



Office and Postal address:
C/- Waiora Clinic
Level 2
435 Malvern Road
South Yarra VIC 3141

Tel: (03) 9076 4713
Convenor: Judi 0425 723 476

Email: isfaf@alfred.org.au
Website: <http://www.ispaf.org/>

7 June 2018

MONTHLY SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

7.30 pm Tuesday 12 June 2018

**WELLWAYS AUSTRALIA,
NDIS & OTHER SERVICES,
INCLUDING SERVICES FOR CARERS**

SPEAKERS:

**KYLIE ARMSTRONG,
Community Engagement Coordinator, Wellways**

**FRAN LYONS,
Support Officer, Wellways**

MultiPurpose Room, Betty Day Centre,
67 Argyle Street, St Kilda

access via carpark in Bath St (off Inkerman St)
or via southern end of path from Argyle St

No need to book or RSVP but please come early, especially if coming for the first time

Light supper available from 7.15 pm

No charge, but a gold coin donation towards supper is always appreciated

Our office is attended only part time, but please don't hesitate to contact us via the office or to call Judi on 0425 723 746 if you have any questions or difficulty with transport.

FILM, FOOD AND FUN TO FINISH THE FINANCIAL YEAR

Noon, Saturday June 30

NOTE CHANGE OF FILM AND VENUE

**Planning in progress for lunch near The Como Palace Cinema plus
Film: The Leisure Seeker**

...starring Helen Mirren and Donald Sutherland

**Further details will be announced at our June meeting, will be circulated by email
and will appear on our website.**

Join the 21st century - keep your eye on the website

<http://www.ispaf.org/>

Bookings essential:

Email isfaf@alfred.org.au or phone 9076 4713 and leave your details if the phone is unattended.
Please ensure you provide your phone number and email address with your booking.

We thank Alfred Health carer Services for their generosity in making this function possible.

**2018 Annual General Meeting
and
Monthly Support Group Meeting**

7.00 pm Tuesday 10 July 2018

Speaker: Beth Wilson OAM

**Victoria's Health Services Commissioner 1997 – 2012
Lawyer, Health Consultant, Advocate and Amazing Speaker**

**Please note early start, so that our AGM does not prevent us from
enjoying our excellent speaker(s), discussion and question time.**

Family and Friends Lunch – Christmas in July

12.30 pm, Sunday 22 July 2018



All family and friends welcome to join in yet another delicious modestly priced meal shared with like-minded folk in gorgeous warm surroundings overlooking a sparkling sea.



Bookings absolutely essential

Phone office and leave message if phone is unattended: 9076 4713 or email: isfaf@alfred.org.

Please ensure you provide your phone number and email address with your booking.

Please note this is not a subsidized event. Everyone pays for themselves

and most importantly – keep up-to-date by looking on our website, updated weekly by our wonderful Judith R.

<http://ispaf.org/>

ISFAF is based on camaraderie and that we all share fun times in friendship among a bunch of people who understand and have experienced similar challenges to us.

Committee and I look forward to seeing you at our above meetings.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Best wishes,

Judi

M; 0425 723 746

VIA EMAIL SENT TO MEMBERS ON 10 MAY, 2018.

Hi All,

Matthew has kindly sent us the following article and link to it. It appears below. Please read it.

The contents were discussed at Tuesday's meeting and are of grave consequence to us all.

As I understand it - and I plead a high degree of ignorance, and take absolutely no responsibility if some details are incorrect. This is a volunteer, friendly, non-professional summary of discussions to be continued and not professional advice:

The NDIS will (probably / hopefully!) provide assistance to the most highly disabled in the mental health (mh) community....It has been estimated that this will be about 6% of the mh community.

This leaves about 94% of the mh community without NDIS assistance. In itself, this may not necessarily be a bad thing as the NDIS is a wonderful innovation for the permanently / severely disabled. Hence **IF** other supports were available to help those less disabled, things would probably be reasonable. In many Australian states, eg NSW this is the case.

However in **Victoria**, virtually all mh assistance funds were tipped into the NDIS by a previous government, thus leaving about 94% of our mh community lacking support in the foreseeable future. For the sake of justice, such cruel legislation needs to be corrected.

The 94% of individuals with psychosocial disabilities are likely to be suffering from a range of psychosocial disability from a severe and hopefully transitory (or very infrequent) dose of depression to individuals who, although severely affected by psychosocial disability, somehow manage to live independently but are lonely, physically not well (possibly due to the side-effects of their meds) and have very unfortunate lives if not provided with assistance. All individuals along this spectrum need some assistance, but, by contrast to some other states, **in Victoria** they are unlikely to be able to find suitable assistance (or any assistance!!).

The above describes one tragic outcome of **our Victorian** situation.

The flow on from the above results is loss of jobs, skill, education, experience, knowledge, contacts, heart and soul when a large sector is closed down. Moreover this sector is not a mechanical one – it was built on relationships between individuals ...ie heart and soul.

So two more tragedies result from this **odious decision by our Victorian government:**

1. The tragedy to mh workers forced into unemployment / other sectors,
2. The tragedy to our loved ones who will miss out on much needed help.

So – should we move to NSW or should we let our politicians know how we feel?...I have highlighted **Victoria** throughout this as **Victorian elections are around the corner.**

If you would like to help / have ideas /connections to let **Victorian** candidates know our feelings, please start to spread the word / respond to this / judi.burstyner@gmail.com

Have a great weekend,

Cheers,
Judi

Inner South Family and Friends Mental Health Carer Support Group
Waioira Clinic

Level 2, 435 Malvern Road

SOUTH YARRA 3141

Telephone 03 9076 4713

Email isfaf@alfred.org.au

www.ispaf.org

A THOUSAND MENTAL HEALTH JOBS TO BE LOST IN VICTORIA, LOBBY GROUP FEARS

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-05-07/ndis-mental-health-funding-changes-putting-lives-at-risk/9732596>

Patients lives at risk after NDIS funding redirected, Mental Health Victoria says

By [Liz Hobday](#)

Updated Mon at 12:19pm

PHOTO: Nicci Wall is worried about how she will now access support for her bipolar disorder. (ABC News: Liz Hobday)

RELATED STORY: This is Jonathan, one of the thousands worse off under NDIS

RELATED STORY: NDIS contractors not equipped to deal with complex, emotional cases, insider says

A woman with bipolar disorders says she feels "cheated" after discovering she is no longer able to access mental health support because her illness is not considered a lifelong disability.

Key points:

- About a thousand jobs will be lost in Victoria's mental health sector, Mental Health Victoria (MHV) says.
- Funding has been redirected from community support programs to the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
- The Federal Government says new funding means more patients will get help, but MHV believes 11,000 people will be left without support.

Nicci Wall is one of thousands with a mental illness who don't qualify for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Due to a funding restructure, which sees some of the Victorian funding for mental health redirected to the NDIS, money for the community-based services she relies on is running out.

Victoria's peak mental health body said community support programs were being defunded. About a thousand jobs in the community mental health sector will be lost within the next year, as tens of millions of dollars is redirected to the NDIS instead, Mental Health Victoria said.

MHV said those changes would leave 11,000 people suffering a mental illness without support from specialist health workers.

Ms Wall, from Geelong, has been coping with the wild swings of bipolar disorder for decades.

Diagnosed at the age of 35, she has been hospitalised for depression more times than she can count, and has even undergone a dozen sessions of electroconvulsive therapy.

The depression is just one end of the spectrum of her illness. There is a manic phase that is just as extreme.

"When I'm manic and I'm having hallucinations, and delusions and paranoia, I just lose all touch with reality," she said.

For years, Ms Wall relied on the support offered by the mental health services in her community, spending an hour a week with a mental health specialist, as well as sessions with a local peer support group.

"It was really important to helping me maintain some form of stability," she said.

But Ms Wall was shocked to learn she was now one of thousands of people who no longer qualified for the NDIS because she did not meet the criteria for lifelong disability.

"I felt cheated, I was angry," she said.

'Lives, jobs at risk' from funding restructure

MHV estimates only about 20 per cent of people who suffer serious and complex mental health issues have been able to qualify for the NDIS.

The chief executive of MHV, Angus Clelland, said that was putting lives at risk.

"Individuals will end up having to fall back on the emergency part of the system ... and that's really the wrong message that we want to be delivering," he said.

"The ideal is that we treat and look after people in the community."

If you or anyone you know needs help:

- [Lifeline](#) on 13 11 14

- [Kids Helpline](#) on 1800 551 800
- [MensLine Australia](#) on 1300 789 978
- [Suicide Call Back Service](#) on 1300 659 467
- [Beyond Blue](#) on 1300 22 46 36
- [Headspace](#) on 1800 650 890

A spokeswoman for the National Disability Insurance Agency said the NDIS "was never intended to replace other government support systems, including mental health system or community-based support or treatment for people living with mental health conditions".

The spokeswoman said NDIS funding, together with additional funding committed through the Council of Australian Governments, would increase the number of people with mental health issues who were assisted.

A spokeswoman for the federal Department of Social Services said no existing client of a Commonwealth mental health service would be left without support.

"Commonwealth mental health clients ineligible for the NDIS will continue to receive similar levels of support through existing Commonwealth programs until longer-term continuity of support arrangements start at full scheme from 1 July 2019," the spokeswoman said.

MHV also warned the funding changes would see at least 1,000 specialist staff lose their jobs by the end of the 2018-19 financial year.

Government 'understands concerns' about NDIS changes

Last week's Victorian budget painted a very different picture for the sector, promising a record \$705 million in mental health funding — much of it aimed at acute services.

There was also \$232 million allocated to boost the number of treatment hours in community-based services.

Minister for Mental Health Martin Foley said that equated to a 20 per cent increase in community mental health service hours over the next four years.

But he acknowledged the move to the NDIS model was an issue.

"We understand there are concerns about the transfer of psycho-social mental health supports to the NDIS," he said.

Mr Foley said he has been working with the National Disability Insurance Agency to make sure people get the services they need under the NDIS.

Mental health workers facing uncertain future

The funding changes also provide a bleak outlook for specialist mental health workers.

Belinda Bruno was one of 32 staff at a St Kilda community mental health service that looks after 250 clients.

Faced with redundancy by the end of the year, and under pressure to repay her mortgage, the single mother opted to find another job on a short-term contract.

"There's no security in my current position, so I'm unsure what my future is," she said.

She said the service where she used to work was being "dismantled", and she was worried about the loss of expertise in the entire mental health sector

Ms Bruno is also concerned for her former clients.

"Having to watch them potentially become really unwell in order for them to get support — that shouldn't be happening," she said.