

Creating opportunities to work strategically across the region with multi-sectoral partners

TIP SHEET 1



Engaging Lived Experience Advisors

The Eastern Mental Health Service Coordination Alliance aims to ensure that people who experience mental ill-health and co-occurring concerns and the people who support them have access to responsive, appropriate and collaborative services to assist with the multiple facets of their individual recovery journey.

EMHSCA have been working with the members of the Dual Diagnosis Consumer and Carer Advisory Council since 2013. This council has provided the following recommendations to EMHSCA regarding effective engagement of Lived Experience advisors.

- Lived Experience Advisors provide consultation on consumer and carer related issues of service provision.
- Lived Experience Advisors may provide other support to consumers, carers and service providers such as group facilitation, workforce development, peer to peer engagement etc... and their titles may vary accordingly.

Key recommendations

- Involve Lived Experience advisors from the outset of the development of a piece of work.
- Communicate exactly what is wanted from Lived Experience advisors.
- Communicate where the information is going and why it has been requested.
- Strengthen feedback mechanisms and provide greater transparency about the outcomes of the advice provided by Lived Experience advisors .
- Provide training to peers (e.g. Health Centre Issues training) to support committee participation when required.
- Include Lived Experience advisors on all subcommittees.
- Ensure Lived Experience advisors are supported to participate in peer networks (e.g. Eastern Peer Support Network). This enhances the representative and 'Lived Experience' nature of their advisory capacity.
- Ensure that equal consumer and carer representation is commissioned.
- Ensure peers are reimbursed for travel, attending meetings and preparation time.
- Those participating remain fully informed of any correspondence pertaining to the position.
- Lived Experience advisors may elect to opt out of an activity if they identify a perceived conflict of interest.





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Lived Experience Leadership

The recommendations from the Mental Health Royal Commission report March 2021 include the notion of developing Lived Experience Leadership across programs and organisations who provide support to people experiencing Mental Health challenges.

The following are recommendations for the development of Lived Experience Leaders:

- Develop clear position descriptions to support recruitment at all levels of the organisation.
- Ensure appropriate time is allocated to briefing LE advisors prior to meetings.
- Support LE advisors leading agenda item discussions in Leadership meetings with other non LE staff.
- Provide briefing documents and resources in an accessible format.
- Provide information about common acronyms.
- Provide opportunities for leadership skills development and training.
- Provide Leadership mentoring
- Ensure outcomes of LE input are provided as clear feedback to the LE advisors.