



KEMPSEY
Shire Council

DELEGATE'S REPORT

12th September 2006

DR2

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

FILE: 419

JHB

{ Folio No. * }

SUMMARY:

Reporting on attendance at a consultative meeting at Port Macquarie on Tuesday 29th August 2006, on behalf of the Mayor, Councillor Janet Hayes.



DESCRIPTION:

The meeting was arranged to allow input across all areas into the North Coast Area Health Services Plan for 2007-2012.

The overall theme was to identify what can be done to improve services for people with mental illness through:

- Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention
- Integrating the health care system
- Participation in the community and employment, including accommodation
- Responding to mental health emergencies, and
- Workforce

It is estimated that approximately 20% of the population suffer from mental illness in one form or another.

The Prime Minister has announced that \$1.5 billion will be made available over four (4) years to address the issue.

The Premier of NSW in launching the State Plan – A New Direction For NSW, stated 'The Plan' defines the goals and outcomes that the NSW Government and community together agree should shape public policy over the next 10 years.

'The Plan' includes a theme – Improving Services including:

- Early Intervention - Increased proportion of budget dedicated to prevention and early intervention

- Mental Health – Despite continuing improvements in access to mental health services, there is still an enormous demand for a wide range of care and support services for people with mental illness.

'The Plan' indicates that the NSW Government will provide more community care and early intervention so that problems are identified and managed earlier instead of escalating into acute episodes that require hospitalisation. We need to expand and improve early intervention strategies. Early intervention is proven to have significant impact on the health and educational outcomes.

NOTE:

At the June meeting of Council it was resolved that the Council would facilitate a meeting with representatives of the North Coast Area Health Service and the Department of School Education to address mental health issues within the school system.

This meeting has not yet been held.

There is little doubt that the majority of matters raised at the consultative meeting can be addressed with adequate resources, the subject of the Prime Ministers announcement, But when?

The Health and Ageing Working Group, at a meeting on Thursday 31st August 2006, resolved to request the North Coast Area Health Service provide the draft document – NCAHS Mental Health Services Plan 2007-2012, to allow a submission on behalf of the Kempsey Shire area to be considered.

In the meantime, representations could be made to our members of parliament both Federal and State to ensure adequate funding is provided to address the multitude of requirements for the provision of services for people with mental illness together with Counselling services to address early intervention and prevention of mental illness within the school education system.

REPORT IMPLICATIONS:

- ***Environmental***

Nil

- ***Social***

Nil

- ***Economic (Financial)***

There are no direct impacts upon Council, other than administrative resources to prepare the representations.

The cost is estimated at \$100.00

- *Policy or Statutory*

Nil

RECOMMENDATION:

That appropriate representations be made to Messrs Mark Vaile MP Member for Lyne, Luke Hartsuyker MP Member for Cowper, Andrew Stoner MP Member for Oxley and Rob Oakeshott MP Member for Port Macquarie, to ensure adequate funding is provided for the North Coast Area Health Service and in particular the Hastings Macleay Network for Mental Health Services.

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COUNCILLOR J H BOWELL