

PRESS RELEASE

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Historic Callan Park site makes history with a 30% employment minimum for people with lived experience of mental health problems, Master Plan still flawed

For the first time all organisations using the former psychiatric hospital of Callan Park will be encouraged to provide a minimum of 30% of available jobs to people with lived experience of mental health problems. At their meeting on 19 July, Leichhardt Councillors were unanimous in their support for this recommendation. This is in agreement with the Callan Park Mental Health Alliance's position.

However the Callan Park Mental Health Alliance urges the NSW government to consider the Master Plan for Callan Park only after looking through the mental health submissions about this site. The master planners and Leichhardt Councillors have ignored comments that don't accord with their own views on mental health.

The Master Plan that was endorsed by Leichhardt Council contains out dated institutional residential proposals for putting 83 beds back on the site. This is contrary to current research as well as national and state mental health policies. This proposal has been contested by many of the submissions to the master planning process. Many internationally recognised mental health experts have spoken against building up a psychiatric (or any other) institution on site.

According to the World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre on Mental Health Training, sites such as Callan Park are well placed to establish employment opportunities for people with mental health problems through social enterprise arrangements that give training, employment and social connection to help get people with mental health problems back on track.

While Callan Park was historically dedicated to the improvement of the lives of people with mental illnesses, the recommendations for the governance of the site in the master plan only give a passing nod to the mental health significance of the site or to contemporary mental health uses of the site.

To establish the Social Enterprises (managed as a cooperative of individuals recovering from mental illness and others) the **Callan Park Mental Health Alliances announces that its inaugural conference on Social Enterprises, Employment and Mental Health will take place on 21-22 November 2011 in Leichhardt.**

Callan Park Mental Health Alliance

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About the Callan Park Mental Health Alliance

The Callan Park Mental Health Alliance consists of consumers, carers, mental health workers, individuals from community managed organisations, the Mental Health Coordinating Council and concerned citizens. The Alliance has been meeting for the past half year to discuss what the best outcome is for the use of the Callan Park site for people living with a mental illness. The three key areas of concern:

1. Governance of the Callan Park Site
2. Mental Health Social Enterprise
3. Accommodation on the site

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