Media release

Monday, 25 November 2013

‘Looking back to look forward’
Transcultural Mental Health Centre celebrates 20 years as leaders look to the future

Today Transcultural Mental Health Centre (TMHC) will celebrate 20 years of providing mental health support, guidance and leadership to multicultural communities across NSW.

The celebration, called ‘Looking back to look forward’, will acknowledge the contribution and achievements of the TMHC and its staff, whilst recognising the need to meet the challenges of supporting an increasingly diverse NSW community.

The Centre Manager of the Transcultural Mental Health Centre, Maria Cassaniti, has seen the evolution of the centre and the growing range of services and support offered.

“From humble beginnings, we are now fortunate to be able to offer a comprehensive and diverse mental health support service, which is invaluable for the many and varied multicultural communities across NSW,” she said.

The Minister for Mental Health, Kevin Humphries, who will address the celebration, said, “With more than 250 countries of birth now represented across NSW, the Transcultural Mental Health Centre has been able to connect with communities, families and consumers, working from the premise that the experience of diversity is at the heart of the Australian story.”

The celebration will be preceded by a Leaders Forum coordinated in partnership with the Mental Health Commission of NSW. The forum will focus on the experience and perceptions of mental health in culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

The unique transcultural perspective on mental health provided by the Forum will inform the draft Strategic Plan for Mental Health in NSW, to be delivered by the Commission to government in March 2014.

NSW Mental Health Commissioner John Feneley said, “The multicultural population of NSW strengthens our community. It is crucial that we remain informed and take clear action to support the mental health and well-being of culturally and linguistically diverse communities across the state.”

Maria Cassaniti said, “Communities are getting bigger and demand and complexities in multicultural mental health are increasing. The insights identified from this diverse group of leaders during today’s forum will help guide the direction for mental health across our ever-growing communities.”

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INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY
Monday 25 November
12:30pm
Australian Maritime Museum, 2 Murray St, Darling Harbour

Available for interview
- Maria Cassaniti – Centre Manager, Transcultural Mental Health Centre
- John Feneley – NSW Mental Health Commissioner
- People living with mental illness from the culturally and linguistically diverse community.

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About the NSW Transcultural Mental Health Centre
The NSW Transcultural Mental Health Centre is a state wide service established in 1993.

The Transcultural Mental Health Centre’s mission is to work in partnership with mental health services, consumer, carers and the community to improve the mental health of people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities living in NSW.

About the Mental Health Commission of NSW
The Mental Health Commission of NSW was established under the Mental Health Commission Act 2012 and came into operation on 1 July 2012. www.nswmentalhealthcommission.com.au

The Commission is an independent statutory authority established with the purpose of monitoring, reviewing and improving the mental health system and the mental health and well-being of the people of New South Wales. In all its work the Commission aims to reflect the experience of people who live with mental illness, their families and carers. In 2013-14 the Commission is undertaking the development of a draft Strategic Plan for Mental Health in NSW, to be presented to government in March 2014.