

14 May, 2013

Mental Health Forum throws the spotlight on support and recovery for people with a mental illness

The importance of support and recovery for people who have experienced mental illness will be the central theme at this year's St George and Sutherland Consumer Recovery Forum.

The free Forum will be held at Club Central Hurstville on Thursday 30 May, 2013 from 9am to 4.30pm and is open to mental health consumers, carers and service providers in the St George and Sutherland areas.

Irene Gallagher, consumer representative, said the Forum will give mental health consumers an opportunity to come together to hear inspiring stories, and to participate in how their local service can improve delivery of mental health services in their area.

"The Forum will be of great benefit to mental health consumers already engaged in their local service, as well as members of the public who are faced with the many challenges of mental illness," Ms Gallagher said.

Jasmine Storey, Occupational Therapist, St George Community Mental Health, said the Forum has created significant anticipation and enthusiasm, with many people registering their interest in attending.

"The aim of the Forum is to inspire and support people with a mental illness in their recovery, to provide information about St George and Sutherland Mental Health Services and to improve services by listening to consumers," Ms Storey said.

The Forum is an initiative of St George and Sutherland Mental Health Consumer Advisory Committee.

Key note speaker, Fay Jackson, CEO of *Vision in Mind* and NSW Deputy Commissioner in Mental Health, will talk about her experience of living with a mental illness and will give ideas on how to improve the way people think about themselves and how to achieve lifetime goals.

Ms Storey said the afternoon will be broken up into two interactive workshop sessions.

"The workshops will provide information on self care, resources for recovery, physical health and employment and training. The segment on self care includes a range of activities and is facilitated by two psychologists, one of whom is also a consumer.

"Current statistics show that one in five people will be affected or know someone affected by some form of a mental illness during the course of their life. Despite this high prevalence of mental illness in our society, there continues to be a great deal of stigma attached to the condition.

"Forums such as this allow us to bring the issue into the spotlight, inspire people who have a mental illness in their recovery journey and provide them with information about what services are available to assist them," Ms Storey said.

To register your attendance, or for further information about the Forum, contact Arna Rathgen or Jasmine Storey on 9553 2500. Registrations close on Friday 24 May, 2013.

South Eastern Sydney Local Health District

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