



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**23 May 2019**

## **WA Mental Health Conference and Awards set to return in late 2019**

IN the interest of creating a more sustainable mental health system and strengthening our community in Western Australia, the WA Mental Health Conference 2019 will again draw experts together from a diverse range of fields to explore best practice which improves people's lives.

The conference will be held at the Hyatt in Perth from 19-20 November and preceded by the inspiring WA Mental Health Awards 2019 close by at the Pan Pacific Hotel on 18 November.

Both the conference and the awards are hosted and coordinated by the peak body for community mental health in the State, the WA Association for Mental Health and supported by the WA Government's Mental Health Commission.

Renowned mental health policy expert and senior lecturer at the Brain and Mind Centre at The University of Sydney, Dr Sebastian Rosenberg is the first confirmed keynote speaker, with the call for abstracts to help further shape the program and its four core streams, to be announced soon.

Registrations to attend the conference will open on 5 August, with early bird spots available through a flash sale in late June before the end of financial year.

WAAMH chief executive officer Taryn Harvey said the conference was all about bringing people together to strengthen each other's understanding and drive real solutions to empower our community and bolster the State's mental health services – both community-based and public.

"If it takes a village to raise a child, then it takes a whole of community approach to tackle mental health challenges," Ms Harvey said. "Through connections and conversations at our State premiere conference, we hope to weave a path through the current system to ensure it is equipped to offer the right support, at the right time, in the right place to keep people well in their own homes and local communities."

The conference will offer a rich, targeted program and appeal to a diverse range of delegates including people with lived experience as a consumer, carer or family member; professionals from primary health, private sector and NGO services; funding bodies; policy makers; mental health educators and advocates; and people whose work relates to mental health, HR and/or OH&S.

Nominations for the WA Mental Health Awards are open to all members of the public and open on 4 June with eight categories including the **News Media Award to recognise excellence in journalism and reporting on mental health**; Promotion or Prevention; Consumer Impact & Inspiration; Diversity; Mental Health Employee Excellence; Mentally Healthy Workplace; Mentally Healthy Education; and Innovation for Change Awards.



Winners will be awarded at a celebration ceremony on 18 November at the Pan Pacific Hotel in Perth.

“The Mental Health Awards are an important recognition of the often quiet heroes in our society who make up the fabric of mental wellbeing in their workplaces, for their clients or in their communities and it’s important to highlight their amazing efforts through this event,” Ms Harvey said.

“This year, there is a brand new award category in the mentally healthy education field in an effort to inspire our teachers, educators and students.

“Our goal towards a sustainable and responsive mental health community starts by shining the light on the elements which already work well, and the people and organisations setting the right example and being innovative and recovery-focused in their spheres of influence, so we can build the mental health system we all need and want, together.”

#### FIND OUT MORE

**WA Mental Health Conference 2019:** <http://waamh.org.au/conference>

**WA Mental Health Awards 2019:** <http://waamh.org.au/awards>

#### MEDIA CONTACTS

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#### MENTAL HEALTH IN THE MEDIA:

Please include the following crisis support service for any story regarding mental health or suicide:

**Lifeline** - 13 11 14 - <http://lifeline.org.au>

In the interest of community education and safety, you can access evidence-based guidelines for reporting responsibly on mental illness, suicide, or alcohol and other drug issues at **Mindframe Media:** <https://mindframe.org.au/>