

“Smoking & You” – A unique Occupational Therapist & Pharmacist co-facilitated inpatient education group in an acute mental health facility.

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Background: It is well established that mental health (MH) consumers have a higher smoking rate than the general population. There is a drive from government and healthcare professionals to reduce the smoking rate in this population, to prevent and reduce co-morbidities. In response to this imperative and consumer requests a multidisciplinary smoking reduction education group was established on the 32 bed acute inpatient MH unit at Barwon Health.

Aim: To empower MH consumers with information about smoking reduction and to provide support with interventions specific to their individual needs.

Method: A fortnightly inpatient education group was established on the acute MH ward covering pharmacological interventions, sensory modulation techniques and social factors. The interactive discussion group structure is flexible and can be modified to meet the individual needs to the consumers choosing to attend.

The group provides opportunity for consumers to trial sensory modulation techniques with the support of a MH OT, as well as nicotine replacement therapy options with a MH Pharmacist which they can elect to continue at the end of the session. Consumers have access to a variety of written information to take with them and electronic tools are utilised. Ward nursing staff and medical staff are encouraged to attend to provide further consumer support and improve follow up.

The participating consumers benefit from a group co-facilitated by specialised clinicians based on the acute ward who provide follow up to optimise utilisation of new skills and uptake of NRT. Consumers have the option of being referred to an outpatient clinic on discharge.

Conclusion: Inpatient uptake of this recovery orientated group has been consistent with positive feedback from consumers, carers and clinicians. Ongoing evaluation of the group through feedback and monitoring of smoking rates of consumers ensures the content of the group continues to be relevant to consumer needs.