



# mhconnect

## SPRING EDITION

### MHAQ unveils a new look!

The Mental Health Association Qld (MHAQ) springs into spring with a fresh new look and we are delighted to share this exciting news with you. With a revitalised image and an enthusiastic team of dedicated staff, MHAQ is primarily focused on skilling and employment, education and early intervention activities for the holistic health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders.

The fresh new colours and design of the MHAQ logo emphasise the importance of maintaining good mental health, wellbeing and choosing a positive attitude to life. MHAQ's primary function is to help solve the puzzle for people from all walks of life by promoting connectivity, developing Mental Health literacy and creating pathways to a brighter future.



Terry Hamilton and Casey Barber of MHAQ proudly show off the new MHAQ branding at the Fusion Festival 2009. (Visit [www.mentalhealth.org.au](http://www.mentalhealth.org.au) to view more images from the day.)



The **mhConnect** team offer a Mental Health information and referral service focused on

supporting the community in making Mental Health connections, and promoting stronger support networks. This valuable service assists people in making linkages to support services in their local area whether for themselves, or enquiring for friends or family members. With a wide range of useful resources available, our trained staff can assist you in finding out about your local service providers, support groups, or community programs.



The **mh Learn** team at the Australian College of Community Services (ACCS) is focused on building skills and knowledge within the area of Mental Health. Funded by the Department of Communities, ACCS tailor programs for the community services and health workforce and deliver Mental Health First Aid training for the wider community. The accredited team at ACCS are currently rolling out the valuable Mental Health First Aid Course to metropolitan and regional Queensland. This course will equip participants to provide Mental Health first aid until appropriate professional treatment is received or until the emergency is resolved. (See story on page 2 for more information.)



The **mh Participate** team is focused on creating pathways for mental health & wellbeing including the Hero's Journey Project and the Work in Place Program developed with and funded by the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation as part of their 'Skilling Queenslanders for Work' Initiative.

MHAQ continues to be positioned to make a significant impact on Mental Health in Queensland and with its team now located together in new premises at Annerley, MHAQ is gearing up for a vital year ahead.

## MHAQ promote a 'stress less' lifestyle



The MHAQ Team 'stress less' during Mental Health Week 2009. (Visit [www.mentalhealth.org.au](http://www.mentalhealth.org.au) to view more images from the day.)

**Early morning Tai Chi followed by herbal tea and a relaxing massage were just two of the range of activities the MHAQ team enjoyed on Stress Less Day Wednesday 7 October.**

According to MHAQ CEO Geoff Riddell, managing stress is the key to maintaining good mental health. "When stress gets out of control it can lead to anxiety and depression and recovery can be a slow process," Geoff said.

To help promote a less stressful lifestyle, MHAQ have announced their new "Stress Less" campaign. Mouse mats and posters (see image above) are available to purchase for a cost of \$2 for posters and \$4 for mouse mats (min. order \$20 + postage).

If you would like to order these items, please visit [www.mentalhealth.org.au](http://www.mentalhealth.org.au) and click on the MHW page where you will find an Order Form to download.

Next month, we will launch an ideas competition where you will have the chance to share your Stress Less initiative with all readers of mhConnect as well as win a great prize for your organisation to enjoy.



"Ten Tips to Stress Less" mouse mats and posters. Go to [www.mentalhealth.org.au](http://www.mentalhealth.org.au) to order.

## ACCS roll out mental health first aid course

As the mental health priority continues to gather pace and momentum in the general media, community organisations have been empowered towards addressing the stigma attached to people living with a mental health issue in our community or in the workplace.

In response to the numerous enquiries made by the public and clients alike, the Mental Health Association QLD (MHAQ) through its registered training organisation, the Australian College of Community Services (ACCS), now offer training in Mental Health First Aid (MHFA).

Recently, ACCS, in collaboration with the Queensland Network of Alcohol and other Drugs Agency (QNADA) delivered the course to twelve Cairns based community service workers. It is anticipated 20 plus community service workers in Rockhampton will undertake the workshop before the end of 2009. Partnerships such as this are high on the ACCS agenda.

According to the CEO of ACCS, Geoff Riddell, an opportunity exists for many organisations such as QNADA, as well as the corporate sector, to improve the mental health literacy of their employees.

"This type of collaboration between ourselves and other organisations, demonstrates a strong joint commitment towards developing opportunities and initiatives in mental health education and community awareness" Geoff said.

Developed by the Orygen Research Centre, The Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) course is a two-day workshop-style offering, primarily focused on improving the mental health literacy of members of the Australian community and providing first aid assistance to a person developing a mental health problem or in a mental health emergency.



*A Group of QNADA community service workers from Cairns completed the Mental Health First Aid Course on October 1.*

Pictured, along with ACCS's MHFA Instructors, is a group of recently qualified MHFA students. This group are now equipped with knowledge to identify and respond to mental health clients in the community and the workplace.

To register your interest in participating in one of our workshops, please phone the Australian College of Community Services on 1300 833 328 or email [info@accs.qld.edu.au](mailto:info@accs.qld.edu.au) to organise a booking for an individual or as a group.

## MHAQ expands its SQW programs

With a new round of funding recently announced by the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI), the mhParticipate team at MHAQ will offer two valuable programs over the next 12 months with the objective of assisting up to 200 people on the journey towards prosperity and employment.

MHAQ's "Hero's Journey" and "Work in Place" programs are part of the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative developed and funded by DEEDI. The aim of the programs is to strengthen the capacity of people facing substantial barriers to access opportunities such as training and entry into the workforce.

At a recent graduation ceremony for the Work in Place program held on 16 October, SQW Programs Manager, Safia Raza said many participants in the program have found meaningful work placement following the program.

"For most participants, their daily living situation, training and health are the main barriers they face when seeking employment. Our team of experienced and passionate case workers work through intense case management to help clients achieve their goals," Safia said.

For more information about the "Hero's Journey" and "Work in Place" programs, please call 07 3426 8440 or email [mhParticipate@mentalhealth.org.au](mailto:mhParticipate@mentalhealth.org.au).



*Simon Finn MP presented graduates with their Skilling Queenslanders for Work Certificates.*



*L-R Medina Meco, Hamdi Osman and Sabah Yacoub, were among the 19 graduates of the SQW Programs.*

## mental health week wrap up



Mental Health Week continues to build its impact with many events being held across Queensland during 2009. Many of these events were made possible due to mini grants funded by the Department of Communities and distributed to the winners of the 2009 MHW Mini Grant Competition by MHAQ.

To encourage entrants to think creatively about their projects, funds were made available only for elements such as exhibitions, drama, a publication, guest speaker or development programs (education and awareness).

A record number of 75 entries were received this year and many were of a very high standard making the MHAQ judging panel's job a difficult one. Over \$14,000 was distributed to 33 successful applicants representing all Queensland regions.

Creative thinking was at the forefront for Mental Health Week with many of the 33 mini grant winners coming up with some weird and wonderful ways to celebrate in 2009.

Very creative minds came up with events and activities focused on the theme "Be Active, Get Connected, Stay Involved".

To view images of a selection of Mental Health Week events attended by the MHAQ team, visit [www.mentalhealth.org.au](http://www.mentalhealth.org.au).

Stay tuned for our next newsletter which will showcase some of the events which took place in the regions during MHW.



**mental health**  
association qld  
connect learn participate

**Mental Health Association QLD**  
473 Annerley Road, Annerley  
(Cnr Annerley & Ipswich Roads)  
GPO Box 78, Brisbane Qld 4001

**P: 07 3426 8440**

**F: 07 3112 4399**

**P: mhConnect info line 1300 729 686**

**E: [mhConnect@mentalhealth.org.au](mailto:mhConnect@mentalhealth.org.au)**  
**[www.mentalhealth.org.au](http://www.mentalhealth.org.au)**



**accs**

**Australian College of  
Community Services**

**Australian College of Community Services**  
473 Annerley Road, Annerley  
(Cnr Annerley & Ipswich Roads)  
GPO Box 78, Brisbane Qld 4001

**P: 1300 833 328**

**F: 07 3112 4399**

**E: [info@accs.qld.edu.au](mailto:info@accs.qld.edu.au)**  
**[www.accs.qld.edu.au](http://www.accs.qld.edu.au)**

**General Enquiries: 1300 833 328**

**Opening Hours: 8.30am - 4.30pm**  
**Monday to Friday**

*Stay Tuned ... our Gold Coast office  
is in the process of moving.  
We will keep you informed  
in our next edition.*

*Funding Bodies:*

*The Department of Employment, Economic  
Development and Innovation  
The Department of Communities*