

Independent Chair Communique No. 4

I am pleased to be able to share my fourth update as the Chair of the Ministerial Taskforce into Public Mental Health Services for Infants, Children and Adolescents aged 0 – 18 years in Western Australia (the ICA Taskforce). The fourth meeting of the ICA Taskforce was held on 25 June 2021.

Due to COVID travel restrictions I was unable to attend in person, however I chaired via teleconference and held a number of meetings with people with lived experience and clinicians across CAMHS and CAHS. I also met with the Health Services Union (HSU) WA and the Australian Medical Association (AMA) following the ICA Taskforce meeting. Discussions at the Taskforce were again rich and constructive. Several key items were discussed:

Expert Advisory Group reflections

- Between 2 – 4 June, the three Taskforce Expert Advisory Group (EAGs) conducted their second meetings. Members reflected on the outcomes of EAG meetings held so far and their contribution to the Emerging Directions paper.
- During all three meetings, EAG members identified potential solutions for the future public infant, child and adolescent mental health service system. ICA Taskforce members noted that participants have been engaged and solution focused.
- It was agreed that additional work is required to engage with culturally and linguistically diverse, Aboriginal and rural and remote communities who are under-represented within the EAGs

Insights Paper 2: Current state mapping

- The draft Second Insights Paper: Current State Mapping was tabled to the ICA Taskforce. The paper maps the current public mental health system for infants, children and adolescents and includes key findings based on available data.
- Findings indicate that the demand for publicly funded mental health services for infants, children and adolescents has been increasing much faster than the population or the funding over the last ten years.
- Further work is underway to establish the unmet need which cannot be seen from activity data.

Demand modelling

- Members were provided with an update on the approach to demand modelling which will be undertaken by the Department of Health and the Mental Health Commission (MHC). Modelling will use a combination of sources to identify optimal service capacity for Western Australia.

Insights Paper No 3: A review of good practice models of care for infant, child and adolescent mental health systems

- The scope of a third ICA Taskforce Insights Paper, a review of good practice models of care for infant, child and adolescent mental health systems, was discussed.

Emerging Directions Report

- The ICA Taskforce discussed the emerging directions which are starting to become evident through the work completed thus far.
- The Emerging Directions Paper will be the first published output from the ICA Taskforce. The Emerging Directions Paper will draw on feedback from the EAGs, consultations and key data to outline the case for change and the high-level direction and opportunities developed by the ICA Taskforce for further consultation, analysis and planning. This paper will subsequently be used as a basis for further consultations and assist in the development

of the final report and costed implementation plan due to be delivered by the end of November 2021.

I am very conscious of the current challenges that the Western Australian infant, child and adolescent mental health system is facing. I have however been heartened by the preparedness of all the members of the EAGs and many other key groups currently being consulted to bring their time, skills and contribute to the building of the longer-term infant, child and adolescent mental health plan.

I am looking forward to the fifth ICA Taskforce meeting where we will review the Emerging Directions Paper prior to validation by the EAGs at a joint workshop on 23 July 2021.

If you have any questions, comments or feedback for the ICA Taskforce please email CATaskforce@mhc.wa.gov.au

Robyn Kruk AO

Independent Taskforce Chair