



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background:

Consumer participation is a key priority across national and international jurisdictions to enable the development and implementation of effective mental health policy and programs, and to continuously improve all aspects of mental health services, including staff and management accountability and access and quality.

Consumer participation in the development, delivery and evaluation of mental health services is endorsed by national and state policies, including the *National Mental Health Strategy*, *NSW Mental Health Strategic Plan* and the policies and documents that underpin it.

The Consumer Subcommittee was established in 2009 and is jointly chaired by the Chief Executive Officer of Being (the Peak Consumer Organisation), and the Executive Director, Mental Health Branch, NSW Ministry of Health.

Purpose

To provide advice to the NSW Mental Health Program Council and the NSW Ministry of Health on policy, planning and strategic issues relating to mental health consumers in NSW public mental health services with the following aims:

- to improve service delivery; service quality and service access for mental health consumers in NSW public mental health services.
- to ensure that mental health consumer concerns and voice are given appropriate priority in accordance with Government objectives.
- to facilitate promotion and prevention initiatives to increase awareness and understanding of and ability to respond to mental illness amongst the broader community, service providers and carers and consumers.

Activities

The Consumer Sub Committee is to:

- Develop an annual work plan identifying key strategic priorities to progress for each year
- Advise the Mental Health Program Council on the appropriate mechanisms to obtain consumer input for the development, implementation and review of policies and programs – on a case by case basis.
- Nominate expert consumer advisers to participate in time limited working groups, workshops and consultations to develop and review policies and programs as required.
- Provide comment on policies and procedures that go before the Mental Health Program Council to ensure that the interests of consumers are adequately and appropriately reflected;
- Provide advice to the Mental Health Program Council and the NSW Ministry of Health on issues of concern to mental health consumers.

Governance:

Chair: The Executive Director of Mental Branch, NSW Ministry of Health or delegate and the Chief Executive Officer of Being or delegate will co-chair the Consumer Sub-Committee.

Secretariat: Secretariat support to the Consumer Sub-Committee will be provided by the Strategic Commissioning Team, Mental Health Branch, NSW Ministry of Health. This support will include:

- Developing the agenda in consultation with the Chair
- Distributing meeting papers and minutes at least five days prior to meeting
- Drafting and Circulating meeting minutes within 10 working days of the meeting
- Following up actions arising from the decisions of the Subcommittee
- Distributing material associated with the work of the Subcommittee



- Maintaining a record of out-of-session papers, circulating papers and recording responses from members
- Arranging venues, catering for meetings and teleconferencing as required.

Reporting: Key issues, input or recommendations stemming from the Consumer Sub Committee Meetings will be submitted the NSW Mental Health Program Council as relevant.

Confidentiality

Matters discussed at the meeting, reports comments/feedback and recommendations and related documents are confidential, unless wider distribution is agreed by members at the time of the meeting. Recommendations to the Mental Health Branch and the Mental Health Program Council are also confidential.

Payment:

- Consumer representatives who are not paid through the LHD for their time on the Sub-Committee will be paid a sitting fee of \$110 for half day and \$220 per full day by the Mental Health Branch. This will also apply to participation in workshops and working groups. Sitting fees do not apply to pre-reading.
- Payment of fees for any other out of session work will be considered by the NSW Ministry of Health as appropriate.
- This arrangement is consistent with provisions made by the NSW Mental Health Commission for members of the Ministerially appointed Mental Health Community Advisory Council. It is guided by the December 2012 directive *Classification and Remuneration Framework for NSW Government Boards and Committees* (Document No. D2012_005, File No. PSC01939). Noting that the NSW Government is not required to pay sitting fees to members of boards and committees that are not Cabinet approved and Ministerially appointed.
- Consumer representatives will be additionally reimbursed for out of pocket expenses and travel expenses incurred for involvement in the Sub-Committee and to participate at meetings and working groups in accordance with relevant NSW Health Policies.
- Travel and accommodation arrangements for Sub-Committee meetings should be arranged by members. The Secretariat will engage with members to determine travel and accommodation needs on a case by case basis.

Membership:

Structure

- The Sub Committee will consist of 7 core members, who will refer to a broader group of expert consumer advisors as needed for input into development and review of specific policies and programs.
- There are two standing members – the Chair of the NSW Public Mental Health Consumer Workers Committee and the Chief Executive Officer of Being.
- The Consumer Sub Committee will nominate a delegate for representation on the NSW Mental Health Program Council.

Process

- The 7 core members of the Sub Committee will be responsible for meeting quarterly, developing and progressing the Sub Committee work plan, coordinating consumer input to policy and program development and review as needed and representing issues to the NSW Mental Health Program Council.
- Membership on the Sub-Committee and the expert consumer advisor group is at the discretion of the Co-Chairs. The Co-Chairs have the right to review the membership of any member subject to compliance with the terms of reference.

Core Members

1. Executive Director of Mental Health Branch or delegate;



2. Chief Executive Officer, Being or delegate
3. Chair, NSW Mental Health Public Consumer Workers Committee
4. A person with a lived experience of mental illness from a regional, rural or remote Local Health District
5. A person with a lived experience of mental illness from a metropolitan Local Health District
6. A person with a lived experience of mental illness representing forensic mental health and who has encountered the Justice System
7. A person with a lived experience of mental illness representing the NGO sector

Expert Consumer Advisers (Total 10 positions)

- Two young people with a lived experience of mental illness representing young people
- A person with a lived experience of mental illness representing people from CALD backgrounds
- Two people with a lived experience of mental illness representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
- A person with a lived experience of mental illness who is not employed in a consumer position representing rural or remote communities
- A person with a lived experience of mental illness who is not employed in a consumer position representing metropolitan communities
- A person with a lived experience of mental illness representing older people
- A person with a lived experience of mental illness representing people in the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex community
- A person with a lived experience of mental illness representing people with an intellectual disability.
Note: Arrangements for a support worker will be made for participation of this adviser as required. Meeting room / venue will also be arranged for this adviser to conduct out of session work of the Sub Committee as required.

Vacancies

- Vacancies will be recruited as they arise. The Sub Committee will ensure that no more than 50% of membership is vacant at any given time. The following process applies to recruiting vacant positions:
 - Selection criteria will be developed and approved by Being and the Mental Health Branch in consultation with core members of the Sub Committee
 - Advertising for vacant positions will be published on Being's website and through other avenues and sites as appropriate
 - Interviews for vacant positions will be conducted by the co-chairs or their nominated representative.
 - Support will be provided to assist applicants with the application process, preparing for and participating in interviews as required.
 - Members will be appointed for a term of three (3) years which can be extended for an additional 3 year term on request
 - Appointments cannot exceed a maximum of six (6) years
 - Following the completion of 2 terms, a gap of one year is required before reapplying for appointment on the Consumer Sub-Committee.

Participation

- Members are responsible for:
 - Attending at least 80 percent of meetings annually
 - Reading meeting and out-of-session papers
 - Nominating expert consumer advisors to provide input to policy and program development and review
 - Providing timely comments on policies and procedures going before the NSW Mental Health Program Council
 - Representing and advocating for the views of the lived experience constituency.

**Frequency:**

- Meetings will be held 4 times per calendar year prior to each NSW Mental Health Program Council meeting. Teleconference participation will be available.
- Where urgent advice on policies is required the Secretariat will send out-of-session papers to members for their comment.
- Out-of-session papers are only to be used in special circumstances and limited to one out-of-session paper a month.
- Working groups and workshops with nominated expert consumer advisors will be convened as needed to work on specific projects as required.

Review:

The terms of reference will be reviewed at the end of the first year; and every two years thereafter.

Mental Health Branch
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