



CoMHWA

Consumers of Mental Health WA (Inc)

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2nd November 2016

Michael Cheeseman,
Manager
Brass Monkey
Cnr James & Williams Sts
Northbridge, WA, 6003
brass.monkey.hotel@alhgroup.com.au

Dear Michael,

Stigmatizing and discriminatory Asylum Party

Consumers of Mental Health WA (CoMHWA) is WA's peak consumer organisation led for mental health consumers, by consumers. We are dedicated to supporting mental health reform and recovery of people with lived experience of mental health challenges. We seek to reduce stigma and raise understanding and respect for consumers in our community.

On the 31st October, the Brass Monkey held an event, the Asylum Party. CoMHWA became aware of the event through complaints received by our office from people expressing their concern about the event.

The Brass Monkey Facebook Page featured event images of a young woman in a strait jacket and invited attendees to "Get admitted to the institution and GO CRAZY".

Around 1 in 5 people will experience mental health issues in any one year. It is inappropriate to stereotype us or portray mental health issues and treatments as forms of entertainment.

Such an event is stigmatizing and discriminating, and if we were to pursue this matter with the Equal Opportunity Commission, AHG Group is likely to be found in breach of anti-discrimination laws.

CoMHWA is calling on the Brass Monkey to immediately issue the **attached statement** on its website and advice CoMHWA of its publication.

Sincerely,

Shauna Gaebler
Chief Executive Officer

Notice of Public Apology

The Brass Monkey is committed to ensuring all members of the public have equal opportunity to access and enjoy our premises and events.

We offer a public apology for misrepresenting people with mental health issues by using a mental health theme for our 2016 Halloween event.

Mental health issues are common and can affect anyone in our communities. People affected by mental health issues have an equal right to access public events, and the use of stereotypes or mental health themes for entertainment is therefore inappropriate.

We recognise that the event was likely to cause unwanted mental health stigma and regret that we hosted the event. We commit to ensuring mental health is not an entertainment theme for our hotel premises or events in future.