

## Grass Roots Mental Health - Fact Sheet

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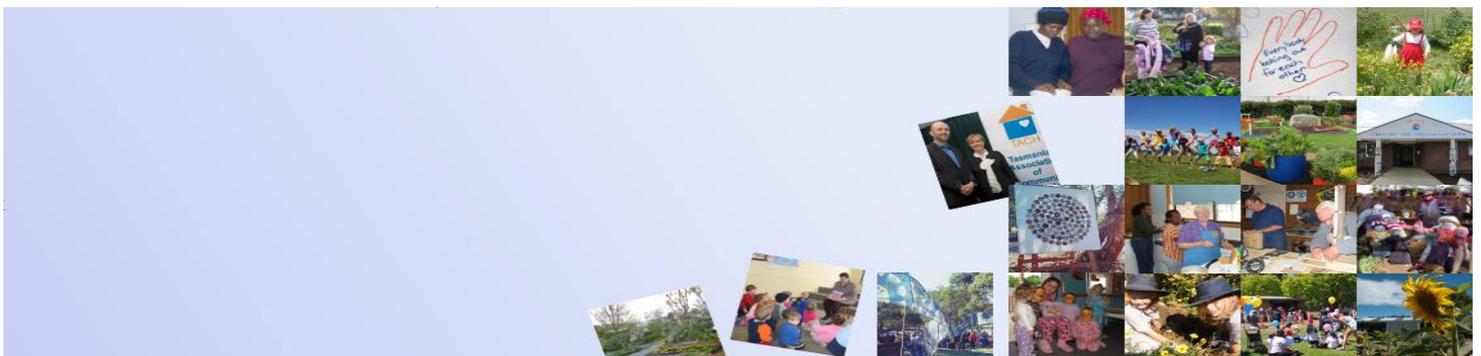
*Are there people in your community who experience mental illness?*

*Can we do more to reduce the stigma of mental illness?*

*Would you like to know more about staying mentally healthy?*

*Would you like some more skills and knowledge in how to respond if someone comes to the house looking for assistance relating to mental illness?*

**The Grassroots Mental Health Project will help maintain good mental health in our communities and provide knowledge and skills in how to best support and refer people experiencing mental illness.**



## Background

The Grassroots Mental Health Project is a partnership between Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania (NHT) and MI Fellowship funded by DHHS. Neighbourhood Houses have long identified the need to build a more effective response to people with mental health issues. The Tasmanian Government has acknowledged this need and provided funding to MI Fellowship to work with Neighbourhood Houses to help build the grassroots approaches to mental health in the community.

## What are the aims of the project?

- To increase grassroots mental health support and community participation for people with a mental illness.
- Provide support and capacity building activities with staff and volunteers of Neighbourhood Houses.
- Ensure that Neighbourhood Houses are a supportive environment and help to meet the needs of people with a mental health issue, while enabling their ongoing participation with their Neighbourhood House.

## So what is the project about?

- It's about increasing the confidence of staff and volunteers in Neighbourhood Houses and Centres to respond to people who may have some mental health concerns.
- It's about building stronger connections between staff and volunteers in Neighbourhood Houses, and staff and volunteers from MI Fellowship.
- Developing skills and capacity to know more about maintaining mental health, as well as preventing, recognising and supporting people through mental illness.

## How will the project work?

- Several Houses already have a relationship with MI Fellowship and have hosted their introductory sessions. In these sessions people with experiences of mental illness share some of their story and help others to understand more about what can help and how best to support someone with mental illness. As a first step, houses will have the opportunity to have this session delivered in house to your staff, volunteers and community members.
- The part time project coordinators, one based in the North and North West, and one in the South, will talk to people in the Houses in the coming months about what the local community needs are, and work out what activities, training, projects may be relevant to each House and community.

## About the MI Fellowship

MI Fellowship supports people with mental illness and other psychosocial disabilities, their families and their friends in order to gain inclusion into communities; to create a home, get a job and build meaningful relationships. We provide this support through recovery, education and advocacy programs.

Our model of support brings together evidence from research with the understanding of people's lived experience of mental illness. We work in partnership with people to assist them to identify their own needs and goals, and to support them along their individual pathways to recovery.

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