



Expression of Interest for Lived and Living Experience Workforce Consumer Advisory Group

Background

Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council (VMIAC) is an organisation for people with a lived experience of mental health or emotional challenges across all of Victoria. We refer to these individuals, particularly those who have needed to access relevant support and services, as consumers. You can read more about what a consumer is here: <https://www.vmiac.org.au/info/about-consumers/>.

VMIAC is run for consumers, by consumers, which means all staff members who work at VMIAC identify as having their own lived or living experience of mental health and/or emotional challenges. You can find out more about VMIAC on the website: <https://www.vmiac.org.au/>.

A consumer advisory group (CAG) is a space where multiple people with lived experience of mental health and emotional challenges come together and share their experiences of being able to (or unable to) access mental health services, to give feedback on these services and systems. When someone shares their experiences in this setting, their feedback and advice is referred to as their consumer perspective.

The lived and living experience workforce is a phrase that refers to all staff members who are employed specifically because of their consumer perspective. All VMIAC staff are part of the mental health lived and living experience workforce.

Purpose

In August 2023 VMIAC was provided with grant funding by the Department of Health to employ a Senior Consumer Consultant. The purpose of this role is to:

- Enable consumer perspectives to support and guide workforce projects and initiatives.
- Support the department to work collaboratively with consumers.
- Provide consumer perspective to LLEW initiatives funded by the Department of Health.

In line with the above, VMIAC will be holding a Consumer Advisory Group to hear the voices of Victorian consumers.

What's Involved in the Consumer Advisory Group?

- Opportunities to review what The Department of Health are working on in the mental health workforce space.
- Opportunities to contribute to or review works that are being done by VMIAC and its partner organisations.
- Working with other members of the advisory group (8 in total)

Your participation will be supported by VMIAC's Senior Consumer Consultant in line with your support needs and preference. Your feedback will be shared with the Department of Health, without naming you or breaching your privacy and confidentiality.



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Who should take part?

- Individuals who have experienced mental health challenges, trauma or emotional distress and/or who may have accessed mental health or other related services specifically to support their mental wellbeing.
- Individuals who have not previously had the opportunity to share their thoughts and experiences about the mental health systems and services will be prioritized. For example, people who have not had experience on a consumer advisory group before.
- The group will strive to be inclusive of diverse voices and discrimination will not be tolerated. The first meeting will be used to create a group agreement to make sure this is possible, and we will revisit this agreement at the start of each meeting.
- First Nations and Indigenous Peoples, People of Colour, and Individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, including individuals with migrant experiences or refugee and asylum seeker experiences are welcomed and encouraged to join.
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer, A sexual and other identities (LGBTIQ+)
- Individuals who are disabled or identify as having a disability

Participation and payment

- Monthly meetings for 8 months with the possibility of extension
- The first meeting is planned to take place between the end of January or early February 2024
- 2-4 hours per month, paid at \$359 per group attendance.

How to join

Expressions of interest open on 3rd January 2024 at 9:00am, and close on 24th Jan at 9:00am. Please note that only 8 members will be selected, and therefore not all expressions of interest will be guaranteed a place. To express interest, scan the QR code or visit <https://form.jotform.com/233459143196057>. For assistance, please contact the facilitator, Lauren via email LLEW@vmiac.org.au or phone 0433 547 370.



All individuals who complete this form will be contacted by Monday 29th January 2024 with an outcome. If you have not been selected, you will be notified via email. Please check you have entered your contact details in correctly. An online information session for members will be held on Thursday 1st February 2024 at 12:30pm, where we will vote on our preferred meeting location, days and times. Our first meeting will then take place during the week of the 26th of February 2024.

If you'd like to provide feedback on this process please call our reception team on (03) 9380 3900 and ask to speak to the Program Manager, Tash Gore. You can also email reception@vmiac.org.au to engage in the process of making a formal compliment or complaint.