



Western Australian Mental Health Commission supports the community through transparency

Government entity Western Australian Mental Health Commission utilizes Smartsheet for improved reporting and better transparency, collaboration and accountability, providing more time to focus on their important mission of helping people.

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Mark Weeks, Senior Project Manager,
WA Mental Health Commission



Government of Western Australia
Mental Health Commission

Customer:

Government of Western Australia
Mental Health Commission

Industry:

Project Management

Organization Size:

250-499 Employees

Region:

APAC

Website:

mhc.wa.gov.au

The Mental Health Commission's mission is to be a respected leader in commissioning, providing and partnering in the delivery of: prevention, promotion and early; intervention programs; treatment, services and supports; and research, policy and system improvements. The Commission was established on 8 March 2010 to lead mental health reform throughout the State and work towards a modern effective mental health system that places the individual and their recovery at the centre of its focus.

Background

The Western Australian Mental Health Commission strives to establish mental health, alcohol and other drug systems that meet the needs of Western Australia's population and deliver quality outcomes for individuals and their families. A part of the State Government, the Commission was established in 2010 to lead mental health reform throughout the State and work towards a modern effective mental health system. It is responsible for a range of services and initiatives, including prevention, community support, treatment services and supporting systems & processes, with a total budget of \$1.013 billion for 2020-21. This breadth of programs and projects requires collaboration across the Commission and consistent tracking to deliver effectively and efficiently.

"We have an important mission to help the people of Western Australia and partner with a range of providers including public health service providers, non-government organisations and private service providers," says Commissioner Jennifer McGrath. "From harm prevention campaigns at music festivals to operationalising new short-term accommodation facilities in Kalgoorlie and Geraldton, the Commission manages a considerable range of programs that vary in size and scale. Each has unique requirements that may see the Commission's staff working closely with individuals, communities, health services, NGOs and many other government agencies."

Solution

Within the Commission, Mark Weeks, Senior Project Manager, is focused on efficiency, effectiveness and continuous improvement. With a focus on managing planning and improving performance, the Business Planning team identified that emerging collaboration tools could improve visibility across all programs and support project managers.

While the team was working effectively using tools like Excel, Word and other Microsoft applications, there was the opportunity to adopt cloud-based

Customer:

The original use was to support audit and risk management and the implementation of project management within the Commission. It began as a small test with a single user and self-implementation, which has since grown considerably to help project managers across the Commission plan and track projects, programs and initiatives in a centralised, real-time location for greater transparency and with improved reporting capability.

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Before Smartsheet, it was hard to get a consistent experience. The way that we implemented Control Center forced us to make a certain set of templates, and to hold true to that set of templates so we'd be able to do global updates. It forced us to think about how we needed to create those templates to generate the robust program and portfolio level reporting we wanted. Now that project reporting naturally flows from our daily work.

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software to improve visibility and real-time collaboration. The Commission began trialling the use of Smartsheet in 2015 as an opt-in program for its project managers to extend the range of tools.

“As the platform manager for Smartsheet here, my role is to encourage people to utilise Smartsheet in support of progressing their work and be a source of information about project, program and portfolio management as well,” says Mark Weeks. “Like all new tools, teams were hesitant about having more work to do but have since become confident using it and seeing some of the time savings.”

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A new foundation for project, program and portfolio management

The Commission now has nearly 200 Smartsheet users or approximately 80% of staff. It is used broadly across the organisation in Project, Program and Operational Planning and Management; Risk Management & Internal Audit; Management of Meetings; and Ministerial Reporting and Correspondence Tracking.

Various teams use a range of existing and custom-build templates to help staff use the Smartsheet platform, simplify processes and allow for communication with key stakeholders. These are being used widely across different initiatives in the Commission. For example, as part of its Strong Spirit Strong Mind registered training program for Aboriginal workforce development. Smartsheet is used to track milestones, capture when tasks need to be updated and as a planning tool to ensure the optimal outcomes for all participants.

The Smartsheet platform is used to improve ease of reporting, tracking and accountability for all managers. As a cloud-based solution, it can be accessed securely from anywhere – useful for projects and programs that involve travel around the state or to remote areas. Operating off a centralised sheet reduces issues around version control while meeting data security and record management requirements.

In a Nutshell:

Rather than sharing across static documents, project and program managers can create custom access to sheets in Smartsheet to give collaborators the information they need in a secure way. Internally, teams at the Commission are using the platform to run meetings and clearly map roles and deadlines on projects.



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The nature of the Commission's programs and projects means it works closely with other agencies, government workers and NGOs. Rather than sharing across static documents, project and program managers can create custom access to sheets in Smartsheet to give collaborators the information they need in a secure way. Internally, teams at the Commission are using the platform to run meetings and clearly map roles and deadlines on projects.

"It's great to see teams huddling together with Smartsheet displaying on screens around the office out in the open, collaborating together, running team meetings using the platform to make sure they're all on the same page," says Mark Weeks. "It's helping to manage projects that make real change in the community – tracking the broad range of tasks involved and with clear responsibilities for team members centrally, in real-time. Even spinning up new sheets based on templates takes less than five minutes, giving everyone more time to focus on their work."

In the hands of employees

Mark Weeks says running projects, programs and operational components from a centralised location has helped beyond just execution, but also for the ease of reporting internally and to other stakeholders. Repeated tasks, like preparing the Commission's Annual Report, are now streamlined with the use of Smartsheet and help the project manager responsible to consistently deliver.

More broadly, employees are able to gain peace of mind from the added transparency. They can quickly and clearly understand project and program status and responsibilities, and automated reminders can keep them on track for certain milestones so they can focus on executing work to benefit the broader community of Western Australia.

"The WA Mental Health Commission remains dedicated to leading the mental health, alcohol and other drug (AOD) sector and managing critical work to support reform. Equipping our staff with the right tools to collaborate and execute on projects and programs is critical; by putting an intuitive and effective platform like Smartsheet in the hands of Commission staff, we can better support their work," adds Mark Weeks.

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