

Insights Mental Health Support Group Ballarat



A support group for
anyone affected by
mental illness,
emotional issues
and/or social isolation
in and around Ballarat



Insights Ballarat

- A peer run group for those with a lived experience of mental/emotional issues and social isolation.
- Our group was established in 2004 which formerly was a Bipolar support group.
- The group is open to all regions but is focused on the Golden Plains Shire, Moorabool Shire and Hepburn Shire.
- Meetings are held every 4th Thursday of the month at Wellways, Ballarat and every 2nd Saturday of the Month at the Eureka Museum Café.

Launching our website

- Three years ago, we decided to create a website for promotion of our group and to bring about a new generation of members
- VMIAC and the NDIS gave us a \$5000 grant which would be used to build and launch a website.
- The funds would be used for a web designer (Pam), hosting, a laptop and printer and to launch our website to the public.
- Please see www.insightmhballarat.org

The Launch

- We wanted to re-launch our group with a new website and honour the reason for the funding.
- We also provided local people with information about applying for an NDIS package.
- Dr Gerry Naughtin, a mental health advisor to the NDIS launched the website and spoke of recent developments in the NDIS.
- Daryl Turner to speak about mental health, overcoming and understanding mental illness a community concern from the 1970's till now.
- Melbourne based duo, The Shifties played music relating for mental health which was a highlight of the event.

Developments since the launch

- We have decided to take over the maintenance of the website with Pam teaching us how to use the website.
- Further developed the website including blog, media and recipes.
- Our group has managed to get around 20 new members since the launch.



Promoting mental health at FedUni

- We applied for a second grant for this project, again from VMIAC and the NDIS, this time for \$2000.
- We decided to do something altruistic by making some difference to mental health and combating stigma.
- We were aware that 75% of mental illness commences before the age of 25, so we contacted a local university to see if they would host a series of workshops.

The workshops

- 1st workshop – Andy Penny from Headspace Ballarat
- 2nd workshop – Heidi Everett – Music and recovery
- 3rd workshop – Sandy Jeffs – Poetry and recovery

Recordings of these workshops are up on our webpage. Overall the workshops were of top quality. The only downfall were issues with FedUni and distance.

Lessons from the two projects

- Team of committed and capable leaders that meets every month over dinner where we plan events, apply for grants, do our mail outs and update our website.
- Our committee team consists of 4 people having either full - time or a combination study and work who have been working together for around 3 years
- Our group has grown with around 60 members on our mailing list, a website and a Facebook page.

The Future..



- If there are other possible rounds of funding, our options include:
 - a. To run a second series of workshops at the other major University in Ballarat, ACU.
 - b. To run a holiday for members across a long weekend
- To keep our meetings running at our Wellways venue and coffee catch-up
- To keep our mail outs for 3 month periods.

The End

- <https://www.facebook.com/insights.ballarat.1>
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