total of two upper house MPs throughout Australia Kelly Vincent (South Australia) and Rob Pyne (Federal). In order to shed some light on this issue, we spoke with somebody who is passionate about people with disabilities getting into politics: **TRICIA MALOWNEY**. She's the former President of the Victorian Disability Services Board.

PANORAMA: Why don't PWD have more government representation?

TRICIA: 'I don't think that most people are mature enough to see past a disability. It's the same issue we have with political candidates who are women or CALD or from an Indigenous background or whatever falls outside the norm: unless you are an able-bodied white male, you are deemed to be incompetent by default.'

P: Do you think it's likely that some politicians have a lived experience of "invisible" disabilities, but are reluctant to reveal them due to the risk of stigma?

TRICIA: 'The use of the term "have a

lived experience" highlights the reason that people don't disclose their mental illness. The language we use implies that having a disability, including mental illness, is shameful. But yes, there are probably many people who have mental illnesses in politics who are afraid to disclose because of the media's handling of the issue.'

P: What could we do to get more PWD into councils and parliaments.

TRICIA: 'Highlighting the *achievements* of people rather than talking about how *inspirational* they are would help. I can't help feeling that we have to be loud and proud about who we are. For instance, Tony Clark (who has a vision impairment) unsuccessfully ran for the seat of Deakin in the last election. He didn't run as the "blind candidate", but rather as a candidate who just so happens to be blind. His memorable slogan was "No sight, great vision." In hindsight, I wonder if he would have won if he'd pushed the blindness issue more?'

"Highlighting the achievements of people rather than talking about how inspirational they are would help."

P: Do you think much would change in this country if PWD had more representation?

TRICIA: 'The only change might be an acknowledgement that being a PWD doesn't mean being "unable". However, it must be noted that being a PWD does not mean that we all think the same way. We have people from both sides of the aisle, and some of those who have a chance of getting in could be used as stooges, in the same way that some politicians will use gender, LGBTI status, religious beliefs or ethnic origins to score points.'

P: What do you think the odds are of more PWD climbing the ranks in politics?

TRICIA: 'If the major parties were serious about real diversity and true representation, then PWD would undoubtedly be encouraged to participate in the political process and would be actively sought out. Unfortunately, the major parties only communicate with service providers and parents or family members rather than the PWD themselves.'

P: What would you like to say to some-

body with a disability who wants to get involved with politics?

TRICIA: 'Keep at it, but be prepared to get sidelined unless you have a backer with money.'

P: You have an interest in running for office and making a real difference. Has this been on your mind for a while?

TRICIA: 'Yes, although sometimes I wonder if I'm not already more effective as an activist and advocate! For instance, a while back I put my name forward to take Stephen Conroy's Senate seat, even though I knew I had no chance, purely because I wanted to get PWD on the agenda. But it would be great to be taken seriously as a member of Parliament in the eyes of the media. I doubt if I will ever get elected though, as I am too outspoken for party politics, and not rich enough to stand as an independent!'

P: The list of things (in your Pro Bono article) that you'd like to achieve if you made it into politics would bring about huge change. What things would you most like to achieve?

TRICIA: 'I think higher employment rates among PWD is achievable if we can get the politicians to take it seriously. We need to have employment quotas in public service, which is already in place in the USA and Ireland. I think it would greatly assist the cause if every minister with the disability portfolio was required to have an advisor with a disability. I would also like to see "abuse" renamed "violence," which is what it is. I think that if we *call* it violence, the justice system would take it more seriously. In Victoria, the Family Violence Protection Act definition of violence clearly outlines what violence is, yet when it happens to PWD, particularly Women With Disability, it is called abuse. This could be achieved if we had a genuine emphasis on the National Disability Strategy and tier two of the NDIS, now called Information, Linkages and Capacity Building.'

"Senator Malowney? Surely It Is Time," Malowney, T (2016)

probonoaustralia.com.au/news/2016/10/senator-malowney-surely-time/

"How representative is our parliament?" Hunter, R (2013)

rightnow.org.au/opinion-3/political-representation-in-australia-how-representative-is-our-parliament/

[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Graham_Edwards_\(politician\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Graham_Edwards_(politician))

HANNAH goes to market

A group of participants from our New Outlook branch in Wollongong recently decided to set up a stall at Crown Street Markets. Hannah Harris accesses our New Outlook service and is the mastermind behind the stall. We spoke with her about how their first attempt at commerce went...

Why did you want to run a stall?

HANNAH: I thought it would be a great way to get the members of Flourish Australia out into the community to show Wollongong who we are and what we do, as well as raising some money for the centre at the same time.

Why Crown Street Markets?

We decided that Crown Street Markets was our best option, as it's close by and it's open on one of the same days as us (Friday). Crown Street was also a good option because many of the New Outlook members live close by. This is important, as I wanted to push the members outside of their comfort zones, but not too far.

What did you sell?

All the things we sold were handmade either by me or by the members of New Outlook. The things I contributed were ones I personally thought would be fun to sell, and included pillow cases stitched from scratch, fairy bottles (bottles with glitter and a word of hope in them), cards, and little gift bags. The members made boxes, tie-dyed socks and pillow cases, and wove dreamcatchers. We made most of these things in our Wednesday arts and craft group.

What's done with the money if you make a profit?

All that the money that we make from the stall goes back to our committee (which is made up of members and staff). Whenever the committee receives any funds they decide as a group what activities or events the money will go towards.

Does it cost much to rent a stall?

For us, it didn't cost anything! I emailed the market people and asked them if we could run a fundraising stall for Flourish Australia. We had to get council permission and a permit for the stall, though.

Who manned (or womanned) the stall? Is there a roster or something?

When I set up the stall I asked for people to put their names down to help on the day. It was a voluntary thing to do, so no one was pressured into doing something they didn't want to do. I was manning the stall most of the day with two other members, One of them helped with the stall as part of their work placement. During the day, a few of the staff came along to give us a break.

Does the stall get assistance from Flourish Australia workers?

The staff at Flourish Australia were amazing. They helped throughout the entire planning process, and even used their mini bus to help us transport everything to Crown Street.

When did you set up and when do you pack up?

We started setting up the stall at around 9:30 in the morning on Friday, and began packing away at about 2pm that afternoon. This allowed us plenty of time to set up the marquee and the tables and to make the stall look professional and presentable.

Have there been obstacles?

As this was the first stall, there were a lot of obstacles that we had to figure our way through. The main one was trying to get New Outlook members involved. When you have a mental health condition it can be hard to willingly come out of your comfort zone, so I wanted to push the members a bit and try and get them involved in the community. That is exactly what the stall was designed to do... well, at least that's ONE of the reasons I decided to run it.

Another barrier was my own mental health. My anxiety was constantly up and down, and I'd taken on a lot of the responsibilities of making this stall become a reality. Surprises didn't help. For instance, a week before the stall was meant to happen I found out that I needed council permission, so talking to the council about this was something that I had not anticipated.

As it was the first stall, there were so many unknowns. It was difficult, but worth it.

Have you gotten to know any people who run the other stalls? Are they good neighbours?

I was very fortunate to already know the lady who ran the crystal stall next to us, as I go to Crown Street Markets every week. She gave us a lot of encouragement and assistance on the day. I also know the lady who runs the Markets themselves. She also runs the Bulli Markets, and my partner has been a member of their committee for quite some time.

What were your favourite parts about running a stall?

I can't really say what my one favourite part of the stall was, because the whole experience was so fantastic!

For starters, I loved having a project I could work on from start to finish. Being able to serve as an integral part of every step in something I am very passionate about was amazing.

I was also very happy to show the Wollongong community what Flourish Australia is all about, and how much of a benefit this organisation can be for people who live with mental health conditions. We had quite a few members of the community ask what Flourish Australia is and what we do, and it turned out a lot of people had never even heard of us. Some of them were actually looking for the sorts of services our organisation provides, so it was great to have an opportunity to really promote the centre. I think this stall was a very good promotion for the Flourish Australia name in my area.

I also loved being able to use the skills that I learnt at TAFE, and creating handmade things helps to soothe my anxiety, so I enjoy that, too.

Flourish Australia is safe space for people with mental health conditions to go and not feel like they are alone.

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Go Swimming

Haydn and Michelle from Buckingham House discuss swimming with Vanessa Vetter

Michelle and Haydn are members at Flourish Australia's Buckingham House, and they regularly go to the local pool for a swim. While they go on their own quite often, they also tag along with the Buck House crew and go as a big group. We asked Haydn and Michelle to tell us about all the ways that swimming is good for their wellbeing, and why they like it enough to go so often.

'It's good exercise. Good for the heart and lungs,' Michelle said. 'Plus you meet new people.'

But you could say that about a lot of sports, so what's particularly special about swimming?

'I don't get too hot when I swim, so I can do it for a fair while. And it's also fun!' Haydn added.

So what do they do? Michelle swims

laps using several different styles, while Haydn does kicking exercises, breaststroke, backstroke, freestyle and butterfly.

'I like learning different strokes,' Michelle says, 'and improving my technique. My favourite sort is freestyle. At first, I set a goal of 800 meters each morning, and now I am able to do 3 times that distance. It's tiring, but worthwhile. I feel refreshed after swimming.'

See this issue's ACTION supplement for POOL SAFETY TIPS starting on page 19

'Diving and freestyle are my favourite things to do in the pool,' said Haydn. 'Swimming provides a good structure to

Accessible Aquatics

and more...

The City of Sydney Aquatic and Fitness Centres (the Prince Alfred Park Centre is pictured to the left) are committed to improving pool accessibility to the wider community, and currently offer several inclusion programs to encourage those who may not usually access to the facilities to come and participate. These programs provide those who may be experiencing some form of disability or disadvantage, or who may be of a diverse demographic, with the opportunity to participate in sports and recreation, promoting an active, accessible, and inclusive community whilst ensuring that they feel connected, safe and supported.

If you would like to learn more about the inclusion programs that are currently being offered, Dave Owen (the Community Development Coordinator) can be contacted on (02) 9326 0444, or via email at:

dowen@belgravialeisure.com.au

my week. Having something physical to do helps me out mentally, too.'

Is learning to swim hard?

'As long as you practice, it becomes easier!' Michelle explained.

'I have been swimming since primary school so it was fairly easy for me, though there is a degree of difficulty for beginners,' Haydn added.

Swimming is also an essential skill to have if you go boating or fishing.

'I can get a little seasick, but that doesn't stop me going out on the water.' Haydn explained. 'One time when I went fishing I caught an octopus! I didn't touch it, but Dad felt the suckers and its skin. It was quiet a surprise catch! We returned it to the water. I also caught some fish that day, too.'

Sport-o-rama

You can probably think of a number of other activities that would be easier and safer to do if you became confident in the water. By simply visiting the pool you could open up a whole PANORAMA of new activities and new people to meet.

Etiquette

Michelle and Haydn both wear casual clothes when they travel to the pool, but there are certain strict rules about what you can wear in the water. Namely, you need to put on gear that is specifically made for swimming. Tony Abbott may be Mr Budgie Smugglers, but for those of us who like something a bit more substantial, board shorts are a valid choice for both guys and girls. Girls also have the option of wearing bikinis or one-piece swimsuits.

Michelle purchased her goggles, ear plugs and swimmers from Target, but that's not your only option.

'You can also buy your gear from Ripcurl or other surf shops,' Haydn noted. 'I paid \$50 for my boardies, and \$10-\$15 for goggles. You also need to bring a towel, change of clothes, and a plastic bag for your wet gear.'

'You can expect decent swimwear to cost you anywhere between \$30 and \$100,' Michelle said.

What other sort of etiquette or rules do you have to follow at the pool?

'When you're in a group you should listen to the instructor, respect each other, stay in the correct lane if your group has booked a lane, and always keep to the left. Oh, and leave the pool to go to the toilet!' Haydn quipped.

Another essential thing you need is sunscreen. These days, sunscreen is easy and cheap to buy. Also, Flourish Australia services that conduct outdoor activities tend to have a bottle of it in their store cupboard, so be sure to ask for some before going outside.

There are other options if you want to have a splash somewhere. Occasionally, Haydn and Michelle have gone to the beach, and Haydn once went to Wet n Wild.

'I'd go again. The Tornado was a good ride.'

Feeling self-conscious? Don't!

But isn't going swimming a little bit

embarrassing for some people?

'Of course not!' says Michelle.

'Maybe a little, if you aren't in the best shape,' says Haydn.

But what better way to GET in good shape than a whole-body workout like swimming? Isn't that solving the core issue? Neither Michelle nor Haydn have encountered bullies at the pool, so it's not like other patrons have any interest in giving strangers a hard time.

And don't let the arrival of Winter put you off! There are plenty of indoor pools around that keep the air at a balmy temperature to ward off goosebumps. However, Michelle is one of those lucky people who don't feel the cold.

'When you are outdoors, the pool can be cold, but I just tolerate it! If it gets REALLY cold I might compromise a bit and swim indoors.'

Give it a go!

What about people who are thinking about going swimming but are still a little unsure?

'Just give it a go!' Michelle advised. 'It's good to learn something new, to meet new people, to make new friends.'

Haydn certainly recommends it.

'If my friends wanted to go, I would invite them to come with me, or I'd find someone else to go with them.'

Now for the golden question: does swimming make them feel better? Is it helping with their wellbeing and recovery?

'Yes, yes, yes!' says Michelle. 'My confidence is growing. I'm doing better than I expected.'

In case you're interested, Buck House has been running swimming days for its members at Prince Alfred Park's outdoor heated pool for some time now. Be sure to let them know if you'd like to come along!

Michelle and Haydn spoke to Vanessa Vetter. Thanks to Vicky and David from Belgravia Leisure.



Flourish Australia Buckingham House, 43-45 Buckingham Street, Surry Hills, NSW 2010
1300 779 270

Haydn is pictured at Prince Alfred Park pool (photos by Vanessa Vetter)

PHOTO MILIN THAKER



The Glitter and the Glamour

They came from everywhere...



PHOTO MILIN THAKER

... and I can see YOU too!



PHOTO MILIN THAKER



PHOTO UNKNOWN

Try to act natural, everybody, that's the boss in the purple hat!

Flourish Australia goes to

Mardi Gras

As announced by CEO Pam Rutledge in December last year, Flourish Australia now has an LGBTIAQ Employee Network, which will provide opportunities for people to connect and share information. The Network will mostly be virtual, using technology to connect and share information. When we have the opportunity, we will provide opportunities for Network Members to get together. The Network is for those people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans* or intersex, their families, friends and workplace supporters (sometimes called Allies). Employees of Flourish Australia who wish to participate in the Network

should email

Diversity@flourishaustralia.org.au

As promised, Flourish Australia entered its own float in the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade as a part of the LGBTIAQ Employee Network, on Saturday 4 March 2017, and we live-streamed it on Facebook. Our theme was "Supporting LGBTIAQ Mental Health and Wellbeing" and our entry message was "Freedom to Flourish."

Around 40 people were in the float. Some managed to sprout gossamer wings, plumes of exotic feathers and, in one memorable case, even horns (see our story on Mark Anacki, opposite). These few photos don't do the event justice, so be sure to check out Panorama Online sometime to get a wider selection of views.

Photos were taken by sundry and diverse persons but most of our photos here were taken by Milin Thaker.

LGBTI Employee Network

One of the less glamorous - but most essential - roles was that of the driver of our official float, none other than Jay Irsaj from Business Services. That's him in the pic at top left.

Also joining us from the UK was Karen Mellanby, Director of Networks and Communities for Mind UK and her friend all the way from Brisbane Karen Wilson. They are seen above in the middle with CEO Pam and flanked by Alison Perizi (purple fairy) and Clare Evans and Mark Anacki (in green).

Fashion

How to look (and feel) Extraordinary

for Mardi Gras

A lot of people go to extraordinary lengths to ensure that they look just right for Mardi Gras and Mark Anacki is certainly one of them. The one-time fashion student and make-up buff appeared in a costume that complemented the green and purple livery of our Flourish Australia contingent, but I'm sure you'll agree, it went one step beyond.

Mark is a hospitality worker in Flourish Australia's Figtree Conference Centre and he usually sports a more sombre basic black and white look while on duty. But for this one day of the year he came complete with yellow chains, exotic eye and face make up, atavistic contact lenses and the *piece de resistance*, a head dress that must have been the envy of all Oxford Street on the night.

We see Mark at right with Nicole Collins from Flourish Australia's Nowra service looking rather foxy.

The overall 'look' that we wanted according to Flourish Australia's Jas Buchal was to have the common element of green but to allow each person to accessorise to express their own personalities.

It seemed that rainbow fairy wings were very much in vogue, in fact our participation was partly built around that element. 'Things have to light up' Jas explained, 'in a way which accentuates everyone's bright and bubbly personalities'

Jas said 'I was impressed by the lengths that people went to- people put a massive amount of effort into their own individual interpretation of our Flourish Australia look.'

This has been Flourish Australia's second Mardi Gras, and the first with our own float. Maybe next year we'll have our own fashion label!





From the top of Australia: RUOK?

In early March 2017, **ADELLE SALTER**, manager of Flourish Australia at Emu Heights, took part in a charity walk at Mt Kosciuszko to raise money for RUOK? However, there were some unexpected obstacles...

“Some unfortunate news greeted us when we arrived at Kosciuszko National Park: the mist and clouds were so thick that we wouldn’t be able to see one foot in front of the other! We were informed by our experienced guide and the park ranger that it was too dangerous for us to climb Mt Kozi today. The other RUOK supporters and I found it difficult to swallow this news, but we had to respect that these experienced rangers knew what they were talking about. So, our team of 70 hiked 12.5 km along a waterfall walk, then made our way back down towards Jindabyne (which is a mere 915 m above sea level). I also had to finish off with a dip in the lake!

But there’s some good news: the following day, 20 of us finally managed to complete the Mt Kozi walk (as you can see in the photograph on the cover).

At 2,228m, Mt Kosciuszko is the highest mountain in continental Australia and is located near the NSW/Victoria border.

I raised more than \$700 for RUOK. All up, over \$74,000 had been raised since the beginning of the challenge.

I became involved in this challenge

firstly for myself to overcome personal obstacles. As well as that, I wanted to share my story, to connect with others and to raise awareness for mental health and suicide prevention.

The work that both Flourish Australia and RUOK do inspires me and I’m proud to be a part of it all. I certainly took all of this inspiration along with me during this experience. I was lucky to receive so much support in doing so, too.

RUOK, as in ‘are you OK?’ Is a question we need to ask people more often. Gavin Larkin and Janina Nearn started the campaign to get people asking RUOK? in order to raise awareness of mental health issues and prevent suicide.

Find out more about RUOK here:

www.ruok.org.au/our-story

And if you’re NOT okay, one thing you can do is to ring Lifeline 24 hours a day on this number:

13 11 14

Flourish Australia Emu Heights, Brumby House, 41 Brumby Crescent EMU HEIGHTS NSW (02) 9393 9357



ACTION

1. Accommodation. 2. Food. 3. Looking after the home. 4. Self care. 5. Daytime activities. 6. Physical health. 7. Psychotic symptoms. 8. Information on condition and treatment. 9. Psychological distress. **10. Safety to self** 11. Safety to Others. 12. Alcohol. 13. Street Drugs. 14. Company. 15. Intimate relationships. 16. Sexual expression. 17. Childcare. 18. Basic Education. 19. Telephone. 20. Transport. **21. Money.** 22. Benefits. (Plus other special topics from time to time)

Personal Safety

People with mental health issues are several times more likely to be victims of violence than the general population; and it is not just violence, but illness, abuse, exploitation and homelessness that could become a threats to our personal safety.

Many people with serious, enduring mental health issues become homeless and homeless people are more vulnerable to danger than most of us. See the article 'Anne Deveson; Understanding homelessness and mental health issues' in this (June 2017) edition of Panorama.

Homelessness seems to be more of a problem than ever before. Recent reports suggest that there are large increases in the number of women are becoming homeless.

Hospital patients can be entitled to feel safe in that environment, but a lot of us who have been in-patients of psychiatric units have reported being harmed. This was especially true in

the days before people with mental health issues began to insist on our human rights. Drug and alcohol abuse is another source of danger. So too is unsafe sex, especially for some people who may have difficulties with impulse control. There are also people who prey upon those whom they perceive to be confused or emotionally distracted. People with mental health issues are more vulnerable to sexual assault.

For those who access Flourish Australia's services, 'CANSAS Conversations' provide an opportunity to think about and discuss things that effect our personal safety (CANSAS #10) as well as the way we might effect the safety of other people (CANSAS #11).

The dangers that effect all people affect people with mental health issues no less. Many disasters are avoidable. It seems that every weekend we hear reports of another rock fisherman who has been swept to their doom on the coast because of rough seas. Then there are the balcony collapses, often caused by too many people piling on during a party. Then there are the people who perish on poorly planned bushwalks (see page 4).

Misfortunes like these are avoidable if we take care and use that rarest commodity in the world: common sense. See 'How not to become a statistic' in this issue of ACTION (see page 1).

INSIDE

1 Personal safety
People with mental health issues are several times more likely to be victims of violence than the general population;

2 How not to become a statistic
Every day in Australia, 26 people are killed by an injury and 1,200 are hospitalised.

3 Water Safety
Read this in conjunction with our swimming Story in Panorama 64 pp8 and 9

4 Some safety precautions for bushwalking
Read this in conjunction with our bushwalking story in Panorama 64 p19



For those who access Flourish Australia's services, 'CANSAS Conversations' provide an opportunity to think about and discuss things that effect our personal safety (CANSAS #10) as well as the way we might effect the safety of other people (CANSAS #11).
Pictured: Workplace Peer Supports Manager Christine Miniawy with Peer Workforce Manager Peter Farrugia.

Left: Most accidents involving cars and pedestrians are avoidable. Don't assume that other people are going to do the right thing. Always take control of your own safety.



Numbers

Your age, socioeconomic status and where you live can strongly influence your likelihood of taking a trip to Emergency. Young males, for instance, account for a whopping three-quarters of injury deaths and hospitalisations, and their over-representation in road traffic accidents is atrocious. As injury rates among young males only increase the closer they get to adulthood, getting older doesn't always mean getting wiser!

Disadvantage

When it comes to other at-risk groups, the most socioeconomically disadvantaged fifth of our population have an injury death rate almost twice as high as those from the most privileged fifth, and are almost 30% more likely to end up with a serious wound than other segments of the socioeconomic spectrum. Finally, it also pays to be extra careful when you're out near Woop Woop, as the rates of hospitalisation and death increase substantially the further you get from a major city. The further you are from help, the lower your survival chances plummet.

When it comes to injuries caused by interpersonal violence, being able to walk away from a fight is your safest move. One punch can be deadly. Drinking alcohol or using substances can make good choices more difficult, so getting blackout drunk can potentially result in far worse than a hangover.

So while luck can play a part, our own choices are also an important influence on our safety and the safety of people around us (see the next issue of ACTION - 'CANSAS #11- Safety to others'). Unlike luck, however, we have a great deal of control over what choices we make.

Sources:

"Injury among young Australians," Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2008

aipn.com.au/

www.aihw.gov.au/injury/

www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=6442452801

By Grant J Everett

Every day in Australia, 26 people are killed by an accident and 1,200 are hospitalised. And while poisonings and drownings have fallen since the turn of the century thanks to awareness campaigns, our overall rate of injury hasn't changed all that much.

The most common accidents that require hospitalisation are caused by car crashes, falls, violence, sporting and recreational activities, work accidents and self-harm. The frustrating truth is that the vast majority of these cases are entirely preventable, and don't NEED to happen.

So what can we do to live longer, healthier lives? For starters, behaving like you're bulletproof is a very effective method of finding out that you aren't. Impulsive decisions can lead to life-and-death consequences not just for us, but also for our friends and loved ones.

Transport

Driving is a prime example of this, as transport accidents are by far the most common cause of injury for Australians, and account for nearly half of all injury deaths. So, stick to the speed limit, don't drive drunk, and don't get behind the wheel when you're tired. The best way to keep safe is to choose not to drive (or allow your mate to drive) like a fool.

This is a good headspace to have

whenever you are doing something dangerous, as there is always a right way and a wrong way to do things. For instance, if you are chopping carrots, slice away from yourself and use a stable surface. If you are operating dangerous warehousing equipment, wear the right safety gear and don't forget what you learned in WHS training.

Another common factor in many accidents is trying to cut corners, so don't rush! Running down the stairs is a good way to break your ankle, galloping around with a hot saucepan will leave you one slip away from getting doused in boiling gravy, and not taking care with industrial machines is an efficient way to lose an extremity. If you are an older Australian, it is even more imperative that you take care when you're getting around, as one trip can ruin your year.

RUOK?

Sadly, suicide is our second leading cause of preventable death. However, it is never inevitable, and it isn't a single event: suicidality or suicidal thoughts usually develops over time, and there will often be warning signs. Maybe somebody you know has become withdrawn, or seems depressed, or changed in some noticeable way? We can all help prevent suicide by keeping an open dialogue with our friends, colleagues and loved ones, and asking them RUOK? Your interest can make all the difference.



Panorama Employment

June 2017

Supporting Mental Health & Wellbeing

Panorama's Disability Employment Service Bulletin for Ostara

Call Ostara on 1300 334 497



What to hold onto,
and what to let go of...

Archives and Records jobs



What things are important and need to be kept? What things are not so important and need to be eliminated so they don't clutter the place up? These are the sorts of questions that archivists and records workers need to answer. Some records are stored on computer, but very often, the records are physical documents or even solid objects. Museums and galleries store everything from machinery to mummies, paintings to sculptures.



INSIDE

What kind of Archives and Records jobs are there? (page 2)
A lot of people prefer to work with 'things' rather than directly with people. Many archives and records roles are mainly "back room" jobs.
What are employers looking for? (page 2)
Our wellbeing is worth billions (page 3)
Things that look good on your resume: Volunteering (page 3)
(... because even if you have been out of the paid workforce for a long time, you still have something valuable to offer potential employers).
There's an app for the maths gap, too! (page 4)
(The better your grasp of numbers, the better your prospects of employment)
Out go the 457 visas (page 4)

Living with mental health issues? Looking for a job? Ostara can help!

1300 334 497

Email
Julie.Duong@flourishaustralia.org.au

Our Disability Employment Service [DES] locations are as follows:

Ostara Liverpool
Suite 5, Level 2,
224 George Street
LIVERPOOL NSW 2170,
PH 9393 9360
Fax 9602 9727

Ostara Caringbah
Level 2, Suite 205
304-318 Kingsway
Caringbah NSW 2229
PH 9393 9134
Fax 9531 7612

Ostara Redfern
Suite 1, Level 4
159-161 Redfern St
Redfern NSW 2016
PH 9393 9220
FAX 9698 3516

Ostara Armidale
First Floor Office 26,
188-192 Beardy Street,
Armidale NSW 2350
PH 0423 566 623
Fax 6771 3812

Illustration: Some of the historical documents in Panorama Magazine's archives.



that involve attaching loose papers or retrieving or returning paper files to shelves in a company, a court or a government department. The advent of computers means that there are far fewer filing clerks these days, but good ones are hard to come by.

Neither of these jobs are handsomely paid, but both provide an opportunity to get a career start.

Records Officer A-H, N

Responsible for keeping a company's files, for tracking the movements of files when not in storage, and for attaching new papers, letters etc. to files. You might call them 'keepers of the corporate memory.' A records officer will need to be aware of legal requirements for retaining or disposing of records.

Research Officer B-L, M-O

Responsible for collecting information, by conducting surveys (including telephone surveys, focus groups etc) and analysing the data gathered. Statisticians examine and draw conclusions from research data that can assist with company or government decision making.

What kinds of Archives and Records jobs are there?

Back room or front line?

A lot of people prefer to work with 'things' rather than directly with people. Many archives and records roles are mainly 'back room' jobs. However, some of these jobs, such as Research Officer, can actually involve a lot of public contact. Librarians, too, might also have a lot of public contact, even to the extent of having to discipliner unruly library customers!

Archivist (see A-H in KEY below)

Responsible for the safekeeping of records and valuable documents. For example, a university will retain the details of students, their studies, their results and any degrees or diplomas awarded. A museum might store a scientist's personal papers and manuscripts.

Conservator A-H, I-L

Responsible for maintaining collections of physical objects, for example, exhibits in a museum or gallery. Repairing, restoring and maintain exhibits, which requires a knowledge of how they deteriorate over time.

Health information manager

C-L, K, M-O

Responsible for looking after the information necessary to meet the medical, ethical, legal and administrative requirements of the health care system.

Librarian A-I, M

Library collections include books, magazines, computer games, software, photographs, journals, maps, microfilms, CDs, e-books and other sources of information. Librarians manage these materials so that they can be of use to members of the public.

Library Assistant A-H

Responsible for sorting and classifying material in a library. Ensuring that borrowed items have been returned.

Library shelf stacking or filing clerk B, D, E, H

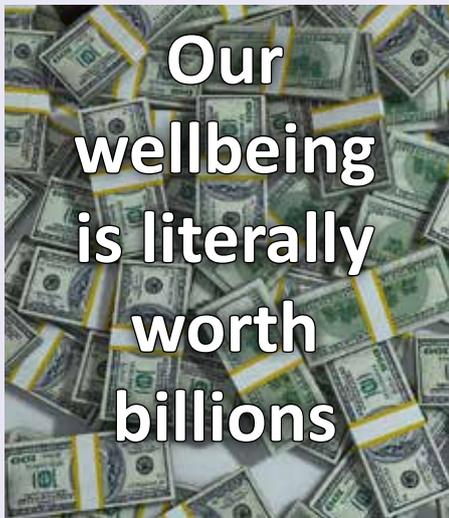
'Shelf stacking' or returning books to their right place on the shelves a vital job in a library which requires a person who can work with meticulous accuracy. While some people might find it boring, people who like 'a place for everything and everything in its place' might find the job ideal.

The same goes for filing clerk jobs

KEY

What employers are looking for: Archives and Records employees

- A. An interest in the preservation and accurate management of records
- B. Able to undertake highly detailed work
- C. Aptitude for using computers
- D. Able to work independently
- E. Good organisational skills
- F. Good oral communication skills
- G. Good written communication skills
- H. Able to accept responsibility
- I. Good liaison and negotiation skills
- J. Patience with the capacity for fine manual work
- K. Aptitude for science
- L. Interested in the arts
- M. Able to analyse information
- N. Able to manage workload to meet deadlines
- O. Proactive (ie, able to work on your own initiative and without direct guidance)



by Grant J Everett

Early intervention in mental health could save Australia tens of billions of dollars a year

According to the Herald Lateral Economics Index of Australia's Wellbeing, we spend \$200 billion a year as a result of mental health issues, including things like sick days and reduced productivity. \$200 billion is equivalent to 12 percent of our economy's entire annual output.

The index takes into account many social factors that are not included in traditional economic analyses. For

example it attempts to place a dollar value on the lower levels of wellbeing experienced by people with mental health issues.

In highlighting the overall cost to society of mental health issues, the index could be taken as a strong encouragement to invest in 'early intervention' methods. For example, investing in the mental health of young people. (See the Panorama story "Want to reduce unemployment? Invest in youth mental health" In September 2016)

Educating people about the dangers of abusing alcohol and other drugs educating people about how to spot the early warning signs of developing mental health issues in themselves, their families and friends and teaching the basic tenets of mental health first aid are known to have great worth.

Preventive measures like these can have a profound effect Think about the cumulative benefit to society if the negative effects of mental health issues could be prevented, reduced or reversed through early action. As it stands, many Australians experience interruptions in their emotional and intellectual development.

Think of the value of more people being

Mental health issues are "under-appreciated" as an economic problem according to Dr Nicholas Gruen, Chair of The Australian Centre for Social Innovation, and author of the Herald Lateral Economics Index of Australia's Wellbeing.

empowered to finish high school and pursue further education, to gain a job and keep it. It would reduce the cost of the Disability Support Pension, minimise the amount of time people spend in hospitals, reduce people's levels of disability. Early intervention can provide us with a chance to develop and mature properly, and profoundly affect the way we can connect with other people and develop and maintain relationships.

Sources:

www.and.org.au/pages/disability-statistics.html

"The wellbeing cost of mental health hits \$200 billion," M Wade, September 10th, 2016 www.smh.com.au/national/the-wellbeing-cost-of-mental-health-hits-200-billion-20160909-grcxxl.html

Things that look good on your resume!

Volunteering

Employers look for certain qualities such as keenness, self motivation, time management skills, resilience, persistence and emotional intelligence. You can develop these qualities outside of the workplace, so even if you have been out of the paid workforce for a long time, you still have something valuable to offer potential employers.

One way of honing these sort of skills (among others) is through volunteering. Simply by putting your hand up to volunteer, you are displaying keenness and self motivation! Once in a volunteer role, you will have the opportunity to develop the skills of the workplace. Volunteering roles can also compliment your studies. In fact, some volunteer organisations run courses themselves.

According to a report in the Sydney Daily

Telegraph, fields for which volunteers are sought after include Community Services, working with seniors, migrants and ex servicemen and women, coaching sporting teams, teaching English to refugees, disability care, working with animals, and working in cultural venues.

On the web, you can look up Volunteering Australia or its subsidiaries The Centre for Volunteering (in NSW) www.volunteering.com.au or Volunteering Queensland volunteeringqld.org.au

You can actually join and become a member of these and other volunteer organisations. To encourage volunteers, Volunteering Australia runs National Volunteer Week (8-14 May in 2017) and holds awards to honour outstanding volunteers. That would definitely look good on your resume!

Melanie Burgess 'Gifts of Giving' Daily Telegraph, Saturday 6 May 2017

You can be a super hero, or you can be a volunteer. Either way, it looks good on your resume. As demonstrated (right) at the 2016 Wellness Walk



Numeracy

There's an app for the maths gap, too!

The better your grasp of numbers, the better your prospects of employment. If you think that your career prospects could brighten with a bit of mathematical knowledge, but don't like the idea of enrolling in a class, you could always try an app. There are a number of computer software applications that can help you learn maths (and many other subjects as well).

Good apps (like good teachers) will help you relate your new Knowledge to everyday life. An article by Helen Wellings lists ten available maths apps. This might be a good place to start looking for something that might suit you:

<https://au.news.yahoo.com/a/26184930/making-maths-count-top-ten-apps-for-learning>

Recognising the gap in maths knowledge out there, at least one big business is doing something to promote it.

In April 2017, to celebrate Westpac Bank's 200th Anniversary, CEO Brian Hartzler announced that the bank would cover the cost to eligible school students of download and subscription fees for an app called Mathspace.

Designed in Sydney, this app is also used in Hong Kong, Britain and the United States. The cost of download was \$99 with \$10 per month subscription.

Mr Harzer, who claims to be no 'maths genius' himself, told the Saturday Telegraph that he tried out some year 12 units on the app and was pleased to find that it doesn't just fire questions at you, but takes you through everything step by step.

Jennifer Sexton, "Maths plan adds up for bank giant," Saturday Telegraph 8 April 2017

Helen Wellings, "Making Maths count: top ten apps for learning," Seven News (Online), 3 February 2015



If sitting in a class isn't your thing, you could always try an app!

Employment News

Out go the 457s, in come the "Temporary Skilled Shortage Visas"

457 visas have been controversial because they enabled employers to hire qualified workers directly from overseas when there are obviously plenty of unemployed or underemployed people in Australia.

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull announced on 20th April 2017 that 457s will be replaced by Temporary Skilled Shortage Visas. He said that the visa changes "will ensure Australian workers are given the absolute first priority for jobs" while businesses will still be able to temporarily access the critical skills they need to grow if skilled Australians workers are not available. At present, there are 95,000 workers on 457 visas in Australia whose positions will not be affected.

216 jobs have been removed from the list of those previously eligible to bring in foreign works, including zookeepers, goat farmers, turf growers, flight attendants and actors. The opposition pointed out that only 8.6 per cent of current 457 visa workers would be excluded under the new system. They also pointed out that 18 of the jobs being cut from the list have not been used in the past decade, 'deer farmer' for example. The Prime Minister said employers would be required to contribute to a fund to "support skills development and take-up of apprenticeships and traineeships."

Under the new scheme there will be

short term visas (up to two years) and medium term visas (up to four years) for more specialised occupations. Issuing the visas will be subject to labour market testing.

The long term solution to the problem of there being a shortage of skilled local workers is to train local workers. To this end, employers using the new visas will be required to contribute to a training fund which will cover the cost of this.

The types of employee shortages differ between city and country. The new visa rules will reflect this.

David Swan and Supratim Adhikari '457 axing will leave talent gap: start-ups' The Australian, 19 April 2017
James Massola 'Malcolm Turnbull's new visa jobs list would affect just 9 per cent of current 457 holders: Shorten' in the Sydney Morning Herald 19 April 2017
Simon Henson and Sarah Martin 'Business to pay as 457 visas axed' The Australian, 19 April 2017
Business Chamber of NSW
www.nswbusinesschamber.com.au/Media-Centre/Resources/What-the-457-visa-decision-means-for-you

Panorama Employment

Flourish Australia Employment Services Senior Manager: James Herbertson, Program Manager, Disability Employment Services: Julie Duong.

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By Grant J. Everett

Public swimming pools always have signs or brochures which let you know how to use the pool in a way that avoids offending or endangering others. Swimming is such fun that sometimes in our high spir- its we forget that running is unsafe, as is pushing people, and diving in without checking the depth.

There are lots of rules –even down to the cut and material of your bathers- but these rules have people’s safety in mind. For example, loose garments can snare people and cause drowning. The rules cover safety, comfort and health.

It is not a good idea to enter a public pool with certain illnesses, because of the risk of other people catching them. For example, don’t go swimming when you have flu and diarrhoea.

Some people need to be reminded not to stare at people or pee in the pool. Others need to be reminded that taking drugs or drinking alcohol can contribute to drowning.

Adult swimming lessons

Aquatic Centres and local pools offer a range of swim classes for every age and ability. These range from a beginner’s introduction for adults who only have limited swimming ability, all the way up to advanced classes for confident swim-

mers who want to perfect their strokes and learn survival skills, such as treading water. Each lesson should cost around \$20, and there may be a discount for pensioners. Never learned to swim? It’s never too late!

Does my bum look big in this?

When it comes to what you should wear at the pool, less is more. Generally, you will be expected to wear synthetic fibres like nylon, spandex, or polyester, as cotton clothing absorbs water, making it harder to swim (and thus more dan- gerous). So, whether you wear budgie smugglers, bikinis or a burquini, it should be okay. If you prefer to cover up, then board shorts and a top are appropriate for both sexes.

Me no fry

Being in the water won’t protect you from the sun one bit. Melanoma is the third most common cancer in Australia, and it kills more people in this country than any other kind of cancer. We have the highest rates of melanoma in the world. So be sure to use sunscreen on all your exposed skin, wear something like a rashie or another kind of synthetic top, and put your hat on whenever you’re out of the water.

Beach Safety

New South Wales has some of the most beautiful beaches in the country. In 2016 alone NSW had over six million visitors hit the waves and catch some rays on the coast. As the ocean is not some- thing to be taken lightly, safety should always be your number one concern. For instance, stay between the flags, never swim alone, and if you need help, stay calm and raise your arm. Of course, pool safety tips apply at the beach, too.

Signage

Take notice of all signs or flags at the beach. Some are permanent (such as places where it would be dangerous to dive) while others are just for that day (such as for rip currents, which can move from place to place). There are many other signs that warn swimmers about specific hazards. If there are no red and yellow flags that means DO NOT SWIM. Black and white quartered flags mark the “surfcraft exclusion zone” for surfers, and are found outside of the red and yellow flags.

Hitting rock bottom

What’s under the ocean may not come to mind when you think about ocean safety, but it’s an important considera- tion. Rule number one: don’t blindly dive into the water! Going into a submerged rock, reef or sandbar is a good way to end up with a neck injury.

Swimming ability

Can you swim? If not, then getting liter- ally out of your depth in the ocean is a bad idea. Knowing how to tread water is extremely important, as it can be the difference between life-or-death if you get into trouble.

Rip currents

A rip current is a narrow jet of water that flows away from the shore at greater speed than the waves come in. If you get caught in a rip it can be quite a shock. Around 80% of beach rescues are due to rip currents. The most important rule is **swim between the flags**.

You can spot rip currents from the beach if you know what to look for: If you can see calm-looking water between the breaking waves, be careful! Sand, murki- ness and debris are also danger signs. Once caught in a rip, many swimmers panic and attempt to fight the current by swimming directly towards the shore. This can lead to exhaustion and drown- ing, especially if you panic. Remember that a rip current is long (going away from the beach) but narrow (paral- lel with the beach). Your best chance is to swim PARALLEL along the beach, heading for white waves. The foam is an indication that the rip doesn’t extend that far, and the waves can sweep you back to shore.

If you can’t swim out of the rip, signal the lifeguards by waving your arms and calling out for help. And don’t panic!

Note that if somebody gets stuck in a rip current they can easily drag would-be rescuers down with them. The best thing a bystander can do is alert the lifeguards, or find something that floats and throw it to them.

Sources:

www.surflifesaving.com.au/beach-safety

beachsafe.org.au/surf-safety/flags-and-signs



Some safety precautions for Bushwalking



Left: Waterfall in the Blue Mountains. Above: Nepean YCLSS bushwalking group, from left Melanie Sheppard, Josh, Dani, Ariana and Liam (PHOTOS BY SOPHIE BOSCHENOK).

1. Stay well back from cliff edges
2. Make sure you check the weather as it can change quickly in the mountain conditions
3. Bring enough water and pack some food
4. Wear sunscreen and a hat, long sleeves and trousers.
5. Wear sensible shoes
6. Take a map with you of the route you will be taking (these can be attained online or at the information centres all the way up the mountain)
7. Reconsider your trip if it has been raining heavily (this can loosen soil and make it quite slippery) or on very hot days (bushfires do happen up there!)
8. Take a first aid kit (slips do happen occasionally)
9. Be aware of your surroundings
10. Never walk alone (especially on harder graded tracks)
11. Make sure also to take your rubbish with you and leave the bush untouched. We try and pick up any rubbish we see on the tracks because we are all responsible for keeping Australia Beautiful.

The best way to make use of these great safety tips is actually get out there and perform the activities. To encourage you, we have a story from the young people's bushwalking group at Nepean YCLSS. See page 19 of June Panorama.

**Q: What can we do about our unmet needs?
What resources are available?
Where can we get further information?**

A: TAKE ACTION!

Watch out for the next issue of ACTION CANSAS domain 11

Safety to Others

Nepean YCLSS goes Bush walking

by Sophie Boschenok

Getting out in nature can do so much more than just keep you fit

Bushwalking is a great way to keep fit and have fun whilst staying social. The young people in the Nepean Youth Community Living Support Service program have reported that being in nature helps them to lift their mood, be more relaxed, stay fit, feel more socially connected and more able to concentrate.

Beyond Blue have conducted research into green spaces (with the Beyond Blue to Green project) and found that there is a significant relationship between mental health and greenness. These studies found that being out in an open environment can boost mood and even improve depression and anxiety. The challenges of bushwalking have also helped the young people in the program to boost their self-esteem.

"I didn't think I would be able to do it, but gave it a go anyway. It felt so good when we finished the walk" – Josh S, former YCLSS member.

Bushwalking allows us to take a break from technology and everyday stress. What more do you need to do this than being physical, fresh air, great company and feeling connected to nature.

"Being in nature helps me feel relaxed and calm. I also like that I get to do it with others in the program as it can be hard to find others to go with" – Melanie, former YCLSS member

Out at Nepean YCLSS we are lucky enough to be at the foot of the beautiful Blue Mountains. The Blue Mountains are about a 2-hour drive from the city of Sydney. We have done many outings at a variety of spots all the way up to Scenic World in Katoomba. One of our favourite



From left: A member of YCLSS, Ariana, Josh, and on the right Bob is holding Sadie who is Ariana's daughter (PHOTO SOPHIE BOSCHENOK)

YCLSS walks is the Charles Darwin Walk at Wentworth Falls. This walk showcases the beautiful flora, fauna and waterfalls in the mountains. The tracks in the Blue Mountains range from easy to very hard. This means that every one of every fitness level will find a track that will be suitable for them.

Some great beginner walks are

- The Valley of the Waters walk at Wentworth Falls
- Scenic World to the three sisters at Katoomba
- Waterfall circuit at Lawson
- Jellybean Pool and Blue Pool at Glenbrook – Save this one for swimming on a hot day.
- Natural wonders at Jenolan Caves – A bit further if you are feeling adventurous.

We asked Melanie Sheppard, a graduated YCLSS member what she thought about bushwalking.

What is your favourite thing about bushwalking?

I like being surrounded by the natural environment. It helps me to relax and calms me down if I'm feeling agitated. I also enjoy the opportunities to take beautiful photos of the scenery. I like the social aspect and had a lot of fun on the walks.

Had you ever bushwalked before joining YCLSS?

Yes. My family and I had taken regular walks when I was younger. It has become a bit harder to find the time to go walking now that I am older and have other commitments. I really enjoyed having a group to go with.

What are some of your favourite walks?

The Grand Canyon at Blackheath and the National Pass at Wentworth Falls. I enjoy these walks as I find them more challenging. The views on the National Pass are amazing.

How has bushwalking helped in your recovery Journey?

It has helped me to get out of the house and do something I enjoy. I enjoy the physical challenge and as there is always something to talk about along the walk. It helped me to better get to know other YCLSS members and staff. **See bushwalking safety tips p 18**

**Flourish Australia
Penrith, Youth Community
Living Support Service YCLSS
232 Derby Street PENRITH
NSW 2750
(02) 9393 9779**



Wish you could afford to StepUP to better things?

Grant J Everett

Microfinance is a type of lending that is designed to help combat financial exclusion and to encourage borrowers to have a healthier relationship with money.

These sorts of loans are offered on a not-for-profit basis in order to help people improve their quality of life. They are targeted towards the basic resources every home needs, such as buying a second-hand car, car repairs, replacing broken white goods or furniture, getting a computer, paying for vocational education, or for medical expenses.

StepUP has won Money Magazine's Best Socially Responsible Product on three occasions, so we will look at it as an example of a loan option for people on low incomes who have had difficulty accessing credit from banks.

StepUP is an initiative from Good Shepherd Microfinance and National Australia Bank (NAB). StepUP will lend amounts from from \$800 to \$3000, and allows up to three years for you to pay it back. There are no fees, and these loans have a reasonably low fixed interest rate of around 5.99% per annum (although it may vary slightly, case-by-case basis). These loans are not available for cash, or the purposes of debt consolidation, holidays, or bills. (See the box for an explanation).

Some of our readers may not have taken out a loan before so we'll go through an example to show how interest works. Interest is the cost of the loan, although some loans have additional fees as well.

With a fixed interest rate, the total amount you are up for will depend on how much you borrow, the frequency of your instalments and the term of the loan. For instance, according to the StepUP online repayment calculator, Bob borrows \$1,000 at 5.99%, and agrees to pay it back over 2 years in fortnightly instalments. Bob's fortnightly payments would be \$20.15. By the time Bob pays back his loan plus interest, it comes to \$1,063. If Bob paid it back over 3 years, however, then he'd be paying \$13.88 a fortnight, but after repaying his debt plus interest Bob would have parted with \$1,095.

There are guidelines for sorting out who can get a StepUP loan. When you first call, a microfinance worker will ask you why you want a loan, as well as details about your income, your housing arrangements, whether or not your utility bills are up to date, the health of your bank account, and whether you have any debts. You must also have a Health Care Card, a Pension Card, or be receiving Family Tax Benefit A. You have to have been living in your current premises for more than 3 months, and your annual income has to be less than \$45,000.

If you meet the eligibility criteria you will get an Information Pack that outlines exactly what documentation you'll need to bring for a face-to-face interview. You will need to prove your identity using the

same 100 points method that any bank would require. When you have a face-to-face meeting, the microfinance worker will talk about your monthly expenditure and determine whether a StepUP Loan is right for you. If everything seems good, you'll be asked to complete a loan application form. The worker can also assist you in completing this application and double-checking that everything is accurate and documented properly. Your paperwork will then need to be assessed by NAB, which will include a credit check. NAB will take up to ten working days to assess your application. If your loan is declined, you'll receive a call from the StepUP Microfinance Worker and a letter from NAB explaining why.

If your loan is approved, then you just need to visit a NAB branch to sign the loan contract and receive a cheque made out to whoever is going to supply you with the product or service you want, such as a car dealership, a computer store, or your local TAFE.

Good Shepherd Microfinance is Australia's largest microfinance organisation, and they offer other affordable financial programs for people on low incomes such as the No Interest Loan Scheme.

Source: stepuploan.org.au goodshepherdmicrofinance.org.au Phone **13 64 57**

"Fast and Easy" money: interest rate rip-offs

Why are there so many steps to go through just to get a loan? Loans always come with a risk that the lender will not pay the money back. The more likely people are to default, the higher the interest the lender will charge. When lenders promise easy money and are not too fussed about what the loan is for or what your means of repayment will be, the interest rate will be correspondingly high. So to get a loan at a reasonable interest rate which involves a low risk, the lender will need to assess your application more closely and attach more restrictions on what the loan is for. A person who cannot pay their electricity bill is unlikely to be able to repay a loan for a holiday. A person after a debt consolidation loan may already be in trouble with multiple lines of credit that they are having trouble keeping up with. Anyone willing to lend to such people has to cover the high risk of default by charging extremely high interest rates. So instead of 4% to 14% it becomes 40% to 4,000%.



Social benefit bonds to fund **Resolve Program**

“A win for social wellbeing, a win for taxpayers and a win for investors”

Long periods in hospital are “costly, isolating and stigmatising’ according to Flourish Australia CEO Pam Rutledge, but they “can be avoided when community supports such as those offered under the Resolve Program are in place.”

The Resolve Program is a community based alternative to hospital for people with severe mental health issues, which Flourish Australia has been selected to roll out for the NSW government.

Resolve is a residential program for people in periods of crisis but it will also provide a “warm line” offering after-hours phone support to prevent a crisis arising in the first place. Support will be given for up to two years under the Resolve Program.

The Resolve program brings together aspects of HASI and our Peer Operated Service in Hervey Bay to assist people who have been in hospital for between 40 and 270 days in the previous year. Its aim, like many of our programs, is to keep people well, connected and out of hospital.

The program will operate in Orange and Penrith in partnership with the respective Local Health districts.

Pam said the announcement of the program was “a win for social wellbeing, a win for taxpayers and a win for investors...This program is about helping people with a mental health issue find, maintain and lead meaningful, independent lives in the community.”

NSW Treasurer Dominic Perrottet applauded the scheme, which is expected to provide services for up to 500 people in Western Sydney and Central Western NSW, as an innovative way of tackling social challenges.

The program’s funding will be raised in the form of social benefit bonds by Social Ventures Australia. The \$7 million scheme is actually expected to SAVE the government \$30 million in lengthy hospital admissions and will offer investors an expected return of 7.5 percent per annum.

“These bonds harness the power of private sector investment to take preventative action that makes a real difference to people’s lives,” Mr Perrottet told Pro Bono.

What are Social Benefit Bonds?

(Or, how social services can turn a profit)

The Resolve Program will be financed through social impact bonds, but what exactly are they?

Normally, Governments fund social services directly from tax revenue. The taxpayer provides the money, the money is spent and the only “profit” is the service itself.

Some social services, however, could actually bring about NET SAVINGS to taxpayers. A new service might prove to be much less expensive than existing ones, leading to long term savings. Part of these projected savings could be used as an incentive to attract investors looking for a profit.

In the long term the investors are rewarded for making the initial outlay by receiving as a dividend, part of the savings that the new service brings about.

In the case of The resolve Program, although it will cost \$7 million, it could save \$30 million, leaving 23 million in savings to taxpayers and profit to investors.

In this way, it could be said that everybody is ahead at the end of the day.



A debt to Anne Deveson

Understanding homelessness and mental health issues

By Ian Webster

Anne Deveson's media presence spearheaded the media's involvement in public health and mental health. She contributed at so many levels - social commentaries and documentaries - which challenged our sensibilities. She was a humanitarian who affected the lives of many people especially those with mental health problems. Her many contributions have been widely reported in the media following her death on 12th December 2016.

My first contact with Anne was being interviewed by her on 2GB about health care controversies and prevention; at that time doctors rarely spoke publicly about health and professional issues.

Anne believed the public media was an essential part of public health. As the director of the Australian Film and Television School from 1985 to 1988 she was able to influence the upcoming media writers, film-makers and producers.

In 1984 the NHMRC appointed a small group - Professor Charles Bridges-Webb from Sydney University, Kirsten Garrett of the ABC,

Family and Carers Page

Anne and me - to advise on the media's role in public health. Buried somewhere in the archives is our brief report, "The media and public health".

After one of our working meetings at Sydney University, Anne asked me to take her to the Matthew Talbot Hostel for the Homeless in Woolloomooloo, Sydney. It took much courage for her to enter, alone, that unruly, potentially threatening, all-male environment. She walked among the men and asked had any of them seen her son Johnathon. She often searched for Johnathon in the haunts of homeless people in Kings Cross and Woolloomooloo in inner Sydney.

Johnathon frequently visited the Matthew Talbot medical clinic where he had established a positive relationship with the nurses but his relationship with me, a male with authority, was pretty brittle. He was difficult and at times threatening. He injected street drugs and other unidentified substances.

Johnathon's behaviour frequently brought him into contact with the police. This was very distressing for Anne. She wanted them to know that her son was not a bad person but suffered a serious mental illness and needed treatment, not incarceration. She asked me to write a 'medical' letter for Johnathon to carry with him explaining his mental illness and that, if apprehended, he needed medical care. The letter said in part, "On occasions, the staff here have felt that he is a danger to himself and we have been most disappointed that the formal psychiatric services have either been unable or unwilling to take a stronger line in confining him to a treatment centre for sufficient time to improve his mental state and physical condition."

One Saturday morning the phone rang at my home. Anne was calling from Adelaide. She had been Chair of the South Australian Film Corporation and was there on a brief work visit. She had just been told that Johnathon had been picked up and taken to the Emergency Department at St Vincent's Hospital. She wanted him to be admitted for formal psychiatric assessment because she felt he was becoming more stable and would improve following an inpatient admission.

Calls to the Emergency Department and then the psychiatric unit were fruitless. The Emergency Depart-

ment said he was not there and had been handed over to the mental health team. The mental health team made that dreaded statement "we have no beds" and he had been discharged. A few days later he was found in a coma from a drug overdose in Kings Cross.

Three months after that, June 1986, another phone call and a police visit informed Anne that Johnathon died at the Edward Eager Lodge, a night refuge, from a drug overdose.

Anne's book, "Tell me I'm here" tells of Johnathon's troubled life. It has had a powerful influence on our understanding of mental illness, the difficulties faced by a parent(s) with a mentally ill child and the "catch-as-catch-can" life of the homeless mentally ill.

The moving and significant part of Johnathon's story for me, is the description of the graveside service at the Rookwood Cemetery in the wind and rain. The minister likened "Johnathon to an instrument, too finely tuned to bear the vicissitudes of life." On other side of the grave, through the rain, Anne could see the homeless, crazy and sick people from the Matthew Talbot Hostel. Among them Ray Bourke, a supervisor, who had had many difficult interactions with Johnathon.

Her son did have friends, friends who shared with him the experience of homelessness and the terrors of the mind.

Afterword - Anne Deveson made many contributions to health care and mental health. As Commissioner on the Human Relationships Royal Commission, she proposed changes needed to humanise undergraduate medical and health professional courses; she co-founded the mental health organisation SANE; she chaired a review of the implementation of the NSW Mental Health Act; and, was a member of the NSW Mental Health Tribunal. Towards the end of her life she spoke freely about the troubling experience of Alzheimer's Disease. (She gave me permission to speak freely about her son Johnathon's life, as I knew it.)

Emeritus Professor Ian Webster AO is a medical doctor who works with the homeless and is committed to the "chain of care" concept. See:

www.penington.org.au/profile-emeritus-professor-ian-webster-ao/

Future Panorama

Readers' Survey 2016-2017

Thank you to the hundreds of people who have responded to our reader's surveys. We appreciate the strong support for publishing people's recovery stories and we will be working to ensure our content reflects what you want to read. We also asked you questions about Panorama Online, Advertising and Recovery Radio.

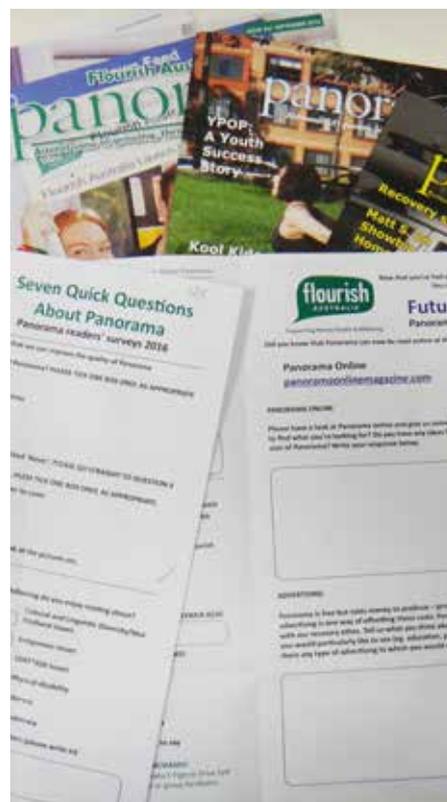
Clearly we need to improve the way Panorama is distributed, because many people don't get to see it! 52 per cent of respondents who attended Recovery Forums said that they had never read Panorama. Rural areas are our biggest concern.

A great many people who access rural services also spoke of the need for local issues to be covered (especially in any future Radio ventures).

There was less enthusiasm for paid Advertising (see Editor's article, Panorama 63), but of those who voiced opinions it seems to be acceptable as a kind of "necessary evil." Most people think that certain things should NOT be advertised. In order of unpopularity these are tobacco, alcohol, junk food, pharmaceuticals and Gambling.

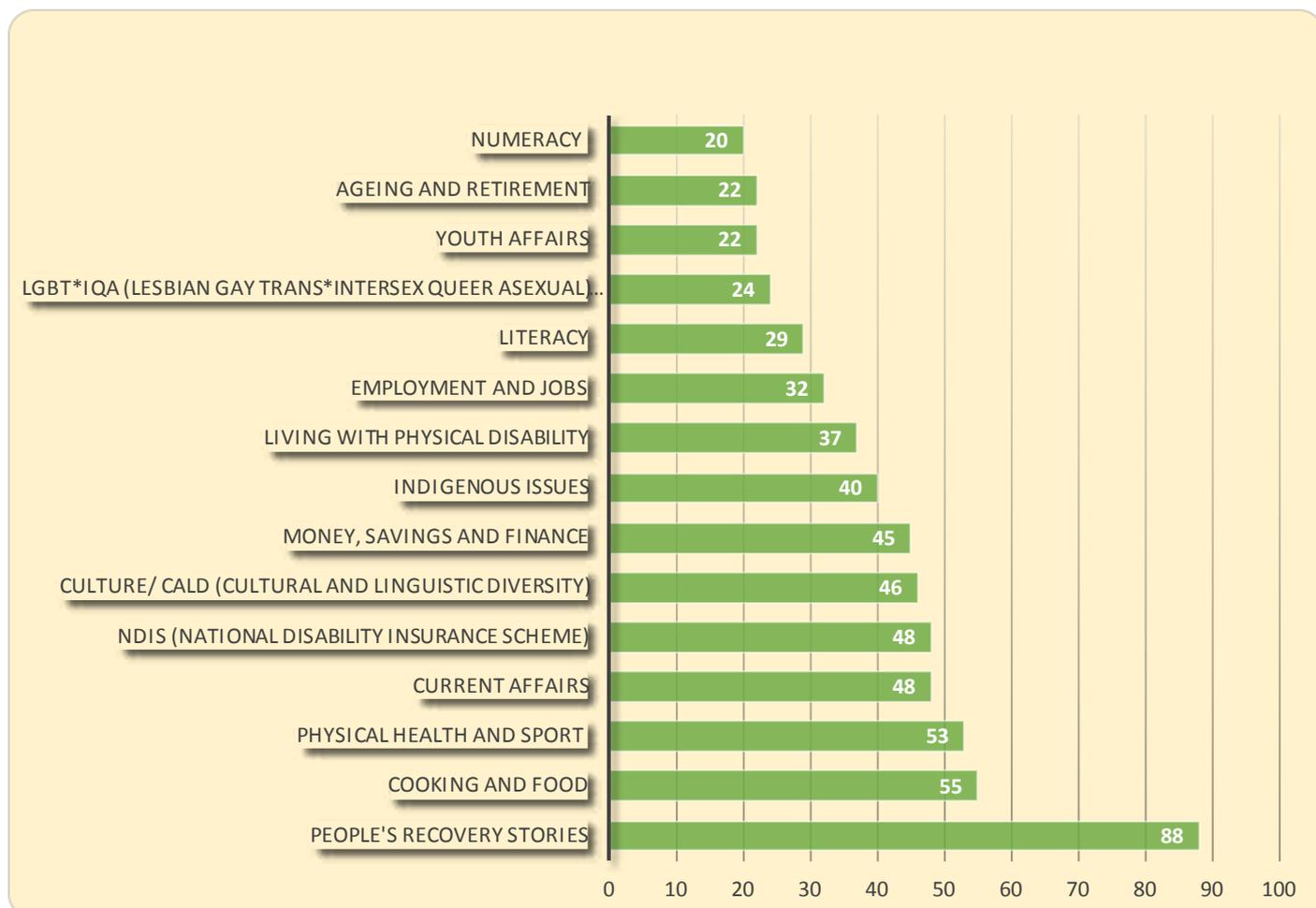
A number of people voiced opposition to advertising with sexual content. Groceries, household items and Educational services seem to be the most acceptable things for advertising.

Respondents came up with hundreds of useful ideas, and we hope that you will see us trying your ideas out one by one. We will publish some of the statistics from the 'Seven Questions About Panorama' survey in this issue and some in September. **Thank you to everybody who participated.**



'Seven Questions About Panorama' 2016-17 survey: What YOU said about Panorama's content

The graph below shows in ascending order the preference readers gave for various topics. The easy winner is people's recovery stories which were favoured by 88% of readers. More stats will be published in September issue.



27th TheMHS Summer Forum

**Mercure Hotel, Sydney,
February 2017**

By Grant J Everett

How can our mental health system deliver authentic person-centred care? How can it enable personal choice and control among the people who access our services and those who support them? How can people and organisations continue to thrive?

These were some of the big questions addressed by 26 speakers from all over the world at this Summer's international TheMHS Forum

Ed Mantler, Vice President of Programs and Priorities for the Mental Health Commission of Canada, informed us that half a million Canadians will miss work this week due to Mental health issues. Another major drain on productivity is "Presenteeism," which is what you call it when somebody turns up to work, but their performance is severely impacted by a mental health issue. This is a real issue in Australia, too, because merely being at work doesn't mean a worker will get anything done. Physically turning up is only half the issue.

Eddie Bartnik is the Strategic Adviser on Mental Health for the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). If anybody was going to be able to share the exciting and terrifying realities of the NDIS rollout, it was Eddie! Ten years in the making, the NDIS is the biggest of its kind in the world, and this detailed plan has been hammered out into a uniform shape across the entire country. He stressed that despite the scale, everything was going as planned. However, a major influx of peer support Workers will be necessary if we want to be able to deliver on all the promises of the NDIS, so it's lucky that Flourish Australia – among many others – have been massively recruiting these essential cogs.

Peter Gianfrancesco is the NSW State Manager of Neami National. Peter was a major contributor to the development of

the NDIS, and he made it clear that most Australian non-government organisations need to shake things up, to try new things. We need to find ways to actively reach more people rather than focusing on the ones we already reach.

Frank Quinlan, the CEO of Mental Health Australia, had some unsettling numbers to share: 690,000 Australians experience severe mental health issue each year. 230,000 will require individualised support. However, there are only 64,000 places in the NDIS. With limited spots, the need to invest in early intervention and prevention becomes even more important.

Sarah Johnson, an actuary of the NDIA, confirmed that despite some questions about its long-term financial sustainability, the NDIS is projected to cost 1% of our Gross Domestic Product, around \$16 billion.

Kim Ryan, CEO of the Australian College of Mental Health Nurses, called for unity between mental health experts, for them to get on with the job, rather than bickering and competing.

Friday got off to a good start with an address by Dame Marie Bashir. Dame Marie spoke about some of the widely-held erroneous beliefs that people have had about mental health issues over the years, about the importance of suicide prevention, and how she's seen young people come into the mental health system suicidal and hopeless, and then gone on to achieve great things. Dame Marie has been a great friend to our organisation for many years now, and has been involved in many of our annual general meetings, the launch of Flourish Australia, and she's also known our CEO, Pam Rutledge, for decades.

Multiple reforms to our mental health frameworks have resulted in a complex knot that the NDIS will hopefully reset. Although changing the way everything has worked for decades may be daunting, soon the NDIS will establish a uniform system across all states and territories. Will this lead to better outcomes for people living with mental health problems and their families? And how can we all navigate our way through these systems.

As we begin a new era that classifies individual recovery as something flexible, something that is defined differently for each person, we need to ensure that this new model isn't just the old one dressed

up in different pyjamas. This is going to be accomplished, in part, by encouraging people to not just have informed choice and control over their own lives, but to also have power over the services and programs they need. There needs to be REAL choice available, not just a veneer. Targeted funding into a new-beaut system will have a major impact on individuals, but unless they can exercise self-determination, it won't work. We have come a long way despite the fact that our system is incredibly risk-averse.

It's amazing that some things still need to be repeated, especially by professionals who should know better: clinical language is bad when it places a barrier of understanding between the clinician and the person accessing the service. Services always need to be people-led, and we people need to explain things in recovery-based language. These are all basic precepts of a recovery model, but something that far too many people still don't get.

New funding strategies are driving new systems of mental health care. How does an organisation plan for and manage its workforce? What are the outcomes for people with lived experience who need these services?

Ken Thompson, Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry for the University of Pittsburgh, wrapped up the Summer Forum in a memorable way, Ken was impressed by the way the other speakers acknowledged the Gatigal people of the Eora nation and paid their respects to Elders past and present, as Ken has never attended a conference or forum in his home country where the Native American people were respected in such a way. Ken went on to say that he is going to encourage his colleagues to promote the same attitudes when he gets home.



Mercure Hotel, Sydney



Minister at Figtree Conference Centre

The Minister for Mental Health in the New South Wales Government paid a visit to Flourish Australia's Head office on 11th April to learn more about our services.

The Hon Tanya Davies, MP for Mulgoa, met the people who work at one of our social enterprises, Figtree Conference Centre.

Regular readers will know that our Conference Centre provides a highly competitive standard of service to customers while employing people living with mental health issues.

The photo by Milin Thaker shows (from left to right) Flourish Australia Chair Professor Elizabeth Moore, Minister Davies and Chief Executive Officer Pam Rutledge.

Flourish Australia CEO Pam Rutledge announces move towards retirement

Announcement made Tuesday, 11th of April 2017

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

After seven years as CEO of Flourish Australia/RichmondPRA/Richmond Fellowship of NSW, and after more than forty-five years working in the health and community sectors, I have decided that the time is right to move towards retirement.

I wanted to let you know directly and early that I have arrived at this decision after enormous thought, and with the future of Flourish Australia and the people who access our services foremost in mind. With the organisation having gone through significant change, and being so well positioned to grow even further in coming years, I simply feel there is a good window of opportunity for new hands to take Flourish Australia to the next levels.

Arrangements are being made for a smooth transition, with a view to me stepping down at the end of the calen-

dar year. The Board will soon commence an independent recruitment process to canvass, internally and externally, for the next CEO. Until then it will be business as usual, with me continuing full CEO responsibilities. I will ensure that the CEO hand-over is smooth.

I have been extraordinarily privileged to have the opportunity to lead this fine organisation over the last seven years. Everything we have done in this time has been the result of teamwork and collaboration at every level grounded in a commitment to learn from and value lived experience, co-design and person-led service. This means that we have a strong and resilient organisation which will continue to thrive independent of any one individual.

And while I look forward to having a slightly quieter life, and more time to spend with my family and grandchildren (yes, another is on the way!), I hope to maintain some involvement in the sector, specifically through my membership of the Mental Health Review Tribunal and other opportunities that may arise. I would like to think that we will still cross paths from time to time.

I have many mixed feelings and emotions at this time, an obvious one being that I will greatly miss the people who make this organisation what it is – the

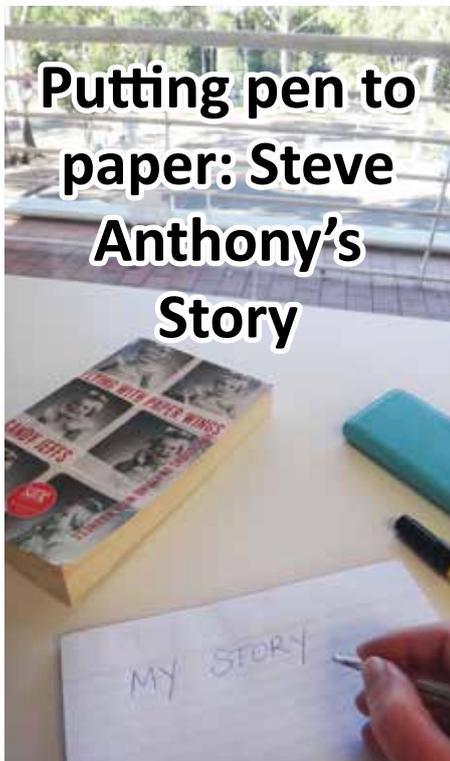
staff, those who access our services, our Board and our many partners and colleagues. An upside is that there will be time for me to thank many of you personally, for your many contributions and support, over the course of the year, something that is a privilege and priority for me.

For now though, let's do what we do well, living our values and delivering high quality recovery-oriented supports, and make 2017 as extraordinary as previous years. There is much to do, and it's all systems go.

-Pam



Pam taking wing at Mardi Gras 2017



Putting pen to paper: Steve Anthony's Story

by Grant J Everett

We all have tales to tell. Discussing his novelette with Panorama, Steve Anthony tells how he ran afoul of the justice system after a mental health flare up, and discovered what it's like to be locked away. After some encouragement, Steve put his experiences down on paper so readers could take a peek into a world that many people would know very little about.

PANORAMA: How long did it take for you to write "A Moment of Insanity: My Battle with Mental Illness"?

STEVE: It took 8 years. I started writing it in jail in 2008 on the suggestion of a cellmate, and I completed the final draft in 2016.

Did you write the manuscript all on your own, or did you have help?

I wrote the whole manuscript myself, but my mother helped me to form it into five letters to make it more readable. I thought that dividing it this way would make it more interesting and easy to read.

What will a reader get out of it?

The reassurance that there is light at the end of the tunnel if you persist with treatment.

Do you think that writing down your experiences was helpful to your recovery?

It was very beneficial to be able to look

back and see where I went wrong. As a result of my experiences, I closely evaluate every decision I make. I am learning from my mistakes.

Have you always had an interest in creative writing?

I have been writing for most of my life. I penned a lot of nonfiction about religious concepts (as I grew up in a very religious environment) but my first major attempt at writing something big was a guitar tuition book at 17.

Are you planning on more writing?

I would like to do some more writing, and I have been working on some ideas for a while now. No spoilers!

You mentioned using a lot of marijuana before all of this happened. Do you believe that this contributed to your mental health issues?

From a young age I had grandiose ideas and delusions, especially religious delusions, that seemed to get greatly exacerbated by the marijuana. I don't think pot was the cause, but it certainly didn't help.

I was on the run for seven weeks, five weeks in a cave and two weeks in a hospital. When I was in the cave I had no food and nothing but dirty, algae-contaminated water to drink. I actually felt quite peaceful and free when I was on the run, and because of my illness (mania) I was unafraid of the consequences.

How long were you in jail?

Six months on remand. Jail was an extremely traumatic experience, but it was the only thing that could have woken me up to the impact of my insane behaviour.

Did jail provide you with a chance to recover?

My recovery truly began in jail, because being in there finally made me realise that I'd made a lot of wrong choices, and I knew I had to change.

... I didn't become a Forensic patient until after jail, so I couldn't go to the Malabar unit [see March 2017 Panorama]. I did spend some time in Silverwater jail and Parklea jail, though.

I am still a Forensic [patient]. I'm getting closer to Unconditional [Release, from the Forensic system], but I will have to prove for a long period of time that I can stay well and function in the community.

It is very difficult to get free from the system once you are a forensic patient. They don't hand out Unconditional [Release] to anybody!

I had a major setback when I stopped taking medication in 2012 and ended up in hospital. I've been back in the community without issue ever since. Hopefully I'll never need to go back.

What has helped your recovery?

My family has been absolutely amazing. I wouldn't have survived jail without their support. The other big factor was getting on the right medication....

What gets you out of bed? Work, study, seeing people?

I visit family and friends regularly, and I work part time. The happy life I have with my wife and family, and wanting to be able to make a nice life for my wife and her daughter, are what keeps me going. As weight gain is one of the side effects of my medication, I also try to exercise as much as possible.

Would you say that you've rebuilt your life, or do you still have a way to go?

I'm remarried, I have a nice home and a good relationship with my family and friends, so I would say that I am fully recovered. However, I may never be as capable as I was before the illness set in.

Do you have any advice for our readers?

Being very unwell may feel euphoric at times, but it is unsustainable and will only end up destroying your life and loved ones. Doing all you can to get well is the only way to have any kind of future, because when you are unwell nothing is real or true.

Is there something you wished you'd known before all of this happened?

I wish I hadn't taken certain parts of the Bible literally, and that God was speaking to me. I wish I knew they were just voices in my head that I had invented.

How is your book available?

It is available as an ebook at the moment, but I can get hard copies at any time if there is a demand.

www.amazon.com.au/Moment-Insanity-Battle-Mental-Illness-ebook/dp/B01N143PUP

Recovery forum hits the road

This year's Recovery Forum program was a great success, with over 250 people who access Flourish Australia services attending the event. Everyone who came enjoyed the day, which involved sharing stories of recovery, learning about diversity, hearing from other people's experiences and trying our hand at peer work.

Travelling to 15 different locations across NSW and South East Queensland, the forum was accessible to many people, especially those who reside in rural and remote locations.

Pam Rutledge, Flourish Australia's CEO, was very pleased with the outcome. "Seeing people embrace this forum demonstrates the strong bonds that develop across our organisation, between staff and people who access the service."

This year, participation was extended to families and carers, staff, as well as local community partners.

Flourish Australia's Manager Peer Workforce Peter Farrugia, who facilitated the forums, was excited to see interest from local communities. "We welcomed a number of peer workers from partner organisations, who participated in the forum. It was great to be able to showcase what Flourish is all about," he said. "I must also thank my colleagues Clare Evans and Annie Sykes for their fabulous co-facilitation support."

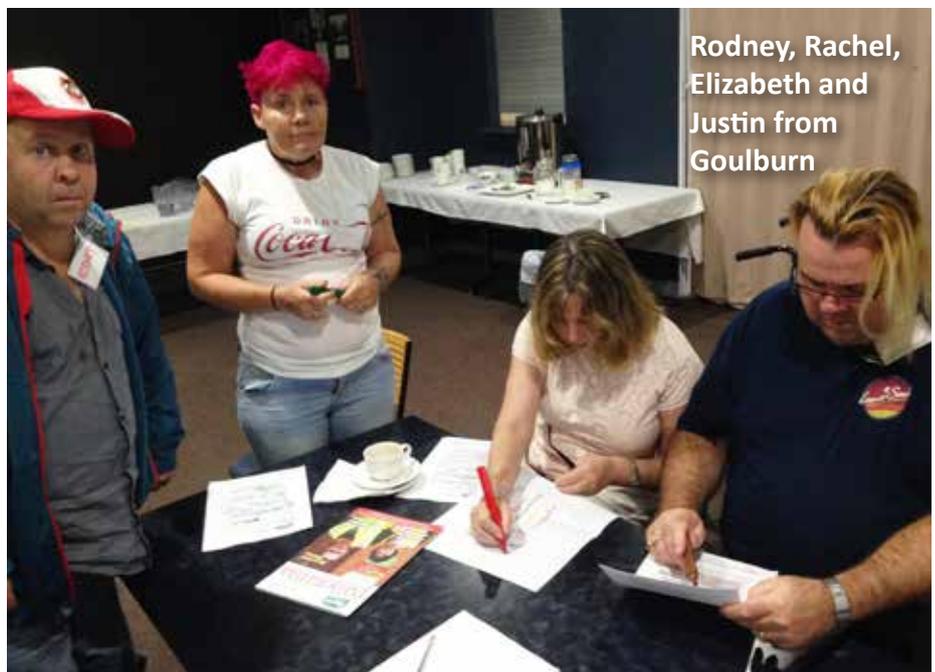
There is one function left to facilitate, dedicated to young people accessing Flourish Australia.

"The final forum will be held in the July school holidays at the Figtree Conference Centre," said Pam Rutledge. "We want to make sure young people have an opportunity to come together and share their thoughts and ideas," she said.

The youth recovery forum is scheduled for Monday 3rd July at Figtree Conference Centre. Any young people wanting to attend should speak to their local service manager.



Kate, Gail and Allen from Griffith



Rodney, Rachel, Elizabeth and Justin from Goulburn

(PHOTOS: PETER FARRUGIA)



Michael, Russell, George, Monica and Ray from Flowerdale, Liverpool

BACK ON TRACK HEALTH Your Physical Health and Wellbeing

Contact Jade Ryall, program manager, B.O.T.H. 02 9393 9009



In-house Dietician and Exercise Physiologist.

You may have read stories in Panorama about the New Moves program where private exercise physiologists have been working with the people who access our services in order to help people meet their physical health goals.

The results of this have been so encour-

aging that Flourish Australia now hopes to engage its own Exercise Physiologist and Dietician!

Pictured above is Paul from New Moves working with members and staff of Flourish Australia's Buckingham House.

Physical Health and Wellbeing Website under construction.

Flourish Australia has been developing a new physical health website. We have already gained feedback from a survey are continuing to collaborate with people who access our services on the content and design.

Health Promotions

We are committed to promoting better physical health for all the people who access our services or who read Panorama. The best way to achieve this is for you to give us your ideas.

Flourish Australia has a Community of Practice for Physical Health which is coordinated by Jade Ryall (02 9393 9009

Jade.Ryall@flourishaustralia.org.au). We meet about once a month by conference phone to discuss what is happening in all our various services. People who access our services can join, not just staff!

One thing that we often hear from community of practice members is how difficult it can be to get some physical health and wellbeing promotions off the ground. Especially at times when we have continual bad weather such as we did in the first few months of 2017!

This means that YOUR ideas for health promotions are always highly valued. All people who access our services or who read Panorama are invited to get involved. If YOU have an idea for a health promotion activity, let your local support workers know about it!

To give you an example which we have already reported in Panorama, some services have recently run Influenza awareness programs in time for the beginning of the flu season.

Every three months, Flourish Australia surveys its services throughout NSW and Queensland to find what kinds of physical health and wellbeing promotions have been running. It would be great to see more and more people involved and –best of all– to know that YOU came up with the ideas.

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Supporting Mental Health & Wellbeing



Expand
your
repertoire:
Join a CoP
today

Communities of Practice share an interest or passion for something they do and want to learn how to do it better as they interact regularly with each other. For information on how to start a new community of practice, contact Janet Ford, Professional Practice Manager, 02 9393 9003, janet.ford@flourishaustralia.org.au

Communities of Practice currently operating within Flourish Australia

Physical Health: contact Jade Ryall at Olympic Park on 02 9393 9007
Peer Workforce: contact Debra Gibbons at Hervey Bay 02 9393 9560
Supporting Aboriginal And Torres Strait Islander People and Communities: contact Jade Ryall at Olympic Park on 02 9393 9007

BACK ON TRACK HEALTH

Recommended health screening tests

- Self-checking (skin, teeth, breasts)
- Skin exams
- Dental checkups
- Testicle checks
- Pap tests
- Pregnancy
- Blood pressure
- Blood tests
- Obesity tests
- Electrocardiogram (ECG)
- Diabetes
- Breast cancer
- Prostate cancer
- Bowel cancer
- Eye health
- Bone density
- STIs (if sexually active)

“Brushes with Life 2017”

Art workshops + exhibition

A celebration of hopes and dreams and good mental health! Throughout the year, the Taree branch of Flourish Australia provides FREE art workshops every month. Materials, instruction and light refreshments are all provided for no cost, and no artistic experience is required!

Artists are also welcome to take part in the **Brushes with Life** exhibition in October, too, for the chance to win acclaim and prizes.

Contact Flourish Australia to book your place in the workshops or the exhibition, or if you need more details.

1300 779 270

Where?

Uniting Church Hall, Main Street, Cundletown

When?

First Thursday of the month, 10am to 2pm

Workshops are held on the 2nd of March, 6th of April, 4th of May, 1st of June, 6th of July, 3rd of August, 7th of September, 2nd of November and 7th of December. As the **Brushes with Life** exhibition is held in October, the workshop does not run that month.

Panorama Online is live!

Panoramaonlinemagazine.com

All the staff at the publications department (both of us) are very proud to announce the official launch of **Panorama Online Magazine!** We've cherry-picked the best consumer recovery stories, watershed events and other seminal articles to live on in digital form. Our clean, easy-to-use, attractive website will keep our finest material in circulation for many years to come, and this is truly the start of a new era for our magazine. The issues we deal with will continue to be hot topics for the foreseeable future, and **Panorama Magazine** will continue to be there for all the people who access our services tomorrow, just like yesterday.



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Supporting Mental Health & Wellbeing



Learn While You Work

- ★ *Are you living with mental health issues?*
- ★ *Would you like to get back to work but feel unsure about where to start?*

If you are on a disability support pension or live in an NDIS rollout area, you may be eligible for supported employment at one of Flourish Australia's Community Businesses.

As a community business employee you will have access to vocational training and recovery groups so you can build your skills and experience, while furthering your mental health recovery journey.

**You can even do tertiary qualifications onsite, including:
Cert. 3 in Warehouse Operations and Cert. 3 in Horticulture.**

We can also support you to access other courses at TAFE and Community Colleges.

When you feel you are ready to enter the open workforce, we are here to support you with the transition.

★★★**NEWSFLASH**★★★

Flourish Australia is a registered National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provider. We can answer your NDIS questions and support you to access our services. Contact us to find out more: 02 9393 9000



At Flourish Australia Community Businesses we currently have supported jobs available in:

Packing and Light Assembly at Marrickville or Harris Park.

Property maintenance, lawn mowing and professional and specialised cleaning services at St Marys, Warwick Farm and Marrickville.

Contact Us to find out more!

Phone: 02 9393 9000
Email: clare.evans@flourishaustralia.org.au
Web: flourishaustralia.org.au