

<b>Project ID No.</b>	CP 236 / 2 / 1 / 07 V2
<b>GOAL</b>	4
<b>SUB-PROGRAM</b>	

## Effective Networking Communities of Practice

Action plans must be submitted online to [www.reframingthefuture.net](http://www.reframingthefuture.net) by COB Tuesday 5 June 2007.

Please select "Submit a Form" on the Home Page Menu and follow the prompts.

All sections must be completed.

Please note: sections 1 – 9 of this document will be uploaded onto the Reframing the Future website. Details of participants in item 11 will be only be used in accordance with our privacy policy and will not be published on the website.

### **Name of organisation funded by Reframing the Future**

NSW TAFE Riverina Institute
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### **1. Convenor's details**

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### **2. Facilitators' details**

Name: As above		
Address:		
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### **3. Project overview** (100 words maximum)

What outcomes do you hope to achieve in your project?

TAFE NSW is recording an increase in enrolments of students with a diagnosed mental illness . These students are enrolled in all mainstream courses. Implementing the national training framework requires staff to not only be technically competent but to be able to respond the needs of industry and students In an effort to address this increasing student group the organisation has responded to concerns from staff by implementing Mental Health First Aid training. Our community of practice will:

- identify specific issues in delivering training packages to students with mental illness so we can maximise outcomes for these students. In line with Standard 2 of AQTF 2007 through this project we are drawing on the insights of industry and students in developing our understanding of the needs of these students.
- make recommendations for continuous improvement of our delivery and assessment for clients with a mental illness. These might include customising delivery and assessment of competencies to the student's particular needs; developing appropriate RPL processes to ensure they are not disadvantaged; ensuring staff are familiar with and implement 'reasonable adjustment' processes; providing enhanced training to our staff for classroom management and personalised learning. This will support us achieving quality outcomes and meeting AQTF 2007 standards. We anticipate, as a result of this project we will further customise our professional development for staff working with

students with a mental illness and review and make recommendations about our delivery and assessment procedures

- in line with AQTF 2007 ensure “our practices are as inclusive as possible and do not unreasonably prevent any clients from accessing our services”
- determine if participation in Mental Health First Aid affects our staff’s capability to work effectively with students with mental illness.
- elicit, document and further develop the knowledge our teachers and other staff have around mental illness.
- identify barriers that get in the way of staff working effectively with students with mental illness
- strengthen links with local primary, tertiary and secondary providers of mental health services to ensure we gather their input into continuously improving our delivery and assessment for students with a mental illness

**4. Domain of knowledge**

We will establish a community of practice where the knowledge, the experience and the issues are shared to enhance supportive learning.

Our community of practice will focus on improving the delivery of training packages to this group of students. This is a student cohort increasing dramatically. In 2001 the number of students who disclosed was 2,709. In 2006 the number of students who disclosed was 5,119.

This is an increase over 5 years of 2,410 students, an 89% increase. Students with mental illness are enrolled in all of our mainstream programs, ranging from a Statement of Attainment through to a Diploma Course. The Community of Practice may be able to identify if specific programs have a greater representation of students with a disclosed mental illness.

We will identify what we know, how we think about and how we teach students with mental illness. We will gain information about different ways of working with students with mental illness. We will begin the process of identifying the “things” that get in our way – structural, cultural and interpersonal.

**National Training System**

This project will address a number of aspects of the national training system. These include as an RTO ensuring we:

- continually improve our delivery and assessment strategies for students with a mental illness
- maximise outcomes for these students
- liaise with industry and students to adequately assess the needs of students with a mental illness
- review and customise our delivery and assessment strategies including: developing appropriate RPL processes to ensure they are not disadvantaged; providing professional development for staff for managing classroom behaviour and personalised learning
- develop recommendations for amendments to our delivery and assessment procedures to accommodate the needs of student with a mental illness.

**5. Facilitating your community of practice**

Stages of Development	
<b>Potential</b>	<p>Stakeholder identification</p> <p>1. We will identify and legitimise project drivers- our key personnel. We will call for membership through our Professional Development and Learning team and the use of internal email. External members will be representatives of those groups with whom we have partnerships.</p> <p>2. We will invite membership in two distinct stages: Stage 1 will be staff who have completed the Mental Health First Aid training – this group will form the core of our community of practice, they have the working knowledge of the program and can comment on their own lived experience. Stage 2 will see us inviting our community and consumer representatives – this is the opportunity for us to share our knowledge and to seek feedback from our industry colleagues</p> <p>3. Planning for first workshop will occur in this stage – the</p>

	<p>first workshop if for TAFE staff only and will have the following goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• participants will develop a shared sense of purpose and commitment to furthering our knowledge about mental health</li> <li>• Identify the documentation process and responsibilities for tasks</li> <li>• Set the scope of the project, develop boundaries and establish trust and respect among members</li> <li>• Complete our personal and organisational skills and knowledge stocktake</li> <li>• Discuss how the worth, the contribution of the community of practice might be evaluated in terms of contribution to individual participants and the organisation</li> </ul>
<b>Coalescing</b>	<p>Here we will grow our community we can do this by using existing member networks and inviting our consumer and industry representatives</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Our second workshop will allow for the sharing of our knowledge with our new members</li> <li>2. We will arrange for a guest speaker to share with us some new knowledge around engaging students with mental illness – this may be a consumer</li> <li>3. We will document further opportunities for learning</li> <li>4. We will share ideas of how learning may impact on current service delivery- new ideas, developments, things we can try</li> <li>5. We will celebrate through appreciative enquiry individuals knowledge and commitment to the community of practice</li> </ol>
<b>Maturing</b>	<p>In this stage we will identify and document the learning that has occurred, the learning still to be done and ideas for implementation</p> <p>Workshop 3 will allow for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Appreciative enquiry of what we have achieved</li> <li>2. Plans for the future: including documenting amendments to delivery and assessment strategies to ensure students with a mental illness are not disadvantaged (reasonable adjustment)</li> <li>3. An evaluation of individual and organisational growth against the parameters agreed upon in the first workshop</li> <li>4. A celebration and formal acknowledgement of member's contributions</li> </ol>
<b>Sustainable</b>	<p>We will negotiate the ongoing viability and usefulness of the community. We will determine the shape it may be able to take. Members will be free to leave and a network of contacts may be established</p>

**6. Structuring your community**

COMMUNITY of PRACTICE	SUPPORT STRATEGIES
<b>Domain of knowledge</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Acknowledge and appreciate shared interest in better understanding our ways of working with students with mental illness.</li> <li>2. Evaluate the impact/effect MHFA has on our capacity to work with this student group</li> <li>3. Create a space for shared learning that is safe, respectful and embracing of new ideas</li> <li>4. Build on the interest participants already have by presenting new ideas, hearing of participants lived experience of working with students with mental illness</li> <li>5. Establish clear boundaries and scope for the community of practice and communicate this openly and clearly to all participants</li> <li>6. Encourage participants to set personal goals to be met through membership of our community</li> <li>7. Enable members to identify an evaluative framework for the community</li> <li>8. Assist in the development of trust via respectful professional conversations</li> <li>9. Sub groups may be formed to assist in knowledge and task management including design of a half day workshop on managing classroom behaviour for students with a mental illness and recommendations for amendment of delivery and assessment strategies to accurately address the needs of student with a mental illness</li> </ol>
<b>Community</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Acknowledgement of common ground i.e. knowledge of Mental Health First Aid, practice experience, passion and commitment</li> <li>2. Invite special guests to add further knowledge, a new perspective.</li> <li>3. Use our internal email network to disseminate relevant information, create opportunities for conversation</li> <li>4. Use workshops to celebrate and enhance learning. Ensure at each gathering participants are formally acknowledged in some way</li> <li>5. Foster a vibrant, respected community that people are proud to be part of – publicise our learning widely</li> <li>6. Create as many opportunities for laughter as possible</li> </ol>

<b>Practice</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collect and collate our shared knowledge and experience</li> <li>2. Identify through appreciative enquiry what we do well, what we can do differently and what we wish we had never done!</li> <li>3. Apply our learning to real life – move from theory to practice in the context of supportive peer review.</li> </ol>
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**7. Anticipated outcomes** (see Chapters 6-7 of *The Potential*)

Please describe the outcomes anticipated as a result of your project:

for participating individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity and understanding of the community of practice methodology</li> <li>• Greater understanding of teaching, delivery and assessment issues specific to this group of students</li> <li>• An increased confidence amongst participants in working with this group of students and in particular in customising the delivery and assessment of training packages so as not to disadvantage these students</li> <li>• Increased knowledge of how we can better work with students with mental illness</li> <li>• Meeting some, if not all, of the personal goals set at the first meeting</li> <li>• Strong relationships among members</li> </ul>
for participating organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stronger connections with our staff</li> <li>• A clearer sense of common goals</li> <li>• Create opportunities for ongoing collaboration</li> <li>• Continual improvement of our systems to assess and address the needs of learners</li> <li>• Amendment of delivery and assessment strategies in the light of CoP findings</li> <li>• Expanded opportunities for liaison with students and industry in the design of our products and services.</li> </ul>

**7. Promotion** Please outline how your project's processes and products will be promoted:

within your organisation(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our internal email and intranet site</li> <li>• Key management group meetings</li> <li>• Making mention of the project in every monthly report</li> </ul>
to industry and other relevant organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through our existing professional contacts</li> <li>• Using the local newspaper to promote our innovative responses</li> </ul>
to the broader VET sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look for opportunities to contribute to bulletins boards on key websites e.g. ANTA, NCVER, Reframing the Future</li> <li>• Publication of a final report</li> </ul>

## 9. Evaluation

Please provide an outline of the methods you will use to evaluate the participants' learning and your project's efficiency and effectiveness.

At the first workshop evaluation will be discussed and tools and methods negotiated. In order to facilitate this process it is suggested that:

- Each participant complete a skills and knowledge stock take, around mental illness at the beginning of the project – this will be checked again at the final workshop
- Community of practice to do a realistic assessment of organisational strengths and weaknesses in regard to our domain of knowledge – look at our capacity to shift this
- We will set clear targets and monitor our performance against these
- We will determine the contribution we wish to make to our organisation and measure against this
- We will pay close attention to budgetary limitations

## 10. Project timeframe

Please list project milestones and key dates

(Please add rows as required)

Milestone	Key date
Project action plan submitted	5 June 07
Advertise project internally and call for members	14 Jun 07
Planning meeting / Review membership response	18 June 07
Workshop 1	July 2007
Mid term report due	28 August 2007
Workshop 2	September 2007
Mid term forum	Mid Sept. 2007
Workshop 3	Oct 2007
Final report submitted	27 Nov 2007
Finalisation of project, signed financial statement and final invoice	29 Jan 2008