

The Mental Health Commission's (Commission) Lived Experience (Peer) Workforces Project (Project) aims to guide the development of thriving state-wide consumer, family and significant other Lived Experience (Peer) workforces across the mental health, suicide prevention and alcohol and other drug sectors. This includes the implementation of the [Western Australian Lived Experience \(Peer\) Workforces Framework](#). This Project supports strategic directions outlined in the WA State Priorities Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs 2020–2024 and the Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Workforce Strategic Framework 2020-2025.

To manage the development and delivery of the Project, a Steering Committee comprising of members representing portfolios and perspectives across the sectors was established in 2021, with membership expanded in September 2023 to ensure that relevant stakeholders for the next stages of the Project are represented. The Steering Committee provides strategic oversight and guidance to the Project. The Steering Committee, co-chaired by Margaret Doherty, representing the Family Significant Other/Community mental health, alcohol and other drug and forensic portfolios and Sharnae Zanotti, A/Director System Governance and Stakeholder Engagement, met on 11 December 2023. This communique is to provide all stakeholders with information and outcomes from the meeting.

Steering Committee members centred discussions around the peer principle of authenticity and set intentions for how authenticity should be upheld and reflected throughout the meeting discussions. The Commission's Workforce Project team then provided updates on key topics to inform the Steering Committee on the project's progress.

Members were informed of a welcome meeting held on 4 December 2023 with the WA Health Service Providers Lived Experience (Peer) Workforces Coordinators (who are currently onboarded). This was an online welcome meeting run for informal introductions. These sessions will continue bi-weekly to provide a networking space while the Lived Experience (Peer) Workforces Coordinator Portal is in development.

An update was provided regarding the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Lived Experience-Led Peer Worker Guide (Guide). Through the project team, the Black Dog Institute's Working Group and Steering Committee members are working collaboratively to provide feedback on the Guide, to ultimately arrive at a finalised version. Planning for the Guide's launch event(s) is now underway.

Members expressed appreciation for the Peer Work Positives training initiative, acknowledging the coordinated efforts to promote attendance at the sessions. This series of sessions have now concluded but Consumers of Mental Health WA (CoMHWA) are available to engage on a fee-for-service basis with individual organisations if requested.

Successful applicants to the Lived Experience (Peer) Supervision and Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work Scholarships have been notified of their acceptance and have provided positive feedback, noting an efficient and well-communicated application process. Congratulations were extended to CoMHWA for their commendable work towards this outcome.

The Commission's Communications team is currently engaged in supporting the project team to progress the Lived Experience (Peer) Workforces website with focus on creating accessible and user-friendly website template styles. Templates will be presented to the Steering Committee for feedback in 2024.

To bring the meeting to a close, members expressed appreciation for the collective commitment to upholding the integral guiding principle of authenticity.

More information about the Project can be found on the [Commission's website](#). For further information or if you have any queries, please email the Mental Health Commission:

LivedExperienceWorkforces@mhc.wa.gov.au