Dear PIR facilitators,

Thank you for your important support in the process of creating a HoNOS for your participants. The below is valuable information on how to best communicate about the HoNOS with the participants.

**First up, what isn’t the HoNOS?**

The good news is the HoNOS isn’t an Assessment. It is compassionate to reassure your participant(s) that they aren’t being assessed. Rather the HoNOS involves having a conversation with me/Jude and you, the facilitator. Please reassure the participant that their HoNOS is *only a summary document* (more below) and that we will protect their privacy and confidentiality. Their personal information is being stored securely at the PHN in the short term and it is being created to build their case for application to the NDIS next year. The HoNOS has proven to be weighted/valued highly in the NDIS application process.

**If the HoNOS isn’t an Assessment what is it?**

It is a summary document that provides a snapshot of how someone is experiencing life at a ‘point in time’ (the preceding two weeks). The HoNOS summary is for people who are living with a mental illness, and summarizes the way the symptoms of the mental illness have impacted in their life for the prior two weeks. The conversation will include a chat about relationships, ways of relating to people, moods, usual activities of daily living, among others. (There are 12 question areas).

The HoNOS is quite similar to the CANSAS but has some important differences. I have attached a copy of the HoNOS template.

**What has happened so far with HoNOS conversations? What learnings are important here?**

We have had last minute cancellation of HoNOS appointments due to participants being anxious leading up to the appointment. Participants can worry unduly about ‘being assessed’ and a ‘stranger’ coming into their home for the HoNOS. For this reason, we have created an information sheet for your participants which includes some self-care, relaxation tips and information for them to keep regarding the process. Please provide the information where the participant is anxious or overwhelmed about meeting another new person. You may also provide the below information to your participant about who they will be meeting during your discussions:

**About your HoNOS visitor, Jude Markland:**

“Jude works in the PIR team at the PHN (Primary Health Network). Jude is trained in using the HoNOS. She works with confidentiality and integrity as core values. Jude is having the HoNOS conversation as a very private conversation with you. It will not be discussed with anyone other than you (the participant) and me (the PIR facilitator).

Jude has worked in palliative care and was a nursing service director for ten years. She has worked in community services for 25 years. Jude has lived experience of recovery herself and I believe you will find her to be respectful, non-judgmental and kind. Jude has a sister with an acquired brain injury and complex trauma. Jude’s hobbies include street meal support for people who are homeless. She has had all the legal probity (clear Australian Federal Police checks along with Working with Children clearance) and background checks to enable her to work in this area.”

**Where will the HoNOS conversation occur?**

The conversation will occur wherever the participant would prefer. Options include:

- In the persons home;
• In your work office;
• At the PHN; or
• In a public setting if preferred, such as a room at the library or community center.

**How long with the HoNOS conversation take?**
Jude is mindful of not wanting to tire the participant out. The form itself only takes about 5-10 minutes to complete but the conversation to obtain the information will usually take about an hour to an hour and a half.

**What doesn’t get documented in a HoNOS?**
There is no consideration nor space on the HoNOS regarding history. What this means is, we are not permitted/able to capture historical trauma, complex past history, we are only permitted/allowed to document the way the MH symptoms show up 'today'. That is, the HoNOS captures the MH symptoms as they are currently experienced, and the functional impact for the past two weeks (give or take within reason).

The participants history is sacred and it is a privilege to know anyone’s stories and absolutely important on so many levels, but truly the HoNOS (and OT) moves away from a conversation on life trauma and a move towards, "what does the functional impact of the MH mean to their capacity to function today, how does the MH symptoms show up today".

The participants case history is, as far as we can see, something that comes into play perhaps with the GP or Psychiatrist diagnosis evidence pieces in building a case for permanence of disability. The history isn't something the OT will be covering, nor Jude with the HoNOS.

**Additional information to consider when talking to your Participant regarding their NDIS Evidence:**
It is important to emphasize the OT and HONOS processes are conversations for evidence pieces around current daily functioning descriptors.

**"If you have on your caseload anyone remotely looking due to exit, we wouldn’t recommend booking in the HoNOS nor the OT because the results from a functional impact/HoNOS perspective will likely not be significant enough to support an NDIS application."**

**How do I book in for the HoNOS for my participant?**
We have developed a private booking page for you to access and book in your participants HoNOS summary. You can access this link from any device or computer using the following link:

https://www.pirgoldcoast.com.au/bookings/ (please save it as a favourite so you can access it quickly)

Jude has scheduled HoNOS for Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays and times available include 9:30am, 12noon and 2:30pm *(unless stated otherwise in the online calendar)*. Please note each assessment can take between 1.5-2hrs.

Please follow the prompts on the screen, ensuring you have the following information ready to enter:

- Name – Please enter your Participants name followed by your name in brackets e.g. Jane D (Rachel)
- Location of meeting *(and address if not at GCPHN, your office or a local community venue)*
- Additional details you wish to share with Jude prior to assessment.

If you are having any troubles with the booking system, please contact Rachel on 5612 5461.

**Any other options?**
If you or the participant have any questions Jude can ring the participant or be contacted on 0418 580 075.