

Media release

13 September 2017

## MENTAL HEALTH WEEK 2017 PROGRAM LAUNCHED

WA's peak body for community mental health, the Western Australian Association for Mental Health (WAAMH), in association with the Mental Health Commission and Lotterywest, is proud to launch the program for this year's [WA Mental Health Week](#), running from October 7-14.

This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mental Health Week, which promotes positive mental health in the community and breaks down the stigmas of the past. With the theme "Connect with nature, connect with community, connect with self for mental wellbeing", there is also a complementary Aboriginal theme this year, recognising the importance of country: "Connect with country, community and you for strong social and emotional wellbeing".

This year's Mental Health Week will include more than [45 events and activities across the State](#). A series of events will run in metropolitan Perth alongside a regional events program.

### Mental Health Week – official events

Sat, Oct 7 [OPENING CEREMONY, KALGOORLIE, CENTENNIAL PK SOUNDSHELL](#)

Tues, Oct 10 [WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY CELEBRATION EXPO, PERTH CBD](#)

Tues, Oct 10 [RESILIENT YOUTH FORUM, MOUNT LAWLEY](#)

Wed, Oct 11 [WORKPLACE WELLBEING SEMINAR, CENTRAL PARK, PERTH](#)

Thurs, Oct 12 [WELLBEING DAY, BROOME](#)

Fri, Oct 13 [ARTS EXHIBITION CELEBRATION NIGHT, LEEDERVILLE](#)

Sat, Oct 14 [PARKRUN FUN, CLAISEBROOK COVE](#)

Sat, Oct 14 [CLOSING CEREMONY, STAND UP! FOR COMEDY, STATE THEATRE](#)

WAAMH CEO Rod Astbury said that having the Opening Ceremony in Kalgoorlie, as well as numerous other events in the regions, put the spotlight on improving the mental health of all people across our vast state.

"WA has a need perhaps more than any other state to breach the enormous physical distances that separate us, so that the Mental Health Week message reaches everyone. That's why for the first time we are including regions as part of the official events, in addition to all the great events being held by community groups in towns such as Broome, Narrogin, Albany and Port Hedland," said Mr Astbury.

"Many of these regional events are an opportunity to start a conversation about mental health in the community and also for people to learn about and connect with local mental health service providers if they have concerns about their own wellbeing or that of someone they know," he said.

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

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Mr Astbury said the last decade had seen a groundswell of support for mental health in the general community, workplaces and Government, as more people talked about the importance of mental health and started to take action.

“There is now a tangible momentum to talking about and taking action on mental health issues in our community. Every person can be a good listener, take the time to enquire about how someone is going or let them know that you are concerned that they are not coping,” he said. “At the same time, we know there is an unmet need for community mental health services – so there is still much to do.”

All members of the public are welcome at events during Mental Health Week and many are made available at no or minimal cost via ticket allocations for unwaged mental health consumers and carers. Community groups have been supported to hold their own event during the week with a community grant scheme, with thanks to Lotterywest.

Minister for Mental Health the Hon Roger Cook, Parliamentary Secretary the Hon Alanna Clohesy and Mental Health Commissioner Timothy Marney will appear at various events throughout the week.

## Fact file

- Mental Health Week is being held from October 7-14, 2017
- For more events and information, visit [mhw.waamh.org.au](http://mhw.waamh.org.au)
- A [full listing of events](#) during the week
- Facebook: @mentalhealthweek, Instagram: @mentalhealthweekwa
- Twitter: #MHW2017 and #MHWTURNS50
- In WA, Mental Health Week is presented by the Mental Health Commission in partnership with the Western Australian Association for Mental Health
- One in five people experiences mental health issues
- Mental health issues cost the Australian economy \$60 billion per annum
- Four out five people who need community mental health support in WA are currently unable to access the support they need<sup>1</sup>

## About WAAMH

The Western Australian Association for Mental Health (WAAMH) is the peak body representing WA’s community mental health sector, with close to 200 organisational and individual members. WAAMH advocates for effective public policy on mental health issues, delivers workforce training and sector development, and promotes positive mental health and wellbeing. Further information at [www.waamh.org.au](http://www.waamh.org.au)

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<sup>1</sup> Western Australian Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services Plan 2015-2025: Better Choices. Better Lives.

**With special thanks to the 2017 Mental Health Week sponsors & supporters**

Lotterywest	Chandler McLeod	All of Me	Anglicare WA
Mental Health Commission	Rise Network	MercyCare	The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists
Department of Mines, Industry Regulation & Safety, Resources Safety	Black Swan Health	Perth Theatre Trust	Strong Spirit Strong Mind
	Avivo	Arts & Mental Health Network	City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder
	City of Perth		

**Media contacts**

WAAMH has a database of people with a lived experience of mental health conditions and mental health service providers available for interview in the lead-up to 2017 Mental Health Week. Please contact the PR Manager below for details.

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