



# Resilient Places Project

## Report on consultation



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# Resilient Places Project

## Project background

The Queensland Alliance for Mental Health has been funded by the Queensland Department of Communities to provide sector development workers in 3 parts of Qld recovering from last Summer's disasters.

### What is the Resilient Places Project funding for?

- The Alliance has received funding until 30 June 2013.
- The funding will locate sector development workers in 3 parts of Qld to help co-ordinate mental health services and responses.
- This funding complements other recovery responses.

### Which communities will the Resilient Places Project work in?

- ✓ Ipswich and the Lockyer Valley (the equivalent of one full time worker).
- ✓ Toowoomba, Dalby, Chinchilla and Roma (the equivalent of one full time worker).
- ✓ The Cassowary Coast, Atherton, Ingham and surrounding communities (the equivalent of two full time workers).



# Resilient Places Project

## Consultation approach & process

### Consultation approach

The Queensland Alliance for Mental Health (the Alliance) wants to ensure that the Resilient Places Project is well planned & effectively linked to both existing responses in the mental health sector & to disaster recovery in each part of the state for which there is funding. Consultation for the project, development of recommendations for a model in each location & preparation of this report was undertaken by Karen Wing from KW Consulting Group Pty Ltd for the Alliance. This report summarises the consultation process & feedback from those who participated.

The Alliance set out a number of objectives prior to commencement of consultation on the Resilient Places Project:

- Consultation will help develop a project model that best fits circumstances in each part of the State;
- Linkages with other disaster recovery initiatives are critical to the project's success;
- Locating the project well in relation to other mental health initiatives & services is important;
- The Alliance is seeking partnerships with other local or regional organisations to better implement the project;
- The Alliance has some priority linkages it wishes to ensure are established as part of the project including with Local Governments' Community Development Officers, divisions of general practice & Queensland Health service integration work;
- The Alliance wishes to explore options with other agencies such as partnership & co-location rather than direct subcontracting arrangements; &
- The Alliance wants to optimise funding resources by sharing accommodation & office resources where possible.



# Resilient Places Project

## Consultation approach & process

### Consultation process

- Initial discussion was held with key statewide stakeholders including Local Government Association of Queensland, General Practice Queensland & UnitingCare Community (previously Lifeline).
- This discussion provided feedback about how these organisations could link with the work & how their regional networks could participate in consultation.
- Initial contact was made with key stakeholders in the mental health field in each part of the state funding covers.
- Locations for consultation were identified.
- A consultation meeting was held in each identified location.
- Most meetings utilised existing interagency forums.

### Locations of consultation meetings

- ✓ Toowoomba
- ✓ Innisfail
- ✓ Tully
- ✓ Ingham
- ✓ Ipswich
- ✓ Chinchilla
- ✓ Gatton

# Resilient Places Project

## Questions & issues discussed at consultation meetings

The following questions & issues were discussed with organisations from the mental health sector & other community & government organisations in each location.

- ✓ What sector development work would improve your mental health sector?
- ✓ How best can mental health services be coordinated in your location?
- ✓ Which towns could worker(s) be located in?
- ✓ Local services' views about how best to make the project work effectively
- ✓ Identifying the best approach/model for employing sector development worker(s) for the 3 parts of Qld
- ✓ Options for co-location of workers with other agencies
- ✓ Potential partnerships
- ✓ Important linkages
- ✓ How location of existing mental health services helps determine the best model

# Resilient Places Project

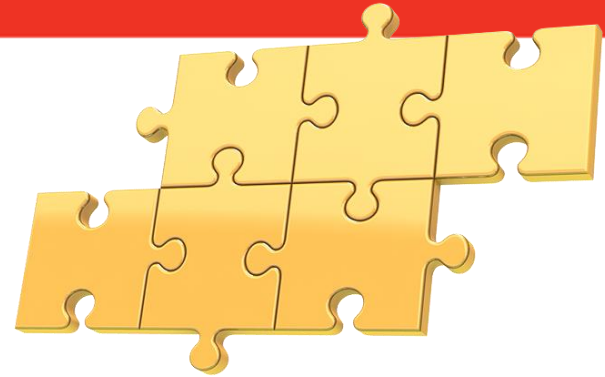
## Views on potential sector development tasks

Sector development tasks commonly discussed at consultation meetings included:

1. **Establishing &/or servicing networks of mental health service providers.** Ideas included establishing networks where there are none, providing networks with secretariat & other support & resourcing networks to help improve service delivery. Comments in this area included:
  - ❖ “We are really committed to our interagency network but it is hard to keep it going because we are all funded for direct service delivery only.”
2. **Information provision on mental health services.** Comments included:
  - ❖ “People in this area don’t know about training that’s on or other things that are happening in our area”.
  - ❖ “General practitioners are not always aware of what community sector agencies can offer to people with mental health problems in our town & making better information available would help with this.”
3. Making sure there is good **co-ordination between new disaster recovery mental health services** was identified as an important sector development task for the Resilient Places Project’s workers. Comments included:
  - ❖ “It’s really important to focus the effort.”
  - ❖ “With all the new workers coming on board in mental health there is the need to sort out how these operate and to do some co-ordination in the context of these new services.”
  - ❖ “Mapping services and responsibility is important – let’s see who’s who and who it is best to talk to.”
4. Mental health workers in these regions reported difficulty in meeting their **professional development needs**. Sometimes there are gaps in training &/or professional development activities required &/or the need to publicise what is available. Comments included:
  - ❖ “Training and development is needed for staff including allied health professionals who don’t work in mental health and need to understand how to provide services to people with mental health problems. This training needs to be well pitched to the type of staff attending.”

# Resilient Places Project

## Linkages identified through consultation



The following important **linkages** were identified through consultation:

- There are significant additional service delivery resources either already in place, or about to be put in place, to support disaster recovery by extending or improving mental health services & the Resilient Places Project needs to link well with these services.
- Linkages to the disaster recovery work in the mental health area that is being undertaken by Councils are critical. Examples raised in consultation included linking to work on resilience & improving well-being that has been incorporated into disaster plans & linking with the Human and Social Sub-Committees that have been established by Councils.
- Local Governments in communities recovering from disasters have been funded for Community Development Officers that Resilient Places Project will need to link with.
- Mental health services in the locations where the Project is to be located are delivered by a variety of types of organisations & individuals including community mental health agencies, NGOs with a more generic focus, government agencies, medical practitioners & allied health professionals in private practice. Linkages between this range of service delivery points are not always clear & the way different organisations & individuals operate in their local community may differ considerably. Improving the way services are delivered by creating linkages between these organisations & individuals was discussed at a number of consultation meetings.

# Resilient Places Project

## How should the project be rolled out?

The following feedback about the best way for the Qld Alliance for Mental Health to roll out the Resilient Places Project was provided by consultation participants:

- Co-location with other services is a good option.
- Locate the worker in the primary area to receive the service or as near as possible to this area. Service providers from towns located close to larger centres reported that when workers are located in the larger centres they often don't see them or receive an adequate service.
- Where a worker is located in one centre & needs to service a second centre, it may be useful to specify days they will be in the second centre & find a local agency that can provide office space in town for those days. This supports better service delivery & deals with the perception that the worker is not accessible.
- Partnering with other initiatives to “top up” funding to make full time workers possible in more areas is a good idea.
- Using the boundaries for provision of mental health services offered by Qld Health to help shape geography for the project is the best way to determine location & catchment areas for workers within the already identified areas for Resilient Places Project.
- More detailed mapping out of the geographic areas covered by the Resilient Places Project will be needed once the workers commence.



# Resilient Places Project

The following pages are intended to provide a flavour of consultation meetings for the Resilient Places Project. Consultation participants looking at this material will see a sample of issues raised & comments made rather than detailed material from each meeting. More detailed comments from the consultation meetings have also been captured as part of the project.



# Resilient Places Project

## Snapshot of local consultation meetings

### Tully

#### Themes

- ❖ Making sure that the work links well with Council's recovery plan & Council's Human & Social Sub-Committee.
- ❖ Making sure the work supports us all being headed in the right direction.
- ❖ Resilient Places Project needs to be positioned so that it is about resilience & well-being rather than about mental health so that it is seen as positive & accepted well locally.
- ❖ The approach to well-being & resilience for the project needs to be fairly broad.
- ❖ Preference is for a service located as close to Tully as possible. However, it may be difficult to find office accommodation in Tully for a worker at the moment given the buildings damaged by Cyclone Yasi.
- ❖ If the worker is located elsewhere, an outreach service to Tully where the worker is based there for a couple of days a week is preferred.

#### Comments

- ✓ The sector development worker needs to do work to make sure that all these new services are on the same page.
- ✓ We don't want plans, frameworks or more meetings.
- ✓ We do want linking to happen & this work to happen in conjunction with Community Development Officers.
- ✓ We want more working hand in glove & more resilience building so we are better prepared for natural disasters.

# Resilient Places Project

## Snapshot of local consultation meetings

### Innisfail

#### Themes

- ❖ With new mental health services coming on across communities recovering from disasters, there is the need to co-ordinate & sort out how these services operate.
- ❖ Resource booklets can be useful in improving information about services.
- ❖ Workers in this region report more need for work with Indigenous people post Cyclone Yasi.
- ❖ Finding housing & office accommodation for new workers may be a challenge given the shortages & cost increases experienced across the region post Cyclone Yasi.
- ❖ Links with industry groups such as those for the banana & sugar industries whose members have been badly impacted by the cyclone will be important.
- ❖ Locating a Resilient Places Project worker in Innisfail (with outreach to other areas including Tully) is an option & may create the opportunity of linking in with other work happening in Innisfail.

#### Comments

- ✓ It's really important to focus the effort.
- ✓ It's good timing for this project, now that some more immediate disaster responses are winding down.
- ✓ Linking in with other workers is very important.

# Resilient Places Project

## Snapshot of local consultation meetings

### Ingham

#### Themes

- ❖ Workers from this area report the need for sector development work that improves connections between the NGO sector & medical practitioners.
- ❖ Consultation participants indicated such work could result in a greater number of referrals from medical practitioners to NGOs & in these referrals being better targeted.
- ❖ A lack of understanding of mental health issues by staff working in more generic healthcare roles was reported as an issue that needs some work in the region.
- ❖ Better information, education & professional development in the field of mental health was identified as an important issue.
- ❖ The geographic area that the worker is to service needs to be mapped out in more detail.

#### Comments

- ✓ Locating a worker to service the region in Townsville will not work.
- ✓ Very important that any worker who comes to Ingham understands the issue of flooding both in terms of the impacts on people in town & on their own circumstances if they are living locally.
- ✓ Stigma about mental health issues is a problem.

# Resilient Places Project

## Snapshot of local consultation meetings

### Toowoomba

#### Themes

- ❖ Coordinating with other responses (e.g., Community Development Officers) is important.
- ❖ Previous sector development work has been done in Toowoomba & this needs to be taken into account.
- ❖ This worker could:
  - ❖ Support networks;
  - ❖ Support collaboration; &
  - ❖ Support co-ordination.
- ❖ Lack of support for networks is exemplified by the lack of an existing mental health interagency network in Toowoomba.
- ❖ Sector development may provide feedback about where better service co-ordination is needed.
- ❖ The worker needs to be accessible & have a clear position description & reporting.

#### Comments

- ✓ There is certainly sector development work to be done.
- ✓ Secretariat & organising for interagency networks is an issue because we don't have dedicated resources to do this work.
- ✓ There are gaps between state & federal funding initiatives where there is no communication.
- ✓ Don't "reinvent the wheel" given previous sector development work.

# Resilient Places Project

## Snapshot of local consultation meetings

### Chinchilla

#### Themes

- ❖ Coordination of new mental health resources for the region is needed.
- ❖ Flood recovery work has highlighted a lack of integrated, current information provision on mental health services.
- ❖ Linkages between government & NGOs & GPs are important.
- ❖ Interagency networks exist in Dalby, Chinchilla, St. George & Roma that it will be important for this worker to work with.
- ❖ Training & education & getting information out about it is important.
- ❖ There is the need to connect more effectively with the Mental Health Professional Network.
- ❖ The option of locating a worker in Chinchilla was discussed & may be an appropriate option as services can still be provided to Dalby & Roma from Chinchilla.

#### Comments

- ✓ The “tyranny of distance” takes up a lot of worker time in this region & this needs to be considered in locating the worker.
- ✓ Servicing networks is important.
- ✓ Creating networks where they don’t exist is important.
- ✓ Providing information about what funding is available is important.

# Resilient Places Project

## Snapshot of local consultation meetings

### Ipswich

#### Themes

- ❖ Sector development work could help identify service gaps & plan responses to these.
- ❖ Mapping mental health services in Ipswich is important.
- ❖ Worker could work with services to identify strategic directions in mental health services.
- ❖ The worker could work with the Strategic Mental Health Action Group (SHMAG) in Ipswich.
- ❖ Better service co-ordination on crisis responses for consumers is needed.
- ❖ Training & development is needed for people who don't work in mental health but need to be able to work with people with mental health issues.
- ❖ The model for Ipswich will need to take into account the differing boundaries for service delivery by NGOs & government agencies such as Communities & Health.

#### Comments

- ✓ Need secretariat role to support network in Ipswich.
- ✓ This work will lead to identification of priorities.
- ✓ What are the strategic directions for mental health services in this town?
- ✓ We need a unified service directory.
- ✓ The style of this sector development work must be to leave a legacy behind as the work may not be funded again.

# Resilient Places Project

## Snapshot of local consultation meetings

### Gatton

#### Themes

- ❖ Worker needs to be very closely linked to Council's Human & Social Sub-Committee. For example, reporting should be back through this structure & there is an established working party that the worker could work to.
- ❖ A service providers' planning forum has just been held in Gatton & has identified priority actions including some in the area of mental health. There is co-ordination work to be done from this & this worker could do this.
- ❖ There is the need for co-ordination of the range of mental health services in the Lockyer Valley.
- ❖ Consultation participants identified a short to medium term need for a full time worker given all the services that are operating in the Lockyer Valley over the next 6 months & the importance of getting the best results from this injection of resources.
- ❖ The preferred model is for a locally based worker rather than a service based elsewhere.

#### Comments

- ✓ This is very timely.
- ✓ There is a lot of hard work happening here to get co-ordination.
- ✓ We are looking at case coordination.
- ✓ There are issues in the Lockyer Valley about people being at the "end of their tether" after 10 years of drought & the events of last summer.

