

SMOKING MAD



Smoking Bans in psychiatric wards are a human rights abuse.

The Smoking Mad National Working Party - will you join & help make a difference?

I have devoted many of my nights and weekends over the past 18 months to promote the Smoking Mad cause and bring about changes to smokefree policies in psychiatric wards. I am not the only consumer who has experienced the enormous distress caused by these bans, and I am committed to do what I can to restore people's rights and dignity.

To find out more about the campaign, read the attached statement, or visit my blog at: www.smokingmad.blogspot.com

It's time to work together

The time has come for more of us to work together to get smoking bans in psych wards lifted. My recent legal and media activities have taught me a lot, but mostly that I can't change the system on my own. I have lots of ideas – but I want more of you to join me.

What would a national working party do?

There's lots of action happening around Australia – but it's not coordinated yet. I hope to form a Smoking Mad National Working Party. This group will coordinate the Smoking Mad campaign across Australia. It would:

- Include people who are passionate about the issue;
- Include a majority of consumers, but other interested parties too (eg, family, advocates, legal experts, mental health workers);
- Include representatives from each state/territory;
- Develop and implement strategies for legal action, public action and PR, as well as political action and dialogue. This will help raise support for the campaign and increase pressure for change;
- Collect & publish people's experiences and stories of the bans through coordinated research and public meetings.

Basically, this would be group of passionate people working out how we can bring about change – then getting on with doing it.

Can you help?

If you're passionate about this issue, and sick of seeing consumers stripped of their rights and dignities, then

please consider joining this working party. We can bring about change if we work together.

What's the time commitment?

Until we have agreed roles and responsibilities, and some agreed strategies, I suggest we initially meet on a fortnightly basis to keep up momentum, and then shift to monthly meetings supported by an online discussion group once we are up and running.

For those who are interested, there would also be work outside the meetings. It will be up to you to decide what best matches your skills, talents and interests.

When and where?

The Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council (VMIAC) has kindly offered their premises for meetings (they are in Brunswick, Victoria). Because this is a national group, we would have telephone conferences set up for each meeting, so anyone outside of Melbourne can phone in.

So how do I join?

If you want to join or find out more, please email me at: smokingmad@yahoo.com.au

Thanks for taking the time to read this – I hope to hear from you!

Kind regards

*Indigo Daya
Smoking Mad*