

Media Release

5 September 2016

UNIQUE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT COLLEGE COMES TO ALBURY

An innovative new education service for people to learn and share knowledge about mental health, life skills and more is set to launch in Albury Wodonga this month.

The Mind Recovery College™ is the first recovery college in Australia to empower individuals by giving them the opportunity to be teachers and students, rather than patients or clients.

The Northern Regional Victoria Mind Recovery College (Albury Wodonga campus) will offer a range of courses including an *Introduction to Managing Stress; Developing your Own Advance Statement; Smart Spending* and much more.

Run by people who have their own first-hand knowledge of what it's like to be dealing with mental ill-health and related life stresses, courses provide a great experience of learning in a non-judgemental, positive environment.

The college is also a great resource for friends, family or carers, health professionals and anyone else who may be interested in the courses available.

Mind Recovery College™ Director Dianne Hardy said she is delighted to bring such an important community resource to the people of Albury Wodonga.

“The college role models a consumer choice culture where power is shared, first-hand knowledge is valued, and consumers and carers are an integral part of the day to day running of the college,” she said.

Feedback from college staff and participants has been overwhelmingly positive.

According to Trudi, age 42, the Recovery College is a wonderful experience. “I’m learning a lot about myself in the process and now have a greater understanding of mental health and how it affects myself and others. I appreciate the kind and supportive environment fostered by staff and facilitators. One of the best rewards has been the inspiration I receive from my fellow students whose courage and stories have lifted my spirit and filled my heart with hope,” she said.

Community Mental Health practitioner Denise said she found the college to be inspirational and educational. “It provides a safe haven for people to express themselves and also to be heard without being judged which promotes independence and confidence.”

The Mind Recovery College™ has been delivering courses in the Hume region; Wangaratta, Benalla and Wodonga for past six months, with 24 courses delivered and 60 students attending.

Established in 2013, the Mind Recovery College™ has been recognised nationally at the 2015 National Disability Awards, winning the *Excellence in Choice and Control in Service Delivery* category and most recently at the Mental Health Services Awards in New Zealand where it won the achievement award for entries with a different focus including large multi strand services.

The Launch

Date: Thursday 15 September 2016

Time: 10:00 am

Venue: Albury Library Museum, corner Kiewa and Swift streets, Albury

Media Opportunities

Mind Recovery College™ teachers, students and spokespeople will be available for interview and a photo opportunity. The Trinity Cruisers; a band made up of Mind Australia clients, volunteers and staff who promote the work of Mind and the power of recovery will be performing.

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College Website

www.recoverycollege.com.au