Recommendations chart way forward for mental health service

Embargoed until 11 April 2019

The Townsville Hospital and Health Service (HHS) has received a report into the adult acute mental health inpatient unit by former Queensland Health director-general Mick Reid and accepted all 16 recommendations.

The review followed the tragic death of a consumer at the unit in July 2018.

The Townsville HHS Board Chair Tony Mooney said a death in care is devastating and the safety of consumers was the number one priority.

Mr Mooney said there was an obligation to the consumer’s family, and the community broadly, to determine if any improvements could be made.

"The safety of people in our care is paramount," he said.

"The Board has supported the chief executive Kieran Keyes and accepted the recommendations in full.

“We have committed to providing the necessary resources and oversight to deliver and implement the recommendations from the Reid Review.”

The Reid Review will be made available to the public following the completion of a Coronial investigation into the death.

Updates will be provided briefing the community on progress made in implementing the recommendations.

Townsville HHS chief executive Kieran Keyes said the priority now was to work closely with the Coroner to assist with the investigation.

“It is essential the integrity of the Coronial process be maintained and we are doing everything we can to assist," he said.

“I’ve received legal advice that the public release of this Review at this stage may prejudice the Coronial investigation."
“Once the Coroner has completed this important work I will release the full report publicly and speak openly about its findings and the improvements we’ve made.

“While the report has found the care we provide is in line with standards of practice and is safe, it did identify clear areas for improvement.”

Mr Keyes said in the interim the Townsville HHS would today release all 16 recommendations made in the Reid Review and work on implementing those changes were already underway.

“We will be putting money immediately into improving the condition of the unit in the short-term ahead of a major multi-million-dollar refurbishment in 2020,” he said.

“This month we are also set to welcome four new mental health nurses and we are actively in the market to attract further staff to Townsville.

“Recruitment is well underway for a new leader of the mental health service group in Townsville.”

Mr Mooney said now was about getting on with the job.

“We now have a comprehensive and clear way forward to improve the care we provide to the most vulnerable people within the community,” he said.

“The Board will support in any way the delivery of these key recommendations and will ensure they are delivered quickly and well.”

**Recommendations, Reid Review**

**Recommendation 1:**
The Townsville Mental Health Service should aspire to high performance. A suite of measures should be developed.

- that reflect the elements of a great health service
- monitor patient/client/customer/carer perspectives of outcomes/experience and
- engage clinicians, consumers and carers in their development.

**Recommendation 2:**
A model of care tailored for the Townsville HHS AAMHIU (adult acute mental health inpatient unit) should be developed based on the state-wide model of service for Adult Acute Mental Health Inpatient Units.

**Recommendation 3:**
MHSG (mental health service group) Executive need to ensure there is adequate capacity to undertake necessary orientation and mentoring of new AAMHIU staff, including the model of care.

**Recommendation 4:**
A review should be undertaken of the reasons and value of the apparent high and increasing use of security staff in the AAMHIU.
Recommendation 5:
The MHOD (medical heads of department) Committee should be revitalised to enable enhanced medical input across all the clinical service groups, to better influence the deliberations of the THHS Executive.

Recommendation 6:
There should be designated accountability for mental health services on the Townsville HHS executive and a clear escalation pathway for the MHSG to this accountable person.

Recommendation 7:
Issues and recommendations that relate to consumers and carers arising from the reviews should, in the first instance, be referred to and discussed by all the relevant consumer groups of Townsville HHS. Specific input should be sought from the Partnering with Consumers and Carers Committee and the Mental Health Consumer and Carer Reference Group. Input should also be sought from the newly formed Board Consumer Advisory Council.

Recommendation 8:
That the Townsville HHS and Queensland Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs Branch conduct a workshop to identify mechanisms to improve mutual communication and collaboration.

Recommendation 9:
That the Townsville MHSG initiate the establishment of a formal network with other regional/isolated public referral mental health services across Australia.

Recommendation 10:
A senior clinical/executive leadership program should be introduced for existing and emerging leaders across Townsville HHS.

Recommendation 11:
A comprehensive longer-term workforce strategy for attracting and retaining mental health staff, with a particular focus on local recruitment, should be developed to better future proof for likely national and international shortages of nursing, medical and allied mental health clinicians.

Recommendation 12:
That Townsville HHS should develop a Lead Consultant Psychiatrist role across the adult MHS (mental health service). This role should have protected capacity and accountability for overseeing quality improvement and monitoring activities in the AAMHIU.

Recommendation 13:
The proposed approach developed by the ED Nursing and Midwifery to enhance the training in managing occupational violence and aggression, is fully endorsed.
Recommendation 14:

In consultation with the HHS security officers, and as part of Recommendation 13 the training program for security officers should be reviewed to ensure it is in keeping with standards for security staff within a health care environment.

Recommendation 15:

In the light of this review, the Townsville HHS Board/Executive should review their respective roles in all aspects of risk management according to best practice governance.

Recommendation 16:

There should be rectification of the physical appearance of the HDU (high dependency unit) within the AAMHIU whilst planning proceeds for the unit’s upgrade.

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