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## **South Eastern Sydney Local Health District staff recognised at Mental Health Matters Awards**

South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD) staff have been recognised for their involvement in life-changing mental health programs for the benefit of the local community.

They were amongst 13 Award winners state-wide announced at a ceremony at NSW Parliament House on 30 September, 2014, when Minister for Mental Health, Jai Rowell, launched Mental Health Month, which will run throughout October.

St George Hospital bilingual psychologist Hend Saab and SESLHD Practice Development and Project Coordinator Natalie Cutler and her team have been recognised for their work in improving understanding, awareness, service provision and the general mental health of the community.

Ms Saab's 'Mindfulness CD' was the winner in the 'Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities' category and Ms Cutler and her team's 'Safety for All' was the co-winner in the 'Consumer Involvement and Engagement' category.

Awarded for creating a 'Mindfulness CD' for the Arab speaking community, Ms Saab said the CD is a self-help resource recorded in Arabic that promotes emotional wellbeing through a technique known as Mindfulness.

"Research has shown that the therapeutic approach of Mindfulness did not clash with cultural values; and it gave clients a chance to learn skills that could be useful in the future.

"Clients reported that they found mindfulness consistent with their faith whether Muslim or Christian. Mindfulness was seen to be complementary to regular reflective prayer," Ms Saab said.

More than seven per cent of people in NSW speak Arabic at home. With that community in mind, the Arabic 'Mindfulness CD' has been developed to be used as either a stand-alone resource or integrated into psychological treatment.

Ms Cutler and her team, who shared the top prize in the 'Consumer Involvement and Engagement' category, said 'Safety for All' is a professional development program that aligns the safety needs of consumers equally with those of mental health staff.

"The program seeks to transform the culture of mental health services from a focus on 'managing risk' to one where the formation of authentic relationships is seen as the foundation of safety," Ms Cutler said.

"Starting from a reference group intending to update the language in an existing mandatory aggression management training program, 'Safety for All' has grown into a major project.

"The 'Safety for All' program has been entirely co-developed by, and is co-delivered with, mental health consumers and has attracted national and international attention as a model for consumer participation."

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**South Eastern Sydney Local Health District**

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