

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**15 February 2016**

## **Inaugural WA Mental Health Conference comes to Perth in 2016**

WESTERN Australia's peak body for community mental health, the WA Association for Mental Health (WAAMH), in association with the WA Mental Health Commission are hosting Perth's inaugural mental health conference on 10 – 11 March at Fraser's, Kings Park. The conference will showcase the latest in mental health from sector leaders and professionals with over 50 sessions across four streams – reflection, diversity, innovation and wellbeing.

The conference program was guided by a reference group of mental health sector professionals, consumers and carers and includes both local and international speakers comprising of UK recovery expert Professor Mike Slade, US psychiatry expert Professor Sandy Steingard, WA's Minister for Mental Health, Hon Helen Morton, former WA Premier and environmental psychology expert Professor Carmen Lawrence, mental health comedians Felicity Ward and Malcolm Dix, and local aboriginal suicide expert and Bardi woman, Professor Pat Dudgeon.

WAAMH's President Alison Xamon said the conference offers those with lived or professional mental health sector experience the chance to learn from sector leaders, collaborate, and together strengthen the capacity of the wider sector. "With the recent launch of WA Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services Plan 2015–2025, collaboration between professionals, carers and consumers is essential to ensure the systemic reforms our sector requires are achieved.

"The conference has something for everyone including carers, consumers and professionals from all sectors, and the breadth of the program highlights the fact that mental health is everyone's business," said Ms Xamon. "In what I hope will be the first of many, the conference is an unparalleled opportunity to engage and move toward a more integrated and collaborative mental health sector."

In addition to the main conference program, other special events include a Workplace Wellness Symposium open to WA's business community and supported by Rio Tinto, an Aboriginal Mental Health Yarning Circle hosted by a panel of Indigenous Elders, a Youth Wellbeing Breakfast in partnership with WA's youth sector and supported by The University of Notre Dame Australia and Perth GP, Recovery Stories by Candlelight - a celebration of stories, lived experience and hope, a Wellbeing Zone and a Mental Health Postcards Art Exhibition with entries from around the state and supported by Anglicare WA.

Peak body representing the community-based mental health sector in WA.

2 Delhi Street, West Perth WA 6005 • T: (61) 08 9420 7277

• E: [info@waamh.org.au](mailto:info@waamh.org.au) • W: [www.waamh.org.au](http://www.waamh.org.au) • ABN: 15 165 640 637

**Follow us:**



“We are pleased that strong government, business, and community support for the conference has enabled over 50 people with lived experience, and over 25 people from regional areas subsidised tickets to attend,” said Ms Xamon. “To ensure remote and regional professionals, consumers and carers are included, the conference will be streamed live to regional centres across the state.”

Over 400 delegates from a diverse range of industries have already registered for the conference including professionals from primary health and private sector services, people with lived experience, funding bodies, policy makers, mental health educators, and the wider community.

Registrations are still available until 26 February 2016, visit <https://waamh.org.au/conference-2016/registration.aspx> to register. To view the conference program, visit <https://waamh.org.au/assets/conference/public-core-program-d1.pdf>

### About WAAMH

The Western Australian Association for Mental Health (WAAMH) was incorporated in 1966 and is the peak body representing WA’s community-managed mental health sector and around 100 organisational and individual members. Our vision is that as a human right, every one of us who experiences mental health issues has the resources and support needed to recover, lead a good life and contribute as active citizens. WAAMH advocates for effective public policy on mental health issues, delivers workforce training and sector development, and promotes positive mental health and wellbeing. In 2016, WAAMH celebrates 50 years of involvement in the community mental health sector.

### Media Contacts

**Alison Xamon**  
President  
WA Association for Mental Health  
08 9420 7277  
[president@waamh.org.au](mailto:president@waamh.org.au)

**Sarah Cooper**  
Public Relations  
WA Association for Mental Health  
08 9420 7277  
[Scooper@waamh.org.au](mailto:Scooper@waamh.org.au)

Peak body representing the community-based mental health sector in WA.  
2 Delhi Street, West Perth WA 6005 • T: (61) 08 9420 7277  
• E: [info@waamh.org.au](mailto:info@waamh.org.au) • W: [www.waamh.org.au](http://www.waamh.org.au) • ABN: 15 165 640 637