

Media Release

OCD Awareness Week – Events and Resources

As part of OCD Awareness Week 2016, WayAhead - Mental Health Association NSW will be running a series of free events to help increase understanding of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is an anxiety disorder characterised by ongoing unwanted/intrusive thoughts and fears (obsessions) that lead to individuals feeling the need to carry out certain rituals in order to feel less anxious (compulsions).

One of the speakers who will be involved in the OCD Awareness Week events is Associate Professor Rocco Crino from Charles Sturt University, a practising clinical psychologist. Crino says that these intrusive thoughts create “considerable anxiety or discomfort” and that about “2% of the population here in Australia will experience full blown Obsessive Compulsive Disorder”.

To help raise awareness for this condition and to educate both the general public and those with lived experiences of OCD there will be four events over the course of the week.

On Monday the 23rd of May there will be a panel discussion at Woolloomooloo. The panel will feature speakers including Professor Rocco Crino and Dr Hugh Powell as well as talks from careers and Julie Leitch who will be discussing her lived experience of OCD. It will be led by Lynne Malcom – host of ABC’s Radio National program “All in the Mind”.

There will be a public forum in Springwood on the 25th of May. Run by WayAhead and the Nepean Anxiety Clinic, it will provide the opportunity to hear from Dr Vlasios (Bill) Brakoulias a specialist psychiatrist from Nepean hospital as well as a person with a lived experience of OCD and a carer.

Finally, in conjunction with “Partners in Recovery – Central Coast” WayAhead will be running a conference in Gosford on the 28th of May. The conference will include talks from professionals in the field as well as talks from individuals with a lived experience of OCD and their careers. The afternoon will run two streams – a discussion panel and a profession development workshop which is aimed at mental health practitioners and will cover the assessment, psychological and pharmacological treatment of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.

To compliment these events WayAhead is also offering free OCD Awareness Week Resources which aim to explain what Obsessive Compulsive Disorder is and help stop the incorrect usage of the term “OCD” in inappropriate contexts. It may also help someone who has OCD or their carers recognise the symptoms and seek help. The resources are available on the WayAhead website.

“Any talk and resources about OCD are important for educating and raising awareness”, says Julie Leitch, WayAhead Educator. “And these resources lets people know that they are not alone, that they can get help and get better. The more we can distribute information the better.”

WayAhead also runs multiple anxiety and OCD support groups across NSW lead by facilitators who have experience in psychology or a personal experience with anxiety.

For more details please visit [WayAhead’s website](http://WayAhead.org.au).

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Anxiety Website: understandinganxiety.wayahead.org.au

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Additional Resources:

[OCD Awareness Week Website](#)

[Resources](#) – posters and other print resources

Articles:

[Book Review - The Unlikely Hero of Room 13B](#)

[Family Accommodation](#) – new research and the dilemma for carers

Personal Stories – [Michael, Pure Obsessional OCD](#) [Lather, scrub, rinse, repeat](#)

Video: [Professor Rocco Crino on OCD](#)

[WayAhead](#) - Mental Health Association NSW is an 80 year old mental health charity. WayAhead champions mental health and wellbeing through education, support and advocacy

WayAhead provides support for Anxiety Disorders with 35 [Anxiety Disorders Support groups](#) operating in NSW. We also run 12 week CBT [Self Help Anxiety Courses](#).

We provide free mental health education through Understanding Anxiety Forums, [Small Steps seminars](#) for primary school teachers and parents, and through our WayAhead websites and [fact sheets](#).

We promote better mental health through programs such as October's [Mental Health Month](#), the [Mental Health Matters Awards](#), Stress Less Tips and Perinatal Depression and Anxiety Awareness Week, the [Workplace Health Promotion Network](#) and the [Young and Parenting Project](#).

WayAhead run free information services such as the telephone services; Mental Health Information Line - 1300 794 991 and the Anxiety Information Line - 1300 794 992, as well as the [WayAhead Online Directory](#) of mental health services.

WayAhead websites:

www.mentalhealthmonth.org.au www.wayahead.org.au

www.understandinganxiety.wayahead.org.au www.directory.wayahead.org.au www.whpn.org

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