**Australian Government**

**Department of Health**

## Communique 13 November 2020

## National Mental Health Workforce Strategy Taskforce

On 13 November 2020, the twelfth meeting of the National Mental Health Workforce Strategy Taskforce (the Taskforce) was held by video conference.

<u>Analysis of National Mental Health Workforce Demand and Supply</u>

The University of Queensland presented findings from their Stage 1 analysis of the national mental health workforce demand and supply report using the National Mental Health Service Planning Framework (NMHSPF).

The analysis identified the breakdown of the workforce across service category and type including medical, tertiary qualified, vocationally qualified and peer workers. The distribution of workforces were analysed against mental illness severity levels including relapse prevention, indicated prevention, mild, moderate and severe. The analysis also looked at service settings and regional distribution by Modified Monash Model areas. The University of Queensland provided an overview of data sources, limitations in data for certain workforces and the methodology behind the analysis using the NMHSPF.

Taskforce members discussed the report and findings, noting limitations on data availability. Members provided insights into alternative data sources for workforces not captured by the NMHSPF, the importance of indigenous health workers in rural areas, estimates of the proportion of service delivery required for mental health care and assumptions underlying the NMHSPF.

Stage 2 will commence in January 2021 and produce a more refined NMHSPF comparative analysis of workforce supply and demand utilising additional datasets and consumer and service characteristics. This will include recommendations to address identified data concerns.

<u>Consolidated Working Group Recommendations</u>

Mark Roddam, the Commonwealth Department of Health representative, addressed Taskforce members on the importance of prioritising recommendations from the working groups for Government.

ACIL Allen presented a paper on the consolidated working group recommendations which were grouped into thematic areas including understanding need, mental health workforce competencies, job roles and utilisation, education and training, employment and practice

and workforce data. Under these themes, high level recommendations were presented outlining the considerations and key workforces impacted.

Members were supportive of the paper and approach to focus on the needs of those seeking mental health care. Members also noted the value in recognising the work settings and the importance of career structures, retention, workforce development and leadership options.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Taskforce will be held on 27 November 2020.

The meeting will include further discussion on the consolidated recommendations and discussion on the findings of the Labour Market Analysis and Educational Institutions Review undertaken by the ACIL Allen.

Previous Taskforce meeting communiques are published [here](#).