



Engaging the Lived Experience Workforce

- The Lived Experience workforce refers to people (consumers and carers) employed in job roles that require them to identify as having experienced mental ill-health and/or Alcohol and Other Drug concerns .
- It is important to value lived experience in all staff (Lived Experience and non-Lived Experience roles), attract people with lived experience into the broader workforce and provide suitable flexibility and support.

Value of the Lived Experience Workforce (refer to [Charter of Lived Experience Support](#))

- Their ability to utilise their lived experience to assist others in their recovery.
- Their ability to model recovery and provide hope for others on their journey.
- The ability to provide services with insight about how services can best support people.
- Effective and targeted sharing of personal stories .
- Provides multiple perspectives on mental ill-health and recovery.
- Provide an opportunity to de-stigmatise mental illness.
- Provides people with the knowledge that they are not alone on the journey.
- Provides a means to alleviate stress and improve well-being for carers.
- Lived Experience workers themselves benefit from well structured and supported Lived Experience roles.
- Mutuality and a sense of community are a key contribution of the Lived Experience workforce.

Recruitment

- Tailor job descriptions for Lived Experience roles and ensure the requirements are clear on induction.
- Interview panels need to include consumer and carer consultants.
- Ensure Lived Experiences have adequate hours of service to fulfil their responsibilities.
- Take care to recruit Lived Experiences to positions who have the skills to fulfil the various roles.

Induction

- Provide clear and comprehensive orientation to the service, staff, sites and processes.
- Ensure Lived Experience workers are oriented to local Lived Experience support networks. And provide calendar of events on induction.
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Support

- Provide a suitable workforce structure to support Lived Experiences with clear and appropriate reporting relationships.
- Provide Lived Experience to Lived Experience supervision for all Lived Experience workers.
- Support Lived Experience workers to attend the local Lived Experience support network meetings in order to enhance a sense of community and increase awareness of the broader Lived Experience workforce.
- Provide education for staff who will interact with the Lived Experience workforce.
- Tailor mandatory training requirements for Lived Experience workers and provide workforce development opportunities that suit their roles.

Addressing stigma and power dynamics

- Provide education and change management for staff to assimilate the paradigm of a Lived Experience workforce and actively address any concerns.
- Actively address workforce stigma regarding mental ill-health within the staff group and outwardly value the lived experience of all workers.
- Offer the opportunity for all staff (Lived Experience and non-Lived Experience) to develop a wellness plan.
- Promote the importance of self-care for all staff.
- Provide similar workplace flexibility for all staff.
- Include a lived experience as desired criteria for all job descriptions.
- Include consumer and carer representatives on all interview panels.
- Recruit people with lived experience of mental ill-health to all levels of the organisation.
- Provide opportunities for advancement within the organisational structure.
- Consider introducing a statement of Recognition Of Lived Experience to meetings and events following the Acknowledgement to Country.

Example Statement

We recognise and value those individuals and their supporters who have a lived experience of mental ill health and the important contribution that they make to the development and delivery of health and community services.

OR

We recognise and value the knowledge and wisdom of people with a lived experience of mental ill health, their families, supporters and the practitioners who work with them. We celebrate their strengths and resilience in facing the challenges associated with their recovery and value their important role in the development and delivery of health and community services.