Handout 7: Workers in the Mental Health Sector

A number of professional groups work in the mental health sector. These are:

**Psychiatrists** - these are specialist doctors who are trained to diagnose (identification of an illness, based on a particular pattern of symptoms) and treat (including prescribing medication) mental illness and mental disorder

**Community mental health nurses** - these nurses work out in the community to assess, support and provide education to people with a mental illness

**Clinical psychologists** - psychologists who are trained in the assessment and treatment of emotional or behavioural problems. They can work with individuals, couples, families or groups

**Social workers** - trained to understand and assess problems and issues facing people. They provide counselling, support, information and practical assistance to people with a mental illness and their families: they also liaise with other agencies

**Occupational therapists** - assess vocational and living skills, and are involved in rehabilitation programs for people who have a mental illness.