

approach to mental illness, the sale of land at Glenside receives the most attention. Yet for Monsignor Cappo, Glenside is one part of a bigger plan to de-stigmatise mental illness.

"We're changing the area completely and in a way it is normalising the environment into the community," he says.

According to consumers, the sale of Glenside is a significant change to our mental health system. Carol believes: "The treatment people are getting at Glenside is pretty poor and pretty degrading really."

Glenside is not the only controversial aspect of the reforms. The action plan recommends family and carers actively participate in the recovery process, yet for many mental health consumers this does not always work.

Tara's husband is supportive of her illness but says her children do not want to know about it.

When it comes to her recovery, family are not always the best support.

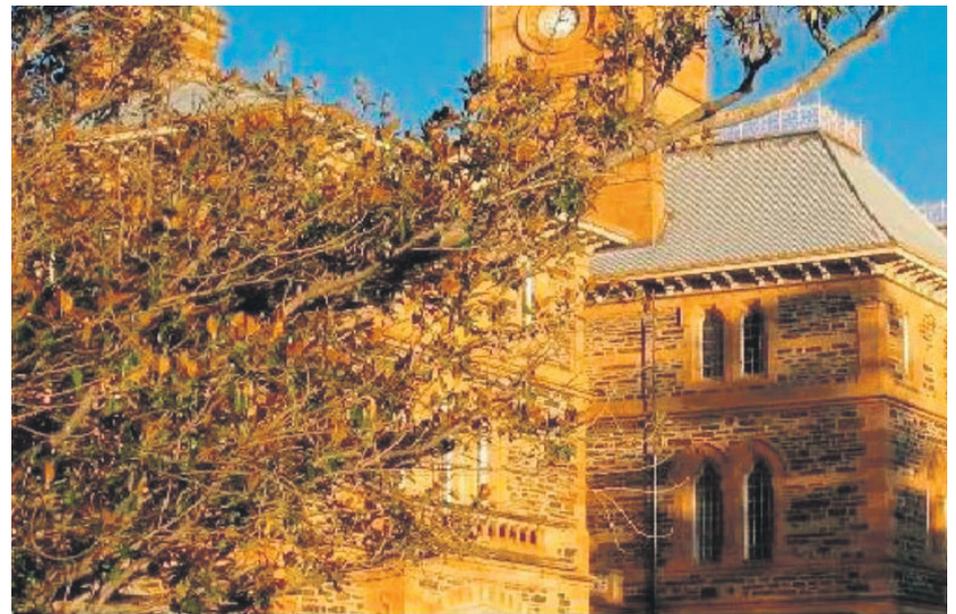
"If you have a bad day and you've got a mental illness it's "oh no you're collapsing again", she says. "By the time they've finished with you, you almost are!" Tara is also a peer support worker and has a client whose family situation is much worse.

"He's 26, lives by himself and his mother still holds his wallet with his key card," she says.

"Now he's allowed to live out of home because she can't have him anymore. She's over it, can't handle it. But she actually won't let go and let him grow up."

As a peer worker Tara cannot advocate for him and finds this increasingly difficult.

Advocacy for those with mental illness is not in the Plan despite the Office of Public



"I also get worried at times that some of the media reporting gets close to reinforcing the stigma of mental illness, and that gets me anxious"

Advocate's representation on the Consumers, Carers and Advocates Advisory Panel.

But educating family is just one area where de-stigmatisation needs to happen. The reforms also ask the wider community to accept those with mental illness.

According to Monsignor Cappo that is difficult with the media focus on the sale of Glenside.

"I also get worried at times that some of the media reporting gets close to reinforcing the stigma of mental illness, and that gets me anxious," he says.

"It just makes consumers of the mental health system voiceless and faceless."

Richard is open about his mental illness and

despite being accepted by his immediate peers he feels others keep their distance.

"People still have a lot of stigma attached to it," he says. "(They) assume the worst when you say you've got schizophrenia."

Connecting with community is a vital part of the recovery process and it can also be the hardest. Yet according to Carol: "When people start to do that it is a really big achievement and others take that for granted."

Names of mental health consumers have been changed to protect their identities.

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