We'll be back!

A Contributing Life: the 2012 National Report Card on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention was launched at an event hosted by well known journalist, Jessica Rowe and opened with the lived experiences of some of the people who feature in the Report Card. This was followed by the official launch of the Report Card by the Chair, Prof Allan Fels. You can read Allan’s full address on our website.

“I hope that we will all look back on today as a special day… when all Australian governments and communities recognise that mental health and suicide prevention are and must remain a high, national priority and found the courage to address some difficult truths,” Prof Allan Fels said in his opening address.

The Commission appreciates all the support it received in the lead up to and following the launch of the National Report Card. Thank you once again to all who attended and who shared the exciting event through their networks, including through social media. We hope you enjoyed the discussion and we look forward to continuing the conversation in 2013.

The Report Card is more than pages

Did you know that the digital version of the Report Card includes a series of videos where a number of Australians share their experiences? People are at the heart of all the Commission does and we made a commitment to reflect the lived experiences of real Australians in all of our work and especially in A Contributing Life: the 2012 National Report Card on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention.

Download a digital version of the Report Card HERE or head to our website to watch the videos.

Meet Pat and Keith from South Australia. Watch their experience - part of the Feeling safe, stable and secure chapter of the Report Card.
Presentation of 'A Contributing Life' to the Australian Government

Commission Chair, Professor Allan Fels, presented A Contributing Life: the 2012 National Report Card on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention to the Australian Government at an event at Parliament House on 27 November.

The Hon Mark Butler MP, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on Mental Health Reform accepted the Report Card on behalf of the Prime Minister and commented:

“There is no shortage of reports on mental health but so many of them focus on the number of beds that we have in the hospital system, the number of doctors, the number of nurses, what I describe as inputs to the system. Very few of them, if any that we could find, focus on the outcome and focus on the degree to which those services are delivering change in people’s lives or to use the language of the Commission, to lead contributing lives in their community.”

Read the Minister's full media release on the Report Card HERE

Staffing update

We are very excited to announce the appointment of a number of roles which were recently advertised. We received an overwhelming response and were particularly pleased to see the number of people who disclosed their mental health experiences within their application. Many reported that this was the first time they had felt comfortable telling a potential employer. We would like to formally welcome to the Commission team:

- Ms Catherine Lourey, Director of Report Card Development
- Ms Jane Moxon, Director of Policy, Strategy and Projects
- Ms Rachael Keen, Business Manager
- Ms Davina Dressler, Policy and Project Advisor
- Mr Peter Birch, Secretariat and Project Officer
- Ms Kerris McLiver, Communications and Media Officer
- Ms Joan Reeves, Executive Assistant and Administrative Officer

Promote the Report Card HERE
Farewell and good luck

It is with great pride that we also announce that one of our staff who has been with the Commission since the very beginning is moving on to bigger and better things.

Our Director of Policy, Strategy and Projects, Ms Rachel Green was instrumental in the setup of the Commission, led our Roundtable consultations in April, developed the Commission’s Paid Participation Policy, sent the Commissioners around the country visiting services and meeting people and managed the production of the first annual National Report Card on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention. One of Rachel’s key achievements was leading the work with Commissioner Meagher in developing the framework for ‘A Contributing Life’ and we are excited that she will be using this philosophy in her new role as Director of Mental Health Services for the not-for-profit organisation, Care Connect. We thank Rachel for all her hard work this year and wish her the very best on her new adventure.

Welcome aboard

The Commission is delighted to be welcoming Ms Jane Moxon into the role of Director of Policy, Strategy and Projects from January 2013. Jane brings significant experience in health service delivery, health promotion and prevention and in embracing innovative policy solutions to complex issues. Jane has worked across sectors; working with community, business and non-government organisations and in many agencies including Health, Education, Environment and the NSW Department of Premier & Cabinet. Her senior management expertise is extensive, with Masters qualifications in Public Health and the ANZSOG Executive Masters in Public Administration. Jane says she feels privileged and excited to work for the Commission in the delivery of its important mental health and suicide prevention agenda.

What’s next?

Planning for 2013 is already underway at the Commission. Our first year of operation has been a big one and 2013 looks to be just as busy.

We will be back with our second Report Card in 12 months’ time, reporting on what’s happened, whether people’s experiences have changed for the better and where things have improved.

While our priority for 2013 is developing the Report Card, there are a number of other key projects the Commission plans to deliver in the new year.

A snapshot of what’s to come in 2013

Commission meetings will kick off in late January with the first one to be held in Sydney. We will also
visit Yarrabah and Cairns, QLD, Canberra, ACT, Port Hedland, WA, Launceston, TAS and Melbourne, VIC throughout the year.

Other priorities for the Commission include:

- Developing a regular, qualitative, whole of life survey to capture the experiences of people with mental health difficulties and their families and supporters. A project summary and Q&As are available on our [website](#).
- Calling for evidence on the best international practice in reducing and eliminating the use of seclusion and restraint, in partnership with the Mental Health Commission of Canada and key Australian bodies.
- Working with business leaders and other partners to call for evidence on and work to advance good workplace practices.
- Releasing a snapshot on how to engage young people in our work to ensure they have a voice in our future Reports and drivers for improvement.
- Examining how Australians think and feel about mental health, mental illness and suicide, including stigma and discrimination. But also, what can be done to help them get more information they need and feel more comfortable talking about mental health and helping others.

**Get Involved - subscribe to our mailing list to receive regular updates**

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS**

In our first year we visited every state and territory and met, listened and shared experiences with people from across Australia. We look forward to meeting, working and collaborating with many of you throughout 2013.

From the Chair, Commissioners and Commission staff we wish you a restful, happy and safe holiday. We thank you for your interest, involvement and guidance in our first year.

**See you in 2013!**

**Please note: The Commission will shut down on 24 December 2012 and will re-open on 2 January 2013**

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