



JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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REGION'S MOST SIGNIFICANT MENTAL HEALTH EVENT LAUNCHES PROGRAM

Over 90 international and Australian presentations will feature in the highly anticipated **12th Biennial Asia Pacific International Mental Health Conference (AsPac) in Brisbane on 24 to 26 October 2016**. The launch of the official Pre-Conference Workshops and Conference Program highlights a focus on early intervention, suicide, cross cultural learnings and innovative service developments.

AsPac is widely considered as the region's most significant mental health forum and has emerged over two decades as a key platform to challenge conventional thinking through inclusive dialogue and cross-cultural learnings.

In 2016, the Conference is hosted by Richmond Fellowship Queensland (RFQ) in partnership with the Queensland Mental Health Commission, with the Abstracts Committee under Chair, Adjunct Professor Robert King, overwhelmed by the response to the Call For Abstracts.

Conference Convenor, Kingsley Bedwell of RFQ said he is very excited by the professional quality and diversity of the submissions.

"I am delighted the narratives of people with lived experience will feature through the program. I'm also pleased the themes of People, Practice, Partnerships and Policy are well represented across the program," he said.

"We are confident this special mental health event will make a significant contribution to developing hopeful and effective early intervention and recovery solutions for people and their families."

ABC journalist and presenter, Sarah Ferguson, will facilitate a Q&A Panel featuring the conference keynote speakers, and the program includes very special performances by the Nunukul Yuggera Dance Group and the **Malu Kiai Mura Buai** Dance Group at the opening and closing ceremonies.

"This is an extremely important event on the mental health calendar and the calibre of presenters is testament to this," Mr Bedwell continued.

The three-day conference takes place at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre (BCEC) in the month of Mental Health Week. It will focus on the theme **Recovered Futures: People, Practice, Partnerships and Policy**.

Headlining the event is internationally reputed US Psychiatrist Dr Daniel Fisher, who through his experience of a diagnosis of schizophrenia developed the Empowerment Model of Recovery and the PACE/Recovery program that helped shift the US mental health system to a recovery orientation. He is joined by renowned keynote speaker Dr Manaan Kar Ray, a UK psychiatrist who is joint lead for PROMISE, a framework transforming the nature of day-to-day interactions at the frontline, Australian political strategist Dr John Mendoza and Psychologist and Research Specialist at the Parenting Research Centre, Dr Laura Hayes.

Early bird registrations are now open until 12 September 2016. Visit

www.aspacmentalhealth16.com.au for more information.

ENDS

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About RFQ

RFQ is a well respected not for profit company and leading provider of psychosocial mental health recovery services, serving the community for over 40 years. Richmond Fellowship was founded in Richmond, England, in 1959 and became a worldwide mental health movement. RFQ is a member of the Richmond Fellowship Asia Pacific Forum and Richmond Fellowship Australia (RFA).

About QMHC (Conference Partner)

The Queensland Mental Health Commission is a statutory body established to improve the mental health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders by driving ongoing reform.

About Richmond Fellowship Asia Pacific Forum

The Richmond Fellowship Asia Pacific (AsPac) Forum was established in 1994 at the inaugural Asia Pacific Conference in Brisbane. The Forum consists of independent sister organisations throughout the region in India, Hong Kong, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Macau, New Zealand, Western Australia, Tasmania, Australian Capital Territory and Queensland. A key purpose of the Forum is to auspice the Asia Pacific International Mental Health Conference where members take turns hosting the conference.

Recent conferences have been held in Sri Lanka (2014), Western Australia (2012), Tasmania (2010) and India (2008).