

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WA MENTAL HEALTH COVID-19 RESEARCH
PANEL, HELD VIA ZOOM ON 14 APRIL 2020**

ZOOM Link:

<https://uwa.zoom.us/j/559040219?pwd=bJlJqenFtTEJNNlhnNmRGejVqNVY0dz09>

PRESENT:

Professor Sean Hood (University of Western Australia) Chair
Professor Jo Badcock (The University of Western Australia)
Dr Bec Bennett (Ear Science Institute Australia)
Dr Travis Cruickshank (Edith Cowan University)
A/Professor Wendy Cumming-Potvin (Murdoch University)
Professor Neil Drew (Edith Cowan University/Indigenous Australian Healthinonet)
A/Professor Joanne Dickson (Edith Cowen University)
Dr Ali Fardinpour (Wise Realities)
Dr Sara Hansen (Edith Cowan University)
Dr Sandra Hesterman (Murdoch University)
Ms Rolee Kumar (The University of Western Australia)
Dr David Lawrence (The University of Western Australia)
Dr Libby Lee-Hammond (Murdoch University)
Dr Judy MacCallum (Murdoch University)
A/Professor Dorit Maor (Murdoch University)
Professor Rhonda Marriott (Murdoch University)
Professor Peter McEvoy (Curtin University)
Professor Vera Morgan (the University of Western Australia)
Dr Michelle Olaithe (The University of Western Australia)
Professor Christopher Reid (Curtin University)
Professor Suzanne Robinson (Curtin University)
Professor Anna Waterreus (The University of Western Australia)
Professor Flavie Waters (The University of Western Australia)
A/Professor Peter Wright (Murdoch University)

Executive Officer (Leanne Hall)

APOLOGIES:

Professor Rebecca Anglin (The University of Notre Dame)
Ms Maria Halphen (Meeting for Minds)
Dr Salam Hussain (University of Western Australia /Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital)
Professor Andrew Page (The University of Western Australia)
Mr Keith Wilson (Meeting for Minds)

Previous minutes: accepted

1. WELCOME

The Chair welcomed members, and invited new members to introduce themselves.

2. UPDATE FROM WAHTN COVID19 RESEARCH COLLABORATION MEETING

Professor Hood provided members with an update from the WAHTN COVID19 Research Collaboration Meeting held on the 20th April.

Of particular note, A/Professor Peter Richmond (CAHS) has issued a call for researchers interested in aboriginal health issues.

There was discussion relating to sharing of data between studies and potential governance and ethics issues. Professor Toby Richards is currently setting up a scientific advisory panel that will address this issue.

Professor Waters commented that the Department of Health Ethics Committees have agreed to an expedited process for urgent COVID research projects. (see attachment A)

Professor Reid mentioned that the as part of the government response there is now a focus on widespread testing in certain populations (i.e.: FIFO, frontline health workers, teachers).

Would it be useful to engage/align with this process, and if so how to link in?

Professor Robinson advised that her group is currently involved in discussions with a mineral resources company to assess FIFO workers, and will give an update at the next meeting.

ACTIONS:

Professor Hood will speak with Professor Gary Geelhoed (WAHTN) regarding linking in to the extended testing program

Professor Robinson will give an update on the FIFO workers project.

3. DIRECTORY OF MEASURES

Professor McEvoy reminded members that the broad aims of the directory is 1) create a list of measures recommended by members and; 2) develop a small battery of measures for collecting baseline data in CIVIC.

There is a need to determine the length of time to track participants, and to this end a draft schedule of timings of key measures is included in the spreadsheet; however still need to discuss the best way to prioritise and implement these measures as soon as possible. All members are invited to provide feedback.

There was also a question whether to include children and adolescents in the initial CIVIC rollout. Professor Reid advised that he has been working with Professor Graham Hall and Dr Sally Brinkman (Telethon Kids Institute), who have existing cohorts. They have recommended alternatives/variations of standard instruments. Also, children and adolescents are a separate module in CIVIC; at present CIVIC is for 18 and older as this module needs further work before going live.

Dr Olaithe queried the measure listed for insomnia, and recommended the PSSQI as this is used by the Raine Study. Also commented that it would be important to include emotion regulation strategy selection measures (coping with isolation/stress/financial hardship) such as the ERQ.

Dr Cruickshank commented that his group recently sent out a survey, and anecdotally it would appear that participants are struggling with length of survey (mean time 12 minutes). Recommend to use very short measures, as other feedback from participants is they are being overwhelmed by surveys.

Professor Hood pointed out that Western Australia is looking different to other countries, such as Italy and the US, in terms of COVID outcomes. Therefore suggested to consider what can be offered at an international scale, and what the relevant data might be in this space. Dr Olaithe agreed, and suggested that impacts on indigenous & mining (FIFO) populations would be unique.

ACTION:

Dr Olaithe, Professor Waters & Dr Cruickshank will work together to create a set of sleep measures.

Next steps:

1. Decide on priority measures
2. Develop a Mental Health module
3. Develop and implement referral pathways (triage system), including ethics approvals.

4. CIVIC STUDY UPDATE

Professor Reid advised members that the CIVIC study went live yesterday.

At present the Baseline data is being collected using the DASS21, and potential pathways for people to follow will be based on these responses – leading to more detailed questionnaires in specific areas.

There is a need to establish a governance framework, and hope to provide an outline by the end of the week.

5. PROJECTS

Dr Olaithe informed members of a number of current studies that may be of interest:

- a. CARE Study (Professor Colin McCloud and Dr Juli Ji, UWA). This is an online survey looking at anxiety, emotions and self-regulation. www.thecarestudy.com
- b. Monash Sleep Study (Dr Melinda Jackson and Ms Hailey Meaklim). This study is examining insomnia symptoms prior to and during COVID. https://monash.azure.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3kfqaoXLi6C8TUp
- c. University of Edinburgh Survey of COVID19 Impact: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/covid-19-response/latest-news/survey-of-covid-19-s-impact-on-our-everyday-lives>

Professor Waters advised members that she, Professor Waterreus and Professor Morgan met yesterday to discuss looking into people who already live with severe mental illness, and how the pandemic has impacted them. Considering conducting an audit of services that are providing care to this cohort, and telephone interviews of their clients to see how these people are coping, accessing medications and care. Also wanting to assess the clinical workforce that looks after this cohort.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

Dr Olaithe asked if there was any interest amongst members in forming a Working Group to evaluate Mental Health Telehealth, in particular for Adolescents and up to 25 years of age. Professor Robinson expressed interest, as did Professor McEvoy, and A/Professor Dickson.

Dr Fardinpour advised members that he is interested in digital health and the use of virtual reality. His group is looking into forming partnerships between (UWA and Curtin) researchers and hospitals to assess the mental health of health professionals during COVID and the recovery period. They are also looking into using traditional aboriginal campfire storytelling as a mental health tool, by translating into a virtual reality experience, if anyone is interested.

Dr Olaithe advised that she is happy to assist Professor McEvoy with entering data into REDCap.

ACTION:

Dr Olaithe will coordinate the Digital Telehealth Working Group and provide feedback to the main group next week.

NEXT MEETING

20 April 2020

ZOOM Link:

<https://uwa.zoom.us/j/559040219?pwd=bJJqenFtTEJNNlhNcmRGejVqNVY0dz09>

Password: 768197