Supporting Mental Health & Wellbeing

Flourish Australia Profile

Flourish Australia is one of Australia's most experienced no-for-profit mental health organisations, providing supports for people across NSW, ACT, Victoria and South Eastern Queensland. Formerly known as the Richmond Fellowship of NSW and Psychiatric Rehabilitation Australia, in August 2016 RichmondPRA Limited's trading name became Flourish Australia. The name was chosen by the people we support and reflects our ethos and aims.

The Richmond Fellowship of NSW was founded in the late 1960s in Sydney. It was inspired by the original Richmond Fellowship in the United Kingdom and its vision of community-based support for people with a lived experience as they moved from long term hospital stays to community living.

PRA commenced in 1955 as a volunteer-run organisation that provided social activities for patients in Sydney's Callan Park Hospital. It also arranged rehabilitation services to support independent living in the community.

Through nearly 70 locations across the country, we support more than 5000 people on their own recovery journey, including through two locations in Tamworth, plus Armidale, Inverell, Moree and Gunnedah. Local services range from homelessness coordination to 24/7 high level support for people exiting mental health acute units. With some 70 staff across the New England and North West, we are also engaged in active consortia with a number of other major providers. We are also a major employer of Peer Workers and more than half of the Flourish Australia workforce have a lived experience of a mental health issue.

In 2018, we commenced a commercial cleaning contract for the NSW Government at the Tamworth Agricultural Institute, creating first-time jobs for a number of supported employees to learn new skills and commence a pathway back into the workforce.

Flourish Australia is also the proud winner of the 2018 Quality Business Awards "Excellence in Workplace Inclusion" award, the first time this award has been presented.

Presenter/Speaker

Jim Booth is the Senior Cluster Manager for Flourish Australia for the New England and North West, joining the organisation in 2011, based at the regional office at 129 Marius Street, Tamworth. He has spent the last 14 years working in mental health after a career in journalism and politics.

Jim first came to Tamworth in 2000 as Chief of Staff to former Senator Sandy Macdonald, having also worked for former lower house Members, John Sharp and Kay Hull. He was a news editor at Radio 2LF (Young) and 2WG (Wagga Wagga), before becoming the inaugural manager at ABC Radio Riverina. He first worked in Radio whilst a student at Radio UNE (now TUNE FM) at the University of New England. Jim continues some freelance media work for the Henty Machinery Field Days and for Fairfax Rural Events and FarmFest (Toowoomba), AgQuip (Gunnedah) and ProAg (Macksville).

His great passion in working in the field of mental health is to see the recovery journeys of the hundreds of people accessing Flourish Australia services across the New England and North West. The BBQ stopper message is that there is nothing to be feared in mental health and that recovery journeys take place every day. Whilst we can all see the effects of a physical injury, a broken arm or whatever, and we can estimate the recovery time and process, mental health is much more challenging, but nonetheless possible. This still creates a lot of stigma across the world, but the veil is lifting and populations are becoming more interested in, and prepared to talk about, mental health issues, as they can effect half the population across a lifetime.

This is why Flourish Australia is proud to be a sponsor of the annual "Mental Health Recovery" award at the Tamworth Quality Business Awards and the Armidale Business Chamber awards and is proud to be involved in the 2019 Regional Business Summit.

Topic

Workplace mental health

Flourish Australia provides assistance to employers to enable them to provide better support to their employees.

Flourish Australia is a not for profit organisation that supports nearly 5000 people with a lived experience of a mental health issues to live successfully in the community. We employ around 700 staff in front line services and another 300 in supported employment services.

We understand the challenges faced by employers, and people with lived experience in workplaces. We are happy to share our experience.

Mental health issues effect an estimated 1 in 5 Australians at any one time, costing Australian businesses an estimated $10.9 Billion Dollars through Absenteeism, reduced work performance and workers compensation claims.

According to research carried out by PwC (PricewaterhouseCoopers), for every $1 a business invests in alleviating mental health issues, it will receive average returns of $2.30 in improved productivity. This is why regional businesses should be interested in mental health.

Workshops

Flourish Australia have designed four 2-hour workshops to assist employers to increase awareness and knowledge about mental health in the workplace for staff and leaders, supervisors and managers. To ensure these workshops address real issues faced in workplaces they have been developed by people who have a lived experience of a mental health issue, as well as workplace managers.