



INFORMATION KIT
FOR ORGANISING THE ANNUAL
TheMHS CONFERENCE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION	4
INFORMATION KIT.....	4
About TheMHS.....	4
GUIDING PRINCIPLES.....	4
RANGE OF STAKEHOLDERS.....	5
TheMHS BOARD - SYDNEY.....	5
TheMHS OFFICE - SYDNEY.....	6
LOCAL COMMITTEE.....	6
STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES.....	7
LOCAL COMMITTEE TASKS.....	7
POLICY INFORMATION.....	9
<i>Finance</i>	9
<i>Budget</i>	9
<i>Registration Fees</i>	10
PRE AND POST-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS AND FORUMS.....	10
<i>Pre-Conference Workshops</i>	10
<i>Pre-Conference Forums</i>	10
COLLABORATION OR ASSOCIATION WITH OTHER CONFERENCES.....	11
PART TWO: GUIDELINES (in alphabetical order)	11
ABSTRACTS.....	11
ACCOMMODATION / HOTELS.....	11
ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS.....	12
ADVERTISING – Also See Publicity and Marketing.....	12
AIRFARES.....	13
ARTWORK (GRAPHICS).....	13
AUDIO-VISUAL REQUIREMENTS.....	13
BURSARIES.....	13
CALL FOR ABSTRACTS (CALL FOR PAPERS).....	14
CARERS / FAMILY / WHĀNAU FORUM.....	15
CATERING.....	16
CHAIRING OF SESSIONS.....	16
COMPLIMENTARY CONFERENCE REGISTRATIONS.....	17
CONCESSIONAL CONFERENCE REGISTRATIONS.....	18
CONSUMER FORUM.....	18
CONSUMER HEALTH SUPPORT.....	19
CONSUMER PARTICIPATION IN CONFERENCE.....	20
CONFERENCE CONNECTIONS.....	20
DINNER – Conference Dinner (<i>See Social/Special/Associated Events</i>).....	20
ENTERTAINMENT.....	20
e-POSTER DISPLAYS.....	20
EQUIPMENT AT REGISTRATION DESK.....	21
EXHIBITION BOOTHS.....	21
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.....	22
HOTEL ACCOMMODATION.....	22
INCIDENTALS.....	22
INDIGENOUS PROTOCOLS.....	22
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' FORUM.....	23
KEYNOTE SPEAKERS.....	24
MONITORS/USHERS DURING CONFERENCE.....	25
NAMES AND NAME TAGS.....	25
PHONE CALLS AND PHOTOCOPIER AT VENUE.....	25
PHOTOGRAPHER.....	26
PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS AND FORUMS: GENERAL INFORMATION.....	26
PRINTING – Also See Publicity and Marketing.....	27
PRESENTERS.....	27

PROGRAM..... 28
See Information Sheet P2 for Program Design details 28
 PUBLICITY, marketing, Media 31
 PUBLICATIONS 31
 CALL FOR ABSTRACTS Brochure 32
 REGISTRATION BROchure 32
 REGISTRATION PROCESS 32
 REGISTRATION DESK 33
 SATCHELS 33
 SIGNS 34
 SOCIAL / SPECIAL / ASSOCIATED EVENTS 34
 SYMPOSIA (FEATURED SYMPOSIA) 35
 SPONSORSHIP 36
 VENUE 36
 WEBSITE 37
 INFORMATION SHEETS (available on [website](#)) 38

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

INFORMATION KIT

This information kit has been designed to promote efficient interaction between TheMHS Board, located in Sydney NSW, and the **Local Committee** located in the host city. Suggestions are always welcome about improving any part of this kit. This kit will be updated as necessary after each conference.

ABOUT TheMHS

TheMHS Learning Network Inc. (TheMHS) is an international learning network for improving mental health services in Australia and New Zealand; is a registered charity and is run by a volunteer Board.

TheMHS Learning Network is an independent, incorporated, not-for-profit organisation which is mainly funded by delegate registrations, as well as some government grants and sponsors.

TheMHS Learning Network's Board has delivered conferences by working closely with local organising committees since 1994. This has added diversity, innovation and ensured local input to the conference planning process.

TheMHS mission is to:

1. Recognise and promote quality collaborative research, practice, policy-making and education.
2. Promote active involvement and inclusion of all mental health stakeholders.
3. Advocate and promote leadership in the mental health field.

AIMS OF THE CONFERENCE

1. Provide a forum for the presentation and exchange of ideas about the best ways of ensuring high quality mental health services for people affected by mental illness.
2. Promote positive attitudes about mental health and mental illness.
3. Provide a forum for professional development of people associated with mental health services, i.e. an opportunity to present current innovations, strategies, research, policies and future directions.
4. Provide a forum for professionals, consumers, carers/families/whānau and managers to meet and debate mental health services.
5. Stimulate debate which will challenge the boundaries of present knowledge and ideas about services for people with mental health disabilities.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Conference:

- Provides a balance of presentations including: descriptive, update, commentary, point of view, research, evaluation, innovation, debates and personal stories.

- Provides enough flexibility in the conference program to accommodate open debates and for networking to occur.
- Pays attention to large group process issues, as well as to the structure of the program i.e. discourages factionalism and encourages constructive debate.
- Does not censor the content of the program (except in exceptional circumstances), but guides, supports and invites potential presenters, as necessary, in order to improve the quality of their presentations.
- Accommodates, if possible, the maximum number of people wishing to present at the conference. When more people present, more people attend.

RANGE OF STAKEHOLDERS

1. Professional groups such as administrators/managers, occupational therapists, nurses, social workers, psychiatrists, psychologists, vocational rehabilitation workers, general practitioners, consumer advocates, peer workers and many other service providers, as well as researchers, policy makers, educators.
2. Consumers and carers/families/whānau – including direct service-users, families and other carers.
3. Government and non-government organisations, public and private health services, private health insurers.
4. Advocacy and voluntary organisations.
5. Geographic areas – Australian states & territories / New Zealand (North and South Island), urban, rural and remote areas.

TheMHS BOARD - SYDNEY

TheMHS Board is the managing body that ensures the annual conference is well organised, accessible and adheres to the Purposes of the Association as set out in the Incorporation Rules. The members of the Board give their time on a voluntary basis. Board Office Bearers (Chair, Deputy Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer) are elected at the AGM. The Board develops and ensures the implementation of the strategic plan.

The members of the Board are members of the incorporated body and are listed below:

Tom Brideson	Maria Cassaniti	Cath Chapman
Lynne Dunbar	Michelle Everett	Roger Gurr
Paula Hanlon	Kevin Kellehear	Peter McGeorge
Marilyn McMurchie	Vivienne Miller	Fiona Orr
Sadie Robertson	Alan Rosen	Tully Rosen
Maree Teesson	Barbara Tooth	

Each year at least one member of TheMHS Board will be a Program Advisor/Liaison and ex officio member of the **Local Committee** (referred to hereafter as TheMHS Liaison).

TheMHS OFFICE - SYDNEY

TheMHS office in Sydney provides an ongoing Professional Conference Organising (PCO) service for each year's conference. This consists of (all part-time employees): Events Manager, Events Coordinator, Communications Coordinator, Development and Communications Manager and Conference Director, as well as part-time project officer/s as required.

TheMHS office provides administrative support for the entire conference and some clerical assistance to the **Local Committee** if required.

OFFICE MEMBERS

Conference Director	Vivienne Miller	vivienne.miller@themhs.org
Events Manager	Alexis Linton	alexis.linton@themhs.org
Development and Communications Manager	Ash Wood	ashley.wood@themhs.org
Events Coordinator	Anne Allen	anne.allen@themhs.org
Communications Coordinator	Penny Hatzis	penny.hatzis@themhs.org

LOCAL COMMITTEE

The Local Committee is usually formed through one or two host organisations. The **Local Committee** consists of the Conference Convenor/s and others who form the working group that hosts the conference in their city. This group becomes the **Local Committee**, who meet regularly and undertake conference organisational tasks – as set out in TheMHS timelines, guidelines, *(See Information Sheets L2 & L3)* and in conjunction with TheMHS Board and TheMHS office. The **Local Committee** should include representation from the professional groups working in mental health, consumers, carers/families/whānau, indigenous peoples and any other relevant or interested group. The Local Committee is made up of people associated with the host organisations/s and other relevant people in the mental health field.

The **Local Committee** usually forms a number of sub-committees or working groups who take on the organisation of specific conference events. These include the Program Sub-Committee and any or all of the following.

- Consumer Forum
- Carer/Family/Whānau Forum
- Indigenous Forum
- Transcultural
- Creative Activities

Working groups may include media/publicity/social activities within the program.

The **Local Committee** may choose to have these sub-committees meet separately or may nominate 2 or 3 people on the **Local Committee** to take on the tasks of the sub-committee, and report on their tasks during the **Local Committee** meetings. If

meeting separately, the chair or convenor of each sub-committee must be a member of the **Local Committee**.

The **Program Sub-Committee** is headed by the Program Convenor/s and consists of members of the **Local Committee** and may also include other relevant people outside the Local Committee. The Program Sub-Committee reviews the abstracts and is involved in decisions about program content and structure. The **Local Committee** Convenor may choose to become the Program Convenor, or preferably may nominate someone else as the Program Convenor, however this person must be a member of the **Local Committee**.

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

TheMHS Board retains the overall responsibility for the finances and for maintaining high standards of the entire conference.

TheMHS Board entrusts certain tasks and roles to the **Local Committee** for that year's annual conference. The following are undertaken by the **Local Committee** in collaboration with TheMHS Board:

- Choosing the conference theme
- Developing the conference logo
- Choosing the keynote and invited speakers
- Reviewing abstracts
- Developing the program content
- Organising a limited number of local social and special events
- Providing specific information with regard to conference theme for brochures
- Providing assistance with specific tasks during the conference
- Promoting a local "flavour" while also ensuring the bi-national aspects of the conference

Any other tasks to be undertaken by the **Local Committee** are to be negotiated with TheMHS Board.

The following areas are wholly administered by TheMHS:

- TheMHS Awards for Service to Mental Health for Programs and Services and Mental Health Media Awards
- Online publication of conference 'Book of Proceedings'
- Site-selection for subsequent years' conference
- TheMHS website, including the Resource Library and social media
- Finances

LOCAL COMMITTEE TASKS

Conference Timeline & Tasks

(See Information Sheet L2)

Local Committee Timeline by Job

(See Information Sheet L3)

Preliminary Tasks

- Take time to understand the policy and financial base of TheMHS.
- Develop working relationship with the Conference Director and TheMHS office.
- Meet with representatives from TheMHS Board via regular teleconference, particularly during the process of conference theme and keynote speaker determination, preparation for Call for Abstracts and development of the conference program and final structure.

Conference Specific Tasks

TheMHS office will make all conference centre bookings and handle all the conference management issues: conference facilities, catering, audio-visual etc. The **Local Committee's role is to develop the program and content of the conference and to provide local input and flavour to the event.**

All of these tasks should be undertaken in conjunction with the Conference Director and the TheMHS office.

- Put forward suggested theme and keynote speakers for consideration by the Board.
- Pre-conference day: Consumer Forum, Carer/Family/Whānau Forum, Indigenous Forum as per guidelines for forums (*See Information Sheets C3 & P1*).
- Determine who will be responsible for each separate forum and ensure a committee is put together for each forum.
- Advise the Conference Director of possible pre-conference workshops from local people and from the Call for Abstracts (*See Information Sheets A6 & P1*).
- Determine the makeup of the Program Committee, who will review the papers and who will be present for the program meeting. The program meeting members will have each read a number of abstracts; the Convenor and TheMHS Liaison will have read all the abstracts; the abstract review meeting will determine which abstracts are accepted and which are rejected.
- With the Conference Director and TheMHS Liaison, construct the program, using the template provided by allocating the chosen abstracts to sessions.
- Once the draft program is completed, presenters are notified that their abstract has been accepted and when it is scheduled. The responses from presenters usually result in changes needing to be made which will be handled through TheMHS office in consultation with the Program Convenor.
- The ongoing development and finalisation of the program to the actual conference is mainly done by the Conference Director and TheMHS office, with the Program Convenor and Conference Convenor/s.

Pre-Conference Day Tasks

- Consumer Forum – a consumer member of the **Local Committee** should be delegated the role of Forum Convenor and should convene a committee to plan and arrange the forum. This committee should liaise with local consumer organisations and draw on the support and expertise of the consumer members of TheMHS Board.

- Carer/Family/Whānau Forum – a carer/family/whānau member of the **Local Committee** should be delegated the role of Forum Convenor and should convene a committee to plan and arrange the forum. This committee should liaise with local carer/family organisations.
- Indigenous, multi-cultural or other forums should follow a similar process of development to the forums above.
- *(See Information Sheets C3 & P1).*

The **Local Committee** is encouraged to use this information kit to help it with its work. The **Local Committee** is specifically encouraged to work closely with the Conference Director, Vivienne Miller and TheMHS office.

Summary of Groups involved in TheMHS Conference – *See Information Sheet T1*

POLICY INFORMATION

Finance

TheMHS Learning Network is an independent incorporated body that does not have ongoing financial support or sponsors.

TheMHS strives to keep the cost of the annual conference as low as possible. Any surplus or deficit from the annual conference is borne by TheMHS. If there is a surplus, it is put towards subsidies and concessions or towards offsetting any unforeseen losses in future conferences.

Assistance is sought from the **Local Committee** to suggest possible local sources of sponsorship and grants. TheMHS office will follow up.

TheMHS Board has:

- Ultimate responsibility for the financial viability of the current year's conference and for future conferences.
- Must authorise all financial expenditure via the Conference Director.
- Provides a working budget for the information of the **Local Committee** via the Conference Director.

Small item expenses (e.g. stationery, phone calls) incurred by the **Local Committee** will be reimbursed as long as there has been a prior agreement with the Conference Director. Receipts are to be sent to TheMHS office and will be reimbursed via EFT to the person nominated. These items must be under \$100.00. Certain other items (e.g. artists work in developing the logo) over \$100 will be reimbursed on invoice and by prior agreement.

Budget

The budget estimate is drawn up by the Conference Director. An estimated budget for each conference is prepared approximately 10 months prior to the conference. TheMHS Board oversees and approves the conference budget. The budget estimate will be subject to change as costs for items become firm over the time period. The venue is booked approximately 2 years ahead of time, by the Conference Director, on behalf of TheMHS Board, and a contract signed.

Registration Fees

The annual conference registration fees are determined by the Conference Director and approved by TheMHS Board, and finalised approximately 9 months prior to the conference. The fees are set at a price which will cover costs, and will at least break-even for the estimated number of delegates attending the conference. TheMHS strives to keep the cost of registration as low as is possible to keep the conference accessible to all. However, the registration fees need to be set at a level that will ensure at least a breakeven financial outcome. Concession fees are available for pension card holders/beneficiaries, unemployed, and full-time students. Fees are listed on TheMHS website.

Additional to the annual conference registration fee, there are fees charged for: pre-conference forums, workshops and seminars; social and special events outside the 3-day program. The conference Welcome Reception, if held, is free to conference delegates, except if a cash bar is applicable.

PRE AND POST-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS AND FORUMS

Pre-Conference Workshops

A range of workshops may be organised on the pre-conference day. TheMHS Board is solely responsible for determining which pre-conference workshops will be held. The number of workshops is determined according to the estimated interest in the topic and the financial viability of each workshop. The **Local Committee** may wish to suggest topics and speakers for these pre-conference workshops.

It is important that these workshops not only break even, but endeavour to make a small surplus. A surplus in the pre-conference workshops allows TheMHS to provide bursaries and concessions for consumers during the main 3 day conference.

Sometimes keynote speakers are asked to present a workshop or be part of a workshop. When a keynote speaker is offered a role in a pre-conference workshop, he/she may be paid a fee for the workshop. They are not paid for their keynote address during the conference, therefore the possible workshop payment can be an added incentive to the person to come to the conference. The financial viability of the pre-conference workshop will determine whether or not there is leeway to pay a fee to the keynote speaker.

TheMHS Board reserves the right to make the final decision about the financial and educational viability of a workshop.

Pre-Conference Forums

A number of pre-conference forums are usually arranged. It has become a tradition to have a Consumer *pre-conference* Forum and a Carer/Family/Whānau *pre-conference* Forum. Other possible forums include: Indigenous Peoples, Transcultural Mental Health. Forums are organised if there is enough interest and if there is a local group willing to work with the **Local Committee**.

These forums must aim to be cost neutral to the 3-day conference. A separate budget for each forum is developed by the Conference Director. The Consumer Forum and Carer/Family/Whānau Forum are usually supported by a grant from the Commonwealth Government of Australia to cover costs. The **Local Committee** may wish to offer suggestions for additional funding, if necessary. See the section on the Consumer Forum for further information on funding.

TheMHS Board reserves the right to make the final decision about the financial and educational viability of a forum.

COLLABORATION OR ASSOCIATION WITH OTHER CONFERENCES

Other mental health conferences and meetings may wish to be associated with TheMHS Conference before or after the main 3-day conference (e.g. Early Psychosis Conference). This must be negotiated with TheMHS Board at least 18 months prior to TheMHS Conference.

PART TWO: GUIDELINES (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

ABSTRACTS

The Call for Abstracts sets out how abstracts should be written and provides guidelines as to the type of presentations that will be accepted (*see Information Sheet P2 & G2*). Abstracts are reviewed by at least 3 people who rate them on a pre-determined rating system. *See Information Sheet R1* and sections on Call for Abstracts and Program for further details)

Local Committee Convenor/s supply TheMHS office with names of abstract reviewers who will form the Program Committee for the conference. This committee will include members of the **Local Committee** but may also include other relevant people as nominated by the **Local Committee**. The Call for Abstracts brochure is mailed out in December each year. The guidelines for submission of abstracts **generally don't change** much from year to year and are available on TheMHS website. For fuller discussion about reviewing abstracts, see the sections entitled: Call for Abstracts; Program.

Abstracts can be submitted online through TheMHS website from December of the previous year: www.themhs.org

ACCOMMODATION / HOTELS

- The **Local Committee** may wish to give advice to the Conference Director in relation to these hotels.
- TheMHS office will arrange all accommodation bookings for keynote/invited speakers.
- If any accommodation requests are made to the **Local Committee** by keynote or other invited speakers or anyone else connected with the conference, these must all be referred to TheMHS office.

- An external accommodation management company (Ozaccom+) has been appointed by TheMHS as the accommodation booking service for TheMHS conferences. They visit potential hotels some time prior to the conference to ascertain their suitability. They negotiate the best rate for hotel rooms and handle all the room reservations on behalf of TheMHS. Hotel bookings are made directly with this agent via their website or a link from TheMHS website.

ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

- The Achievement Awards are administered by TheMHS Board Award Sub-Committee. The Awards are generally presented in the opening session of the 3-day conference. Hence the **Local Committee** must allocate 45 minutes in the program for this in the opening session.
- Approximately 10 months prior, an Awards Ambassador is commissioned. This is generally a very high profile or well-known person with strong links to the mental health field. Previous Awards Ambassadors have included Dame Marie Bashir, and former Australia Prime Minister, Julia Gillard.
- The Awards Sub-Committee selects the dignitary to present the awards (and to open the conference) in consultation with TheMHS Board and the **Local Committee**. This person delivers a 10 minute talk (included in the above 45 minutes) prior to giving out the awards. Usually this person is the Minister for Health or the Governor General. The arrangements for this are made by the Awards Sub-Committee **who liaise with the dignitary's office about protocols**.
- Award finalists are invited to display an e-Poster about their service on the electronic display screens located prominently.
- A photographer is engaged by TheMHS office to take photos of the Award Ceremony and the Award Winners, after the ceremony. (*See section on "Photographer"*)
- A special morning tea is usually arranged after the Award Ceremony for the Award finalists and the dignitary presenting the awards. This is a photo opportunity – photos are supplied to award recipients for use in later publicity.

Finances of TheMHS Awards Program

Grants are received from the Australian Commonwealth Department of Health and the New Zealand Ministry of Health. These grants cover the expenses associated with the running of the awards program.

ADVERTISING – Also See Publicity and Marketing

- TheMHS will place notices in professional journals and newsletters. These are placed in the free diary date sections of these publications. Specific contacts and advice on the most relevant publications are sought from the **Local Committee**.
- TheMHS also has a strong social media presence across Twitter, Facebook & Instagram.
- Advertising costs are kept to a minimum, as we rely on our extensive mailing list to attract delegates to conferences, via post and broadcast email.
- Suggestions from the **Local Committee** are welcomed to further expand the advertising and marketing opportunities for the annual TheMHS Conference.

AIRFARES

- There is no longer a preferred airline arrangement for airfares as so many cheap tickets are available. TheMHS arranges airline tickets for keynote speakers.
- If the **Local Committee** receives any request for TheMHS to pay anyone's airfares, this should be referred on to the Conference Director or Events Manager.

ARTWORK (GRAPHICS)

- TheMHS Board has an ongoing relationship with a graphic artist. This graphic artist produces all TheMHS artwork in preparation for the printing of brochures. This includes the Call for Abstracts, Registration Brochure and conference posters.
- The development of the logo is a collaborative arrangement between the Conference Director, Development and Communications Manager and the **Local Committee**. A local artist may be used to supply the initial artwork which is then sent to TheMHS graphic artist for further development.

AUDIO-VISUAL REQUIREMENTS

- The Conference Director & Events Manager are responsible for ordering audio-visual equipment. Presenters list their audio-visual requirements on the online abstract submission portal, usually by March each year.
- TheMHS office collates this information and advises the AV company.
- Data projection (PowerPoint) is provided throughout the conference venue with capability to play short video clips with audio.
- Presenters are asked to confirm their audio-visual requirements in the acceptance letter that is emailed to them from TheMHS office.
- The Events Manager **sends the list of speakers' audio-visual** requirements and estimated need for technical support staff, to the nominated audio-visual company.
- If the **Local Committee** knows of any other audio-visual requirements for any conference events/activities these must be discussed with the Conference Director/Events Manager. This includes any special audio-visual requests, (e.g. video conference links, webcasts).

BURSARIES

- There are up to 20 TheMHS Bursaries, available for consumers to attend the conference.
- Bursary recipients receive complimentary registration for consumer pre-conference forum and 3-day conference plus travel expenses (including the most reasonably priced flights available and transport to and from the airport). Accommodation is **not** included.
- The bursaries are administered by TheMHS office and applications are assessed by the Conference Director. Priority is given to consumers who are presenting at the main conference or pre-conference day **and** who would otherwise have difficulty attending the conference for financial reasons.

- The bursaries are allocated on the basis of a maximum of 2 bursaries per state, 1 per territory and 3 for New Zealand.
- Bursary applications are taken via TheMHS website (online form).
- The first round of offers are given out in approximately May each year.
- Additionally, up to a total of 5 free registrations are given to consumers and carers/family/whānau from the host state of the conference. These are administered by the **Local Committee**, and are usually allocated to consumers who have been actively involved in organising the conference – i.e. **the Local Committee** convenor chooses who and how the free registrations are distributed. These 5 registrations are allocated on the understanding that there are no claims for travel costs for these recipients. *(See section on Complimentary Registrations)*

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS (CALL FOR PAPERS)

- This is a standard brochure produced by TheMHS office and posted to TheMHS mailing list in December each year. It is also made available as a PDF document on TheMHS website. Notification is also via broadcast email and social media.
- **Standard information doesn't change greatly from year to year.** However, information about the keynote speakers and the conference theme, as well as any special requirements for abstracts does change each year.
- The **Local Committee** Program Convenor and the Conference Director, are responsible for confirming the presentation formats that will be offered to presenters.
- Information about the theme and keynote speakers, for inclusion in the Call for Abstracts brochure must be given to TheMHS office by the **Local Committee** according to the timeline supplied.
- TheMHS office supplies the final draft of the text for the Call for Papers brochure, to the graphic artist.
- The graphic artist emails drafts of the Call for Abstracts to TheMHS office and the Development and Communications Manager sends this onto the **Local Committee**.
- **Local Committee** advises Conference Director of desired changes to the draft.
- TheMHS office arranges printing and postage of the final Call for Abstracts brochure which is mailed out by mid-December in the year prior to the conference.
- The closing date for the receipt of abstracts is the first week of March in the year of the conference.
- All people wishing to present at the conference submit their abstracts online. Each abstract is given a unique number for quick identification purposes. All correspondence with presenters is via TheMHS office.
- Online submission of abstracts via TheMHS website is available from December of previous year.
- The Events Manager sends instructions regarding access and use of the Reviewers Portal to all reviewers following the abstract submission closing date. The Program Convenor and TheMHS Liaison are allocated to review all abstracts (approx. 300), and each other reviewer is assigned approximately

30-50 abstracts to review. All reviews are done electronically (*See Information Sheet R1*). For the next steps in abstract reviewing, please refer to abstract reviewing in the section called: Program and also *Information Sheet P2*.

CARERS / FAMILY / WHĀNAU FORUM

- The Convenor of the Carer/Family/Whānau Forum must be a member of the main **Local Committee**.
- The Convenor will meet regularly with a number of other people who form the Carer/Family/Whānau Forum Sub-Committee. It is best to start meeting 12 months prior to the conference.
- The Conference Director provides the **Local Committee** with a budget for the Carer/Family/Whānau Forum at least 6 months before the conference. At present, the Australian Government provides subsidies for the Carer/Family/Whānau Forum, but the Forum must stay within budget. There is no funding for invited speakers. The Carer/Family/Whānau Sub-Committee must keep the **Local Committee** and the Conference Director informed of their planned program, to ensure there are no unanticipated costs that could lead to a budget overrun and to ensure smooth running on the day.
- The Forum must aim to be cost neutral to the 3-day conference. The **Local Committee** may wish to offer suggestions for additional funding.
- If Commonwealth Government funds are not available it may be necessary to apply for other funding for the Consumer Forum, or find ways of dramatically reducing the costs of the Consumer Forum, e.g. not supplying lunch, or reducing the whole day to half a day so that the only catering cost incurred is morning tea.
- The Carer/Family/Whānau Forum Sub-Committee provides the Conference Director with: the day's program; audio-visual requirements; names of presenters; any other special requirements a minimum of one month prior to the conference.
- TheMHS office receives all registrations for this forum and supplies catering numbers and audio-visual requirements to the venue.
- The number of presenters at the Forum should not exceed ten (10). Presentations should be relevant to the theme of the annual conference and the topic of the Forum. Presenters receive complimentary registration for the day of the Forum, but do not receive fees or expenses.
- Funding from government allows for catering, audio-visuals and hire of one room. However, one extra room may be available for concurrent sessions.
- **Program Guidelines.** The program/theme of the Carer/Family/Whānau Forum should relate to the overall conference theme/title, remembering that this is a national and bi-national Forum, as well as a showcase for local issues. The Forum should have a maximum of 2 breakout spaces (i.e. 2 rooms in total), but this will depend on funding and space availability. The Conference Director to be kept informed over the year/s of the development of the program (*See Information Sheets C3 & C4*).
- TheMHS office will print the day's program for distribution at the Forum.
- Also refer to section: PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS AND FORUMS: GENERAL INFORMATION (Page 25)

CATERING

- A catering budget is allocated for the conference.
- The Events Manager liaises with caterers/venue about catering costs, menus and dietary requirements.
- All menus for the conference must include 30%-50% vegetarian diet. Any other special dietary requirements need to be notified to TheMHS office – there is a special section on the conference registration online form for this information.
- The Events Manager supplies catering numbers as required by caterers – final numbers are usually given to the caterer at least a week prior to the conference. Any alteration to the catering arrangements (in particular involving costs) must be approved by the Conference Director.
- Water stations will be provided throughout the venue, arranged by the Events Manager.

CHAIRING OF SESSIONS

- Chair people (Chairs) are required for all sessions except workshops, debates and symposia. Workshops and symposia do not require TheMHS to find them a Chair as this function is built into the workshop or symposium. TheMHS office arranges Chairs for paper presentations.
- Chairs should be as representative as possible of the stakeholder groups attending the conference, but must be strong enough to take charge of a **session's proceedings as necessary**.
- Chairs must be able to time-keep, handle groups of people, and be confident in overseeing the smooth running of the session. As much as is possible, the Chair's interests are matched with the topics of the sessions.
- The nomination of Chair is a combined responsibility of TheMHS Board and the **Local Committee**.
- The list of chairs is usually constructed after the registrations start coming in, i.e. approximately July-August. Only delegates who are registered, or will be registering, whether paid or complimentary registrations, can become a Chair of a session.
- The **Local Committee** Program Convenor supplies the Conference Director/Events Manager with a list of potential Chairs with contact phone, fax, and/or email details, **and that person's interests/expertise**. The Conference Director supplements this list with suggestions of suitable chair people, from previous conferences. *(See Information Sheet L4)*
- When Chairs have been selected, TheMHS office contacts all Chairs to confirm their willingness to undertake this task. Chairs are contacted by email approximately 3 weeks prior to the conference.
- TheMHS office sends all Chairs the 'Chairing Duties' *(See Information Sheet C1)* and an emailed letter detailing, session title, names of presenters and their topics and other relevant information *(See Information Sheet C2)*.
- TheMHS office produces a listing of Chairs and their sessions in session number order which is displayed at the Conference Registration Desk/Notice Board.

Chairperson Responsibilities *(See Information Sheet C1)*

- On the morning of their session, collect presenters' biographies for their session from the Registration Desk – note that **not** all presenter's give their bio's to TheMHS, so some may not be available.
- Check for program changes on the notice board near the Registration Desk (a presenter may withdraw).
- Be at the session 10 mins before it starts, to meet the presenters.
- Time keep to ensure presentations are kept to the allocated time, and allow for extensions to the allocated time if another presenter has withdrawn.
- Advise TheMHS staff at the Registration Desk if a presenter does not turn up or if there are any other problems.
- This list of tasks is emailed to Chairs prior to the conference.

COMPLIMENTARY CONFERENCE REGISTRATIONS

Members of TheMHS Board are each given a complimentary registration in recognition of the many hours of work undertaken in their own time every year.

Additionally, TheMHS offers complimentary and concessional registrations to the following:

Local Committee – Main Conference

- 10 complimentary (i.e. free of charge) 3-day registrations are offered to the **Local Committee**, to be allocated by the Conference Convenor/s.
- In addition, up to 10 concessional registrations (i.e. charged at concession registration rate) can be allocated by the **Local Committee** to people who have worked actively towards organisation of the conference.
- Up to 5 free 4-day registrations are offered to consumers (or carers/families/whānau) from the local area (state/territory/New Zealand) and are allocated by the Conference Convenor to those who have been actively involved in organising the program or pre-conference forum. These 5 places for the Consumer Forum are additional to the Consumer Convenor and speakers at the Consumer Forum.
- **In summary:** TheMHS will provide to the **Local Committee** up to a maximum of 10 complimentary registrations, up to a maximum of 10 concession registrations and up to 5 complimentary consumer registrations.
- This information is required in July but no later than 2 weeks prior to the conference. TheMHS office will not refund registrations if paid by a person who is later allocated a complimentary registration from the local organising committee. Such registration fees can be transferred to another delegate. It is therefore essential to decide on the allocation of committee complimentary and concession registrations as early as possible, i.e. no later than June.

Local Committee – Pre-Conference Workshops and Forums

- Pre-Conference Forums: Complimentary registrations for the day are given to up to 6 members of the Forum Committee and up to 10 speakers.
- Pre-Conference Workshops: Complimentary and concessional registrations are negotiated with the organiser of the workshop.

Other complimentary registrations (additional to those above) are allocated by TheMHS office and apply to:

- Media passes
- 1 health support worker per day (from the local mental health crisis team)
- 1 peer support worker (optional, by confirmation of **Local Committee**).
- 1-2 complimentary registrations are provided to sponsors with their sponsorship package
- Technical staff, as determined by TheMHS
- Keynote speakers
- Selected invited speakers at Featured Symposia. A maximum of 10 complimentary one-day registrations may be allocated for selected Featured Symposia speakers (additional to the 3 keynote speakers) over the entire conference. The Conference Director reserves the right to allocate these places on a case-by-case basis. The criteria for allocating these places include – specialist speakers who cannot afford to register; specialist speakers for whom it would be impossible to ask them to speak and to also then ask them to pay for the privilege. NOTE that some specialist speakers may fall into one of the previous categories above, so will not need a specialist invited symposia registration.

CONCESSIONAL CONFERENCE REGISTRATIONS

- Concessional registrations are given to: Full-time students (student card stating full time status, or equivalent), pension or beneficiary card holders, and unemployed people (card or letter from Centrelink or equivalent). **Centrelink's** Health Care Card will be accepted as proof of concession for the purpose of receiving a concession at the conference.
- Policies in regard to who may receive a concessional registration for the conference are set by TheMHS Board.

CONSUMER FORUM

- The Convenor of the Consumer Forum must be a member of the main **Local Committee**.
- The Convenor will meet regularly with a number of other people who form the Consumer Forum Sub-Committee. It is best to start meeting 12 months prior to the conference.
- The Conference Director provides the **Local Committee** with a proposed budget for the Consumer Forum 6 months before the conference. The Commonwealth Government has so far been funding the Consumer Forum, which enables the forum to run at greatly reduced registration fees for participants. TheMHS Board applies for these funds each year and the Commonwealth Government reviews the application. The Consumer Forum Sub-Committee must keep the **Local Committee** and the Conference Director informed of their planned program, to ensure there are no unanticipated costs that could lead to a budget overrun and to ensure smooth running on the day. There is no funding for invited speakers.
- The Forum must aim to be cost neutral to the 3 day conference. The **Local Committee** may wish to offer suggestions for additional funding.

- If Commonwealth Government funds are not available it may be necessary to apply for other funding for the Consumer Forum, or find ways of dramatically reducing the costs of the Consumer Forum, e.g. not supplying lunch, or reducing the whole day to half a day so that the only catering cost incurred is morning tea.
- The Consumer Forum Sub-Committee provides the Conference Director with: the day's program; audio-visual requirements; names of presenters; any other special requirements a minimum of one month prior to the conference.
- TheMHS office receives all registrations for this forum and supplies catering numbers and audio-visual requirements to the venue.
- The number of presenters at the Forum should not exceed ten (10). Presentations should be relevant to the theme of the annual conference and the topic of the Forum. Presenters receive complimentary registration for the day of the Forum, but do not receive fees or expenses. Funding from government allows for catering, audio-visuals and hire of one room. However, one extra room may be available for concurrent sessions.
- **Program Guidelines.** The program/theme of the Consumer Forum should relate to the overall conference theme/title, remembering that this is a national and bi-national Forum, as well as a showcase for local issues. The Forum should have a maximum of 2 breakout spaces (i.e. 2 rooms in total), but this will depend on funding and space availability. The Conference Director is to be kept informed over the year/s of the development of the program.
- TheMHS office will print the day's program in the Conference Handbook.
- Also refer to section: PRE - CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS AND FORUMS: GENERAL INFORMATION & *Information Sheet C3, C4 & P1*.

CONSUMER HEALTH SUPPORT

- General and mental health support services are provided during the conference as follows:
 - A help page containing contact details of a local General Practitioner, local pharmacy, nearest hospital and other relevant health information is provided in the Conference Handbook and is available at the Registration Desk. Often people need a script and assistance with a general health matter, on a bulk-billing basis.
 - An arrangement is made for attendance by a member of the local mental health crisis team/community mental health team to be available to assist conference delegates for mental health problems. TheMHS offers a complimentary registration to this mental health worker (one mental health worker per day of the conference).
 - Over the past few years, we have also had an onsite Peer Worker (1 per day of the conference) available to conference delegates.
- The **Local Committee** assists the TheMHS office to find contact details for the nominated GP, psychiatrists, and mental health teams for use of TheMHS Staff onsite, as well as the nearest hospital emergency for listing on the "Help Page" of the Conference Handbook.
- The **Local Committee** makes initial contact with local mental health services to ascertain their availability during the conference. The local mental health service is defined as the service who would normally provide mental health cover to the geographical area of the conference venue.

- TheMHS Conference Director follows up and finalises the agreement between the local mental health service and the conference.

CONSUMER PARTICIPATION IN CONFERENCE

- TheMHS Board values the contributions that are made by consumers in every aspect of the conference.
- It is a requirement of TheMHS Board that one of the keynote speakers be a consumer. TheMHS Board can offer assistance and advice in relation to this.
- It is also a requirement of TheMHS Board that there be representation by consumers on the **Local Committee**.

CONFERENCE CONNECTIONS

The role of TheMHS Learning Network's Conference Connections Meeting is to facilitate exchange between past, present and future local organising committees and TheMHS Learning Network's Board. The purpose of the exchange is to strengthen future TheMHS Conferences. This meeting is usually held on the final day of the conference, over a light catered breakfast (*See Information Sheet T2*).

DINNER – Conference Dinner (*See Social/Special/Associated Events*)

ENTERTAINMENT

- The budget for entertainment and social events is set by the Conference Director and must be strictly adhered to. The amount allocated does not have to be spent, and it should not be assumed that it can be allocated to other conference activities
- Entertainment can be arranged by the **Local Committee**, within the agreed working budget and can include musicians for the reception, dancers or musicians for the Opening/Closing Ceremony etc.
- Although **Local Committee** makes initial arrangements for entertainment and social events, final bookings are made and paid for, by TheMHS office.
- All contact details of any entertainer or social event must be given to the Conference Director at least 2 months prior to the conference.
- Noise levels must not be excessive.

E-POSTER DISPLAYS

- During the abstract review meeting the **Local Committee** chooses the abstracts that will be offered an e-Poster. Some people specifically apply for an e-Poster, while others may be offered an e-Poster instead of a paper/workshop/symposium.
- Achievement Award Winners are invited to display an e-Poster of their award winning service or program.
- e-Posters are on display for the duration of the 3-day conference on large digital touch screens, as well as on the Conference App.
- A list of all e-Posters being displayed, as well as contact details for their author/s, is listed in the Conference Handbook.

- e-Posters are viewable in TheMHS online Resource Library after the conference.
- *See Information Sheet R2*

EQUIPMENT AT REGISTRATION DESK

- TheMHS office arranges for the following equipment to be on site during the conference for use of TheMHS office staff:
 - Phone & internet connection at the venue
 - Printer
 - Computer for use of TheMHS staff
- If there is any other equipment deemed necessary by the **Local Committee** this should be negotiated with the Conference Director.
- The equipment at the Registration Desk is for the use of Registration Desk staff only.

EXHIBITION BOOTHS

TheMHS hires enough space for catering and for setting up exhibition spaces and displays.

Commercial and government/non-government organisations may hire exhibition spaces in order to exhibit their products and services to delegates. The booking consists of a walled shell scheme booth, a table, and chair. However, exhibitors are encouraged to create an inviting, innovative space with custom furniture and interactive activities/giveaways. All exhibition space booking enquiries should be directed to TheMHS office.

Exhibition spaces are available for the following days of the conference: Pre-Conference Day (Tue) only, Conference Days only (Wed-Fri) and full 4 Day display (Tue-Fri). Prices are quoted on a daily basis and pricing categories are dependent on the size and type of organisation/company that applies. The pricing categories are:

- ✓ Corporate & commercial,
 - ✓ Government agencies, medium & large not-for-profits & small for-profits,
 - ✓ Community & small not-for-profits
- TheMHS offers a **GREATLY** discounted rate for community & small not-for-profits.
 - TheMHS office produces a listing of all exhibition applicants and their requirements.
 - TheMHS office in conjunction with the venue and exhibition management company, organises the floor plan for these booths. A copy can be sent to the Local Committee for information if required.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

- TheMHS office administers the conference throughout the year. All phone and email enquiries are handled through TheMHS office. TheMHS office, hires temporary staff immediately prior to and during the conference if needed.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATION

- TheMHS engages an accommodation broker, currently Ozaccom+, to manage hotel reservations for conference delegates. See further information under "accommodation".

INCIDENTALS

Incidentals include:

- Flowers - for the stage area in plenary hall especially for Awards Ceremony, within the agreed working budget. This is arranged by TheMHS office.
- Gifts to keynote speakers – the **Local Committee** may wish to give a gift to keynote/invited speakers. This must be contained within the agreed working budget and discussed with the Conference Director.
- Decorations – the **Local Committee** may organise decorations, but this must be within the agreed working budget. Some years there will be very little money available for this.

INDIGENOUS PROTOCOLS

- TheMHS Board acknowledges the original owners of the lands on which the conference is held and endeavours to be sensitive to indigenous issues throughout the entire conference and its planning.
- TheMHS Board strongly encourages **Local Committee** to include indigenous people and indigenous issues in the planning and running of the conference to ensure that indigenous people have an active role in the entire conference.

In Australia:

- Chairpeople/speakers should acknowledge the traditional owners of the land with these words:
 “I acknowledge the *Wangal* People of the *Eora* Nation as the traditional owners of the land on which I live and work and also the traditional owners of the lands in the location that our annual conference takes place across **Australia and New Zealand**”. Please use the names of the local people for the land on which the venue stands.

In New Zealand:

- Welcoming protocols may be practiced through the process of Pōwhiri – a formal welcome that normally takes place on a Marae. A Pōwhiri can take between 30 minutes to 2-3 hours depending on the importance of the event.
- The Pōwhiri can be daunting to visitors and can be fraught with traps that may offend. It is therefore advisable to seek the assistance of a Māori advisor.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' FORUM

- An Indigenous People's *pre-conference* Forum is organised where there is a local interest and where funding is available. If there is to be an Indigenous Forum, it is a requirement that there is an Indigenous Forum Sub-Committee to organise this event.
- The Convenor of the Indigenous Forum must be a member of the main **Local Committee**.
- The Convenor will meet regularly with a number of other people who form the Indigenous Forum Sub-Committee. It is best to start meeting 12 months prior to the conference.
- The Conference Director provides the **Local Committee** with a proposed budget for the Indigenous Forum 6 months before the conference.
- The Commonwealth Government has so far been funding the Indigenous Forum, which enables the Forum to run at greatly reduced registration fees for participants. TheMHS applies for these funds each year and the Commonwealth Government reviews the application. The Indigenous Forum Sub-Committee must keep the Local Committee and the Conference Director informed of their planned program, to ensure there are no unanticipated costs that could lead to a budget overrun and to ensure smooth running on the day. There is no funding for invited speakers.
- The Forum must aim to be cost neutral to the 3 day conference. The Local Committee may wish to offer suggestions for additional funding, if necessary.
- If Commonwealth Government funds are not available it may be necessary to apply for other funding for the Indigenous Forum, or find ways of dramatically reducing the costs of the Indigenous Forum, e.g. not supplying lunch, or reducing the whole day to half a day so that the only catering cost incurred is morning tea.
- The Indigenous Forum Sub-Committee provides the Conference Director with: the day's program; audio-visual requirements; names of presenters; any other special requirements a minimum of one month prior to the conference.
- TheMHS office receives all registrations for this forum and supplies catering numbers and audio-visual requirements to the venue.
- The number of presenters at the Forum should not exceed ten (10). Presentations should be relevant to the theme of the annual conference and the topic of the Forum. Presenters receive complimentary registration for the day of the Forum, but do not receive fees or expenses. Funding from government allows for catering, audio-visuals and hire of one room. However, one extra room may be available for concurrent sessions.
- **Program Guidelines.** The program/theme of the Indigenous Forum should relate to the overall conference theme/title, remembering that this is a national and bi-national Forum, as well as a showcase for local issues. The Forum should have a maximum of 2 breakout spaces (i.e. 2 rooms in total), but this will depend on funding and space availability. The Conference Director is to be kept informed over the year/s of the development of the program.
- **TheMHS office will print the day's program** in the Conference Handbook.
- Also refer to section: PRE - CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS AND FORUMS: GENERAL INFORMATION & *Information Sheets C3 & P1*.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

- The **Local Committee** is responsible for choosing the keynote speakers. In choosing these speakers the **Local Committee** must be guided by the aims and guiding principles of TheMHS and the range of stakeholders. Each keynote speaker should be able to provide an inspiring paper that addresses the theme of the conference. *(See Information Sheet K1)*
- There must be at least one Consumer Keynote Speaker and it is preferable if there is representation from both sexes and from a range of professional backgrounds.
- When choosing keynotes the **Local Committee** must keep within the agreed amount for this item in the working budget. The Conference Director assists the **Local Committee** with this task.
- The **Local Committee** supplies the proposed keynote/invited speaker list to TheMHS Board **prior** to any commitment being made to the proposed speaker.
- TheMHS Board reserves the right to comment and/or make changes to this list of proposed speakers or to veto a speaker.
- Initial contact with the speakers is made by the **Local Committee**. This is to confirm their willingness to participate and the topic of their talk.
- The Conference Director then writes to the speakers with a formal offer of invitation to become a keynote/invited speaker. This will include an agreement to be signed by the speaker and will give details about TheMHS standard offer to speakers.
- Keynote speakers who live in the city in which the conference is being held are also offered accommodation in the conference hotel if required, and a per diem to cover expenses.
- Keynote speakers are expected to submit their keynote address for the electronic Book of Proceedings.
- For a sample letter that included Guidelines to Keynote Speakers, *see Information Sheets K2 & K3.*

Keynote Speaker Support

- Usually the **Local Committee** nominates one committee member to be the contact or support person for each keynote speaker. These **Local Committee** members may contact the speakers initially to invite them to present and should continue communication with the keynote speakers about the topic of their talk and how it fits into the overall program. Close to the time of the conference, these **Local Committee** members may be required to help the keynote speaker feel welcome and supported (e.g. pick them up from the airport, arrange for them to have dinner when they arrive etc.)
- TheMHS office arranges the **speaker's** airfares, accommodation and per diem. Guidelines for Keynote/Invited Speakers are sent out by TheMHS office. *(See Information Sheet K3)*

TheMHS standard offer to keynote/invited speakers is:

- 1 economy return fare (if required)
- Hotel accommodation for the night before the speaking engagement through to the last night of the conference if required. The cost of hotel accommodation is not transferable into cash. Hotel accommodation covers room and 1x breakfast.

No other meals, mini bar consumption or any other personal expenses are paid by TheMHS.

- Per Diem of \$250 per day of attendance at the 3 day conference. This covers taxi fares and an evening meal.

LAUNCHES during the conference– *(See Social/Special/Associated Events)*

MONITORS/USHERS DURING CONFERENCE

- Monitors & ushers assist the organisers of the conference with a number of tasks to enable the smooth running of the day to day activities of the conference. TheMHS office organises paid personnel from a reputable agency to carry out these tasks.
- The **Local Committee** may be asked to assist with monitors/ushers tasks at the conference.
- The Events Manager organises the rosters of personnel, **Local Committee** and other volunteers.
- Monitoring consists of checking that all the people going into the session (presenters, chair people and audience) are wearing **name tags**. Name tags must be current for that day. Anyone without a current name tag is not to be admitted to the session. They are requested to put on their current name tag, otherwise to go to the Registration Desk. If the person(s) won't leave, inform the Registration Desk. Name tags are delegates' **entry pass to the sessions**.
- Monitors are supplied with an orientation kit consisting of a conference satchel, floor plan, Conference Handbook and a list of duties. *(See Information Sheet M1)*

NAMES AND NAME TAGS

- TheMHS office produces name tags for every person registered for the conference, as well as all the complimentary/concessional people, sponsors, media, and monitors/personnel.
- The name tag is also the ticket of entry into the conference which will be clearly outlined to delegates in the final delegate letter which is emailed the week prior to the conference, in the Conference Handbook and via signs posted at the conference registration desk.

PHONE CALLS AND PHOTOCOPIER AT VENUE

Photocopying during the conference

- Photocopying is usually available in the business centre of the venue.

Phone, Fax and Internet use during the conference

- Conference delegates must not use the phone/internet at the Registration Desk or conference office, unless in the event of an emergency.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Hiring of Photographer

- The Photographer is engaged primarily to take photos of TheMHS Achievement Awards Ceremony, which includes a visiting dignitary presenting the Awards, as well as the Awards Ambassador for that year.
- The Conference Director and the Chair of the Achievement Awards will instruct the photographer with regard to his/her role at the Achievement Awards Ceremony.
- TheMHS Conference Director will appoint and arrange payment of the photographer. A fee of approx. \$AUD500 + GST will be paid to the photographer to cover his/her time during the Achievement Awards Ceremony.
- *See Information Sheet P3.*

Photographer's Duties

- Arrive at the Convention Centre at 8.30am to take photos until approximately 11.30am.
- Attend Opening Ceremony (which includes the Achievement Awards Presentation) on the first morning (Wednesday) of the main conference from 8.30am to approximately 11.30am. The combined Opening and Awards ceremony usually takes about 60 mins, with more photographs taken during the special morning tea for award winners afterwards.
- Take photographs of Award recipients as they receive their awards from the Minister or dignitary during the Opening Ceremony. This section of the Opening Ceremony usually lasts for approximately 30 – 45 minutes. There are approximately 15 - 20 groups of award winners who will receive their prize or certificate during this time. These will range from individuals to groups of up to 6 people.
- Ensure photos from the Awards presentations available for viewing the following day on photographer's website, or via TheMHS. TheMHS can provide copies of these to Awards recipients.
- A copy of all photos is to be supplied to TheMHS Learning Network for our records.

PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS AND FORUMS: GENERAL INFORMATION

Pre-Conference Forums – Consumer/Carer/Whānau/Indigenous

The Forums and Workshops are not mini conferences in themselves.

- A number of pre-conference forums are organised if there is enough interest and if there is a local group willing to work with the **Local Committee**.
- The whole idea of the forums is that they are run for people who are attending the conference as a way of getting certain groups together prior to the conference to discuss and exchange views/information of mutual benefit.
- **A forum** (which is different from a workshop) is entrusted to a sub-committee of the **Local Committee**. This sub-committee is responsible for organising the program for a day (or half day) which is of current interest to the special interest group (e.g. consumers, carers/families/whānau, indigenous peoples). It should be noted that the audience of the forum will include delegates who are new to TheMHS and conferences generally, as well as delegates who have attended

many TheMHS forums, so the forum program must try to cover general and in-depth topics.

- The **Local Committee** decide which forums are to be organised on the pre-conference day in consultation with TheMHS Board and within the guidelines set out in the relevant sections of this INFORMATION KIT (See pg. 10 and *Information Sheet C3*).
- For every pre-conference forum there must be an organising committee who will develop the program for the day. A member of the pre-conference forum committee(s) sits on the main **Local Committee** (for more information see Consumer Forum, Carer/Family/Whānau Forum, Indigenous Forum – pg. 10, 15-16, 19, 23).
- The pre-conference forum organising committee provides TheMHS Board with: the day's program; audio-visual requirements; names of presenters; any other special requirements.
- TheMHS office receives all registrations for these forums and supplies catering numbers and audio-visual requirements to the venue.

Pre-Conference Workshops

- TheMHS Board organises the pre-conference workshops. **The Local Committee** is invited to put forward suggestions and ideas, however TheMHS Board reserves the right to make the final selection of pre-conference workshops, for quality and financial reasons.
- The workshop must be self-funding and should aim to make a slight surplus. TheMHS Board provides a budget and sets the fee for registration.
- Workshops must have clear educational objectives.
- The Workshop Convenor must provide TheMHS Board with: the day's program; audio-visual requirements; names of presenters; any other special requirements.
- *See Information Sheets P1 & A6.*

Advertising the Workshop or Forum

- Information about the forum or workshop must be available on TheMHS website by the time the Registration Brochure is ready for posting. Information for advertising the Forums or Workshops must be received by TheMHS office according to the timeline supplied. If extra advertising is agreed, then the selected mailing list is supplied to TheMHS office for emailing.

PRINTING – Also See Publicity and Marketing

- TheMHS office arranges all printing.
- All brochures, leaflets are printed by the printer nominated by TheMHS office.
- If the **Local Committee** requires any local printing, (e.g. 'Welcome to My City' brochure for insertion into the conference satchel) this should be agreed with TheMHS office before proceeding.

PRESENTERS

- After the abstract review meeting, when abstracts are accepted for the program, TheMHS office notifies via email the nominated contact person (as signified on

Call for Abstracts application form) using TheMHS standard “letter to presenters”.

- This letter confirms details of: Contact Person/First Author, Other Authors, Title of Presentation, Type of Presentation, Day, Time, Venue of Presentation, Audio Visual Requirements, and includes ‘Case Study/Vignette Consent’. It also gives other details relevant to their presentation as set out in “Presenters Guidelines for TheMHS Conference”. *(See Information Sheet G1).*
- The Review Committee may offer a different format or time than requested by the presenter.
- Letters of acceptance/non acceptance of papers are sent by TheMHS office. It may take up to 2 weeks for the data entry to be completed and the email notification to be prepared following the abstract review meeting.
- All presenters are requested to submit their paper for the online Book of Proceedings. Submission Guidelines can be viewed on TheMHS website.
- **All presenters** must register and pay for at least the day on which they are presenting at the conference. The only exceptions are listed under complimentary registrations.

PROGRAM

SEE INFORMATION SHEET P2 FOR PROGRAM DESIGN DETAILS

- The **Local Committee** is responsible for the conference theme, keynote speaker topics, reviewing abstracts, and, in conjunction with TheMHS Board, for the development of the program.
- The **Convenor of the Local Program Committee** is the main liaison person for the program between the **Local Committee** and TheMHS Board. This may be the Conference Convenor, however, usually there is a separate **Program Convenor**.
- In addition, a member of TheMHS Board is an advisor to, and a member of the **Local Committee**. This person brings a number of years of experience of TheMHS program design, to the **Local Committee**.
- The number of presentation timeslots (sessions) is set by the Conference Director, but changes may be negotiated by the **Local Committee**.

Structure & Design of Program

Usual presentation formats for the conference program are:

- ✓ Papers
 - ✓ Snapshots (brief papers)
 - ✓ Symposia (including featured symposia)
 - ✓ Workshops
 - ✓ e-Posters
 - ✓ Debates
 - ✓ Keynote speakers plenary session
 - ✓ Roundtable discussions (small sessions of guided discussions)
- The **Local Committee** is encouraged to innovate, but must negotiate changes to the presentation formats with TheMHS Board before making any promises to potential speakers.

- Within this context, the presentation formats advertised in the Call for Abstracts must be adhered to, i.e. what is advertised is what is available in the program.
- A standard program shell is supplied to the **Local Committee**. The program shell sets out the times of sessions, the number of rooms, and morning and afternoon tea breaks for each day of the main 3-day conference.
- The number of concurrent sessions will depend upon the anticipated number of delegates, number of abstracts received, the quality of abstracts received and the number of break-out rooms available in the particular conference venue. Usually there are 10 concurrent sessions.
- The program shell provides for 3 plenary sessions. TheMHS budget only provides for 3 keynote speakers. Possible additional keynote or invited speakers must be negotiated with the Conference Director.
- When scheduling plenary sessions (i.e. keynote speakers) where the main auditorium needs to be set up and/or dismantled into smaller breakout spaces, time must be allowed in the program for this – i.e. during a tea break or lunch time.
- Sessions should be allocated to the available rooms/spaces at the time of constructing/designing the program, i.e. at the time of accepting the papers. Decisions about which session to allocate to which room is done on the basis of past and current interest in the session topics. It is always hard to predict how popular a session will be however, it needs to be done at this stage as presenters are given the session time, date and venue in their letter of acceptance.

Abstract Review and Programming – *See Information Sheet P2*

- Once abstracts are received from TheMHS office, the **Local Program Committee** (including TheMHS Liaison) review them via the online Reviewers Portal (*See Information Sheet R1*). Quite often abstracts are submitted a week or so after the nominated deadline.
- **The Local Program Committee, TheMHS Liaison and Conference Director** decide which abstracts to accept and where papers are allocated within the Program. Abstracts are grouped together to make coherent sessions and then each session is given a preliminary title.
- The current “Program Design” information (*See Information Sheet P2*) is supplied by the Conference Director to the Program Convenor.
- A program meeting is organised for a 2 day period at the middle to end of April. TheMHS Liaison and Conference Director travel to the local city to take part in the meeting and assist with the review and selection of abstracts. It is essential to hold this meeting at this time of year in order to be able to notify presenters so they can book their airfares and to be able to include some program information in the Registration Brochure and other promotional media.
- TheMHS Conference Director takes back to the TheMHS office, a master list of the status of each abstract – whether accepted, rejected, or waitlisted, so that letters can be emailed as soon as possible.
- TheMHS Board reserves the right to negotiate with the **Local Committee**, for the inclusion of presenters whose abstracts might not have been accepted. This may be because the person is senior in their local mental health area or may have particular skills/expertise that are not evident in their abstract but which may be known by members of TheMHS Board, from previous years. A check

needs to be made against the current year's Achievement Award winners list to ensure that any winners were not declined as presenters especially if their paper is about the award winning program.

- TheMHS office sends out acceptance emails to people who have had their abstracts accepted by the **Local Program Committee**. TheMHS Guidelines for Presenters (*See Information Sheet G1*) are emailed with the standard letter to presenters.
- Inevitably some presenters will withdraw from the conference or will request a change of day or time of presentation. Options for handling these vacancies are as follows:
 - Abstracts of papers that were placed on the waiting list can be moved into the vacant paper slots
 - Abstracts of workshops/symposia that were placed on the waiting list can be moved into vacant workshop/symposium slots.
- This process is to be negotiated between the Conference Director and the **Local Committee** Program Convenor.
- The program is posted on the website as soon as it is ready.
- All abstracts that have been accepted are available electronically via the online program on TheMHS website.
- TheMHS office arranges the printing of the program with the Conference Handbook. The Conference Handbook may be included in the packed satchels or may be sent to the conference venue along with other conference materials. This depends upon when the final version is produced.

Meetings / Associated Events / Communities of Interest

There is a designated session available for Communities of Interests, Meetings of Group, Association, Society, Organisation or College usually held Thursday at 5.15 - 6.30pm. Application Form (*See Information Sheet A2*).

Opening/Award Ceremony and Closing Ceremony

- TheMHS Awards for Service to Mental Health & TheMHS Mental Health Media Awards are presented during the conference **Opening Ceremony**.
- It is traditional to include an Indigenous person or group, in the conference Opening Ceremony to welcome conference delegates and in the Closing Ceremony to farewell delegates. (See Indigenous Protocols, P.22 for Australian Indigenous Greeting). When in New Zealand, Maori protocols need to be adhered to. The conference **Closing Ceremony** is an opportunity to draw together the conference strands and issues raised. This is also a time to acknowledge those who have contributed, organised and attended the conference.
- Entertainment and/or a closing address can be included in the closing ceremony, but details of entertainment must be given to the Conference Director a minimum of 6 weeks prior, as well as subsequent changes.
- Traditionally the conference Closing Ceremony includes the ritual of handing the TheMHS Banner (and the Aboriginal Message Stick) from the present **Local Committee** to the next year's **Local Committee**.
- TheMHS Conference is an Australian *and* New Zealand conference and this mixture of cultures should be reflected in the Opening and Closing Ceremonies.

- The Conference Director develops a running sheet for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies in conjunction with the **Local Committee**. This running sheet is used by the Conference Director, **Local Committee** and venue to ensure that everyone involved knows the sequence of proceedings for the ceremonies.

PUBLICITY, MARKETING, MEDIA

- TheMHS Board employs a part-time Development and Communications Manager. This person co-ordinates all media coverage associated with the conference.
- The Chair of the Achievement Awards (a member of TheMHS Board) briefs the Publicity Consultant and Communications Manager about media coverage for the Achievement Awards.
- The aim of any media coverage is to promote good news about mental health and mental illness. In an effort to gain as much publicity as possible the **Local Committee** and TheMHS Board should liaise early with the publicist particularly in relation to the work of the keynote speakers who might attract media interest, and in relation to any special events that might attract interest.
- The Development and Communications Manager co-ordinates all media (print, broadcast, etc.) during and prior to the conference. He/she can also work with the **Local Committee** and its media strategy prior to the conference. The Development and Communications Manager manages publicity about the conference for professional journals/newsletters and NGO newsletters; liaises with Sponsors and Exhibitors prior to, during and post conference.

PUBLICATIONS

List of Publications

1. Call for Abstracts and Registration Brochure

These brochures have a standard format, and are produced and posted by TheMHS office in Sydney (see "*Call for Abstracts Brochure*" and "*Registration Brochure*" below). Additionally an electronic version of brochures is available on TheMHS website.

2. Program

The detailed program is produced approximately 4 weeks prior to the conference, to ensure that it is as current as possible. This is included in the Conference Handbook.

3. Book of Proceedings

This book is published as an online publication after the annual conference. The proceedings are reviewed and selected by a committee including members of TheMHS Board, **Local Committee** and previous conference committees. This can be purchased online at TheMHS website via the Resource Library.

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS BROCHURE

- This is a standard brochure produced and distributed by TheMHS office.
- It is usually a 2 page, A4 size brochure, folded to DL with 4 colour process printing.
- The standard information includes conference details such as venue, dates and theme, keynote speaker name, photo and role, some thematic questions to prompt people when preparing their abstract, available presentation types, submission deadline and direction to submit via TheMHS website.
- The **Program Convenor** supplies the Conference Director with thematic questions, confirmation of presentation types and confirmation of keynotes.
- Information for the Call for Abstracts Brochure must be sent by the **Local Committee** to the Conference Director for inclusion in the brochure according to the timelines supplied. *(See Information Sheets L2 & L3)*
- The Communication Coordinator sends the text to the graphic artist for design.
- The Communication and Development Manager sends the draft text and the draft of the brochure design to the **Local Committee** for review and suggestions/approval.
- TheMHS office arranges the printing and postage of the Call for Abstracts brochure according to the timeline. *(See Information Sheets L2 & L3)*

REGISTRATION BROCHURE

- This is a standard brochure produced and distributed by TheMHS office.
- It is usually a 2 page, A4 size brochure, folded to DL with 4 colour process printing.
- The standard information includes conference details such as venue, dates and theme, program highlights, keynote speaker information, registration URL, sponsor logos and special commissioned/invited symposia.
- The **Local Committee** supplies the Conference Director with information about the program, themes, program highlights, pre-conference forums and workshops, social events and any other local tourist highlights.
- Information for the Registration Brochure must be sent by the **Local Committee** to the Conference Director for inclusion in the brochure according to the timelines supplied. *(See Information Sheets L2 & L3)*
- The Communications Coordinator sends the text to the graphic artist for design.
- The Communication and Development Manager sends the draft text and the draft of the brochure design to the **Local Committee** for review and suggestions/approval.
- TheMHS office arranges the printing and postage of the Registration Brochure according to the timeline. *(See Information Sheets L2 & L3)*

REGISTRATION PROCESS

Prior to the Conference

- Delegates wishing to attend TheMHS Conference register online via TheMHS website.

- TheMHS office deals with any enquiries, refunds, or problems associated with registration. TheMHS office emails tax invoices and confirmation of registration letters to delegates (once payment has been received).
- Updates of registration numbers are supplied to the **Local Committee** as required.
- Name tags for all delegates (including committee, monitors, sponsors, etc.) will be produced by TheMHS office, one week prior to the conference.
- Complimentary and concession registrations – see pg.17-19.

At the Conference

- The Events Manager is responsible for all matters related to registrations and the Registration Desk.
- The Registration Desk at the conference is staffed by TheMHS staff as well as assistants from a reputable personnel agency or the venue.
- All new registrations at the conference are managed by TheMHS staff.
- Members from the **Local Committee** may be asked to assist at the Registration Desk to ensure the smooth running of the registration process.

REGISTRATION DESK

- The Registration Desk is set up the night or day before the pre-conference day.
- Equipment needed at the desk includes:
 - Computer, printer, telephone, photocopier (cost dependant), stationery
 - One double-sided display board for messages for delegates, for display of Daily Program, Chairpersons and Program Changes
 - Tables for delegates to collect their satchel from.
- TheMHS staff are responsible for setting up the Registration Desk.
- TheMHS office supplies at least 3 paid staff to work throughout the 4 days of the conference. Extra personnel are employed to assist at busy times with registrations however, the **Local Committee** may be asked to provide extra assistance. *(See Information Sheet M1)*
- The Events Manager deals with any problems in regard to unpaid registrations, lost name tags, requests for refunds, media passes, etc.

Information Table

- An information table may be set up separately from the Registration Desk. This depends upon the geography of the conference venue. TheMHS staff will be responsible for this table. Delegates may display their own leaflets on this table upon approval from the Events Manager/Conference Director.

SATCHELS

- TheMHS office obtains quotes and samples of satchels.
- TheMHS office organises the purchase of satchels. Usually a good quality lightweight bag is chosen. The **Local Committee** can request a specific type of satchel but the final decision on the type of bag is often a financial one.
- TheMHS office arranges the production and payment to the manufacturers and organises delivery of the satchels to the packers.

- TheMHS office arranges the packing of these satchels. Packing is often done by a local social enterprise or by another group nominated by either TheMHS office or **Local Committee**.
- Satchel packing is paid for by TheMHS office - this usually costs around \$1,000 for the whole job.
- TheMHS office ensures that the satchels are sent to the nominated packers three weeks before the conference.

Satchel Inserts

- Any requests by individuals or organisations to put inserts into the satchels must be arranged through TheMHS office.
- Inserts are charged at the rate set out in the TheMHS Sponsorship Prospectus.
- The **Local Committee** satchel inserts may include: welcome from the **Local Committee**; plus local city maps, lists of restaurants, and other items of local interest. However, it is preferable that general tourist information is made available on the information table at the Convention Centre and is not inserted into satchels.
- Any enquiries about satchel inserts received by the **Local Committee** must be referred to TheMHS office.
- All satchel inserts must be supplied to the satchel packers by the deadline supplied by TheMHS Communications Coordinator.

SIGNS

Directional and Room Signage

- TheMHS office arranges necessary signage with the venue.

General Conference Signage

- These include signs for Registration Desk, Message Board, Daily Program, Program Changes, List of Chair people, Audio/Video taping in progress and other relevant signs. TheMHS office is responsible for producing these signs.
- If the **Local Committee** has any requests for specific signs, these can be arranged through TheMHS office in advance.
- Most venues have electronic signage outside each room, outlining the sessions in that room for each day.

SOCIAL / SPECIAL / ASSOCIATED EVENTS

- TheMHS Board reserves the right to veto the planning of any social / special / associated event which, if it came to fruition, would result in a financial loss for TheMHS.
- From previous experience, evening social events (except Welcome Reception and film screenings) are not well attended.

Evening Social Events

Some "Rules of Thumb"

- The conference Welcome Reception takes place on the first night of the main 3 day conference program (i.e. **not** the night of the pre-conference day).

- No social events are to be scheduled during the conference daytime program whether this is pre-conference day or the main 3 day conference.
- TheMHS does not organise a program for accompanying persons.
- The cost of social events must be kept to a minimum. For example, if a dinner is planned, it should take place in a venue where the total cost of the dinner is less than \$60. In this example, drinks may be purchased via a cash bar, on top of the \$60 cost of dinner.
- When arranging social events, take care about where the event is situated. If the venue is more than a few **minutes' walk** from the conference venue, then transport may be required and this will add to the cost of the event.

Special Events & Entertainment

- Special events within the opening ceremony and closing ceremony, and entertainment can be organised by the **Local Committee**, to culturally enrich the conference program, *see Opening and Closing Ceremonies*.
- There is a budget for entertainment within the conference. The total budget for entertainment must not be exceeded. When planning entertainment please consult the Conference Director, who will advise on hidden or unseen costs.
- Other events, e.g. Art Exhibition (*See Information Sheet S2*)

Associated Events

- Associated events include site visits on the pre-conference day, other conferences, seminars or meetings before, during or after the main 3 day conference. These events must be designed to enhance the main conference, not to **take away "customers"** from the main conference. Please consult the Conference Director before agreeing to any of these ideas.

Art Exhibition Specs and Costs (*See Information Sheet S2*)

Launches (Book, video, program, policy) (*See Information Sheet A4*)

- Any enquiries for launches should be referred to the Conference Director or Development and Communications Manager.
- All launches are arranged from TheMHS office.
- The Conference Director will liaise with the **Local Committee's** Convenor for suitable timing within the main conference program.

SYMPOSIA (FEATURED SYMPOSIA)

- Featured Symposia aim to raise current issues and matters that are at the forefront of mental health service interest, to explore controversial topics and to examine and disseminate current research in mental health and to provide a more in-depth investigation of topics.
- TheMHS Board is responsible for organising up to 3 Featured Symposia during the 3 day conference and the **Local Committee** is invited to organise up to 3 Featured Symposia.
- Additionally TheMHS Board may ask members of the TheMHS Network to convene and organise a Featured Symposium. Examples of past Featured Symposia are: Human Rights and Mental Health for Detainees; Recovery and

Mental Health. The final selection of Featured Symposia remains the responsibility of the TheMHS Board.

- The **Local Committee** and TheMHS Board, must allocate a contact person/organiser (from their committee) for each of their Featured Symposia. This person will organise speakers and a Convenor or Chair for the session (which may be the contact person or another person).
- Topics and speakers for the Featured Symposia must be confirmed by the time the information is required for the Registration Brochure to go to print. For each symposium the contact person must provide the Conference Director with a title, a brief paragraph to summarise the content, and the names and affiliations of the speakers for inclusion in the online program.
- Presenters in the symposium pay a registration fee in the usual way. See section on complimentary registrations for information on providing assistance where necessary. (*See Information Sheets A5, S4 & S5*)

SPONSORSHIP

- TheMHS Board determines sponsorship levels and packages and sets any conditions that need to be met by sponsors.
- TheMHS office prepares the Sponsorship and Exhibition Prospectus and emails to potential sponsors in the October prior to the conference, with follow up emails in the following February.
- TheMHS office can supply the **Local Committee** with a list of the potential sponsors who are being approached by TheMHS Board/TheMHS Staff.
- The **Local Committee** is welcome to suggest other potential sponsors for TheMHS Communications and Development Manager to approach. This is to avoid any embarrassment by duplication of efforts to obtain sponsorship.
- Sponsorship information is available on TheMHS website.
- Sponsorship opportunities include:
 - Gold, Silver, NGO and Networking Sponsor Packages
 - Exhibition Space
 - Satchel Inserts
 - E-Poster Advertisements
 - Pens & Notepads

VENUE

- TheMHS office contracts the venue and is responsible for any dealings with this venue.
- Any enquiries from the venue directed to the **Local Committee** must be referred to the Conference Director/Events Manager.
- The Conference Director and Events Manager visit the venue, with the Convenor of the **Local Committee**, usually in November prior to the conference.
- The **Local Committee** needs to be familiar with the venue in order to plan the program and social events.
- The Events Manager pays the deposit(s) for the venue and all ensuing accounts. The deposit is paid 2-3 years in advance.

- The Conference Director prepares running sheets for Opening and Closing Ceremonies and Welcome Reception in consultation with the **Local Committee**. *(See Information Sheet S3)*
- TheMHS office communicates with the venue in regard to the running sheets for the entire four day event. A copy of this information can be supplied, if required, to the **Local Committee** for comments approximately two weeks before the conference.
- A meeting is organised between the venue, TheMHS staff and if requested, the **Local Committee** on the day before the pre-conference day.

WEBSITE

- TheMHS website is: www.themhs.org
- TheMHS office maintains current and historical information about the conference on the website. Relevant conference information is posted on the website to promote the conference and information bulletins and program outlines are posted at regular intervals and can be readily downloaded.
- The **Local Committee** is encouraged to provide TheMHS with any information about the current conference that they consider suitable for the website.
- TheMHS website provides online registration and submission of abstracts, using the conference organising computer program called EventsAIR.
- TheMHS online Resource Library is available to conference attendees for one year complimentary.

INFORMATION SHEETS (AVAILABLE ON [WEBSITE](#))

Information Sheet A1 – Conference Acceptance Form
Information Sheet A2 – Application for Meetings
Information Sheet A3 – Application for Media Pass
Information Sheet A4 – Application for Launch of Product/Service
Information Sheet A5 – Featured Symposium Application
Information Sheet A6 – Pre-Conference Workshop Detail
Information Sheet C1 – Chairpersons Duties
Information Sheet C2 – Chairpersons Invitation Letter
Information Sheet C3 – Pre-Conference Forum Guidelines
Information Sheet C4 – Guidelines for Writing a Paragraph for Pre-Conference
Forums
Information Sheet G1 – Presenters Guidelines for TheMHS Conference
Information Sheet G2 – Guidelines for the Submission of Abstracts to TheMHS
Conference
Information Sheet K1 – Keynote Speaker Criteria
Information Sheet K2 – Keynote Speaker Confirmation Email
Information Sheet K3 – Keynote Speaker Confirmation Letter
Information Sheet L1 – Initial Information for Local Committee
Information Sheet L2 – Conference Timeline & Tasks
Information Sheet L3 – Local Committee Timeline by Job
Information Sheet L4 – Local Committee Chairpersons
Information Sheet L5 – Letter to Manager, Local MH Service
Information Sheet M1 – Monitor/Usher Duties
Information Sheet P1 – General Info About Workshops & Forums
Information Sheet P2 – Program Design & Abstract Review
Information Sheet P3 – Photographer Specifications
Information Sheet R1 – Electronic Review Instructions
Information Sheet R2 – E-Poster Preparation Guidelines
Information Sheet S1 – Satchel Packing Quote
Information Sheet S2 – Art Exhibition Specs & Costs
Information Sheet S3 – Sample Running Sheet
Information Sheet S4 – Featured Symposia Information for Organisers
Information Sheet S5 – Featured Symposia Information for Speakers
Information Sheet T1 – Groups Involved in TheMHS Conference
Information Sheet T2 – Conference Connections Terms of Reference