Mental health nurses celebrate International Nurses Day but continue to be a lifeline for Australians

Tuesday 12 May 2020

The Australian College of Mental Health Nurses (ACMHN) is the pre-eminent and authoritative voice of the mental health nursing profession in Australia.

ACMHN are proud to be celebrating IND on Tuesday 12 May and have called upon members to share memories close to their hearts to mark such an important day.

With a membership of 3000 qualified mental health nurses, ACMHN is the professional peak body representing mental health nurses in Australia. We recognise the need now more than ever for mental health nurses to continue serving the Australian community in the face of recent drought, catastrophic bushfire and global pandemic.

"With 2020 being declared by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as the Year of the Nurse, it is obvious to our world community how important nurses are to our safety and wellbeing," said ACMHN CEO Mr Stephen Jackson.

ACMHN occupies a senior position in mental health nursing consultancy and policy development in Australia. This is no mean achievement for an organisation which began inauspiciously in the mid-1970s in a time of radical change in healthcare in Australia.

"We believe that mental health nursing is a unique interpersonal process, which promotes and maintains behaviours that contribute to integrated health for individuals and communities," said ACMHN Vice President, Mr Tom Ryan.

"Mental health nursing is therapeutic and promotes a caring, honest and trusting relationship. Mental health nursing embodies the concept of caring by supporting people who are unable to maintain mental, social or physical health functions for themselves and empowers people to take an active role in self-advocacy and self-care," continued Mr Ryan.

A Morgan Poll found that for the 22nd year in a row, out of 30 professions, nurses were seen, by a very large majority of 92%, as the most ethical and honest profession. There are also over 20,000 nurses working in mental health across Australia and over 300,000 nurses in total.

According to WHO 'Nurses and midwives play a vital role in providing health services. These are the people who devote their lives to caring for mothers and children, giving lifesaving immunisations and health advice, including looking after older people and generally meeting everyday essential health needs. They are often, the first and only point of care in their communities. The world needs 9 million more nurses and midwives if it is to achieve universal health coverage by 2030.'

"On this very special day, I would like to acknowledge the work of our members (the mental health nursing profession), our board and the team at ACMHN. Everyone who is a part of our organisation plays a vital role in caring for the mental health of Australians which is one of the most important jobs in our country at this time," concluded Mr Jackson.

For further comment, please contact ACMHN CEO, Stephen Jackson on stephen.jackson@acmhn.org.