

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### WA Mental Health Conference and Awards 2017 - Registrations open

REGISTRATIONS for the Western Australian Mental Health Conference and Awards 2017 opened this week. Joining the impressive line-up of international mental health experts as guest keynote speakers, are also much-loved Australian comedians Mikey Robins performing live comedy and Master of Ceremonies Peter Rowsthorn.

US-based keynote speaker Dr Mark Salzer is a psychologist, widely published researcher, and globally recognised thought leader, specialising in community inclusion and recovery and will deliver an opening address on *Community Mental Health: Towards Transformative Change*, followed by an optional interactive workshop.

Professor Peter Beresford will cross live from the UK to head a discussion from mental health and human rights global thought leaders, while Australian-based keynote speakers will include Emeritus Professor Geoffrey Gallop, Jackie Crowe, and Paul O'Halloran.

The conference, hosted by the WA Association for Mental Health (WAAMH) with the support of the Mental Health Commission, is being held at the Perth Concert Hall on 13-14 July 2017 and builds on the success and popularity of the inaugural WA Mental Health Conference held in March 2016.

WAAMH chief executive officer Rod Astbury said some of the more popular parts of the program will return this year such as the Wellbeing Zone and Chill Out Lounge, while new sessions will complement an informative program.

"This year, there will be a Multicultural Mental Health Forum one week prior to the conference featuring Dr Tim Soutphommasane; a 'Frame of Mind' evening of stories and laughter, with live comedy from Mikey Robins on the conference closing night; and an Embrace Nature Photography Exhibition," Mr Astbury said.

One of the biggest additions to the WA Mental Health Conference this year is the inclusion of the WA Mental Health Awards as part of the official conference program.

"Since the discontinuation of the Mental Health Commission's Good Outcomes Awards after 2015, the mental health sector has had no formal awards of this nature," Mr Astbury said. "This awards ceremony at the conference is designed to fill the gap, recognising innovation and excellence in mental health practice."

The nomination and selection process will occur in the first half of 2017, and there will be six categories, representing the diversity of mental health practice in WA.

The theme of this year's conference is *Integrated Lives* which will bring together the community, mental health professionals, and people with lived experience for discussion around three main streams: emerging practices; dignity and diversity; and Wangkiny Danjoo Kwoop Wiirrin (Working together in good spirit.)

Register or find out more about the conference at: [waamh.org.au/conference](http://waamh.org.au/conference)

#### Media Contacts

Rod Astbury  
Chief Executive Officer  
WA Association for Mental Health  
08 6246 3000  
[RAstbury@waamh.org.au](mailto:RAstbury@waamh.org.au)

Brooke Johns  
Public Relations Manager  
WA Association for Mental Health  
08 6246 3012  
[BJohns@waamh.org.au](mailto:BJohns@waamh.org.au)

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

Level 1, 1 Nash Street, Perth WA 6000 • T: (61) 08 6246 3000

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

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