

Queensland Health Mental Health Framework Peer Workforce Support & Development 2019

Acknowledgements

The Queensland Government pays respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander elders, past present and emerging, on whose land we work. We also acknowledge the important role played by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as the First People, their traditions, cultures and customs across Queensland.

We also acknowledge people with a lived experience of a mental illness as well as those impacted by suicide, their families, carers and support people. We recognise the importance of their role and voice in the Queensland Health Mental Health Workforce.

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Forward

The involvement of people with a lived experience in the health system and across our mental health services continues to build momentum.

This includes the engagement of peer workers.

In Queensland, employment of peer workers in mental health began in 2006 with less than twelve Consumer Consultants employed across seven Hospital and Health Services (HHS).

This workforce has now grown to more than 90 Full Time Equivalent staff employed across the state in a range of peer and carer roles.

*The Fifth National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan*¹ (Fifth Plan) notes that “peer workers or workers with a lived experience of mental illness, play an important role in building recovery-oriented approaches to care.”

*Connecting Care to Recovery 2016-2021: A plan for Queensland’s State-funded mental health, alcohol and other drug services*² commits to lived experience engagement and participation and *notes* the value of the peer workforce in supporting the quality of Queensland’s mental health, alcohol and other drug services.

A key objective of our *Lived Experience Engagement and Participation Strategy*³ (LEEPS) is to plan for the development of the lived experience workforce across mental health alcohol and other drug services within Queensland Health and HHS.

Employment of people with a lived experience enriches our mental health, alcohol and other drugs services. Lived experience engagement and participation in the service system works toward a better system for all.

We know that when peer workers are integrated into service delivery there is a reduction in hospital admission rates; improved social inclusion; reduction in stigma and an increased sense of hope for individuals, carers and their families.

Peer workers use the experience of their recovery journey to support people with mental health issues, through peer support, positive role modelling, education, facilitating self-advocacy and providing information and opportunities to encourage participation in the public mental health system.

Building on the existing peer workforce, this Framework seeks to support HHS to further develop, strengthen and consolidate their peer workforce.

I would like to acknowledge the work undertaken by the Consumer and Carer Workforce Network and reference group members in the development of this document.

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¹ *The Fifth National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan*

² *Connecting Care to Recovery 2016-2021: A plan for Queensland’s State-funded mental health, alcohol and other drug services*

³ *Lived Experience Engagement and Participation Strategy*

Defining Peer Work

There are multiple definitions of peer work and peer workers. For the purposes of this Framework, we have drawn upon the definition from the NSW Mental Health Commission Peer Work Hub - “A mental health peer worker is someone employed on the basis of their personal lived experience of mental illness and recovery (consumer peer worker), or their experience of supporting family or friends with mental illness (carer peer worker). This lived experience is an essential qualification for their job, in addition to other skills and experience required for the particular role they undertake.”⁴. Within this document the term ‘peer worker’ refers to both consumer peer workers and carer peer workers.

Introduction

Over the last two decades significant reforms have been made to the mental health service delivery environment in Queensland and Australia, including the emerging and rapidly growing role of the peer workforce.

Peer workers are an essential workforce within the Queensland public mental health system, come from a wide variety of backgrounds and have a range of skills, knowledge and life experience.

Peer workers provide a unique perspective and offer hope to individuals on their recovery journey by showing that recovery is possible. Use of their lived experience and person-led approach complements the work of multidisciplinary team members and, in this way, they are an integral part of the team.

Through the employment and support of peer workers, an organisation can show its commitment to recovery-oriented approaches and belief that recovery is possible⁵.

However, the Fifth Plan identified that while peer workers play an important role in providing support and modelling positive and recovery-oriented experiences, their role is sporadically used and poorly supported. At the national level it has been noted that the expansion of the peer worker role in Australia appears ad hoc and lacks structured workforce development.

For Queensland, a stocktake of employment arrangements across Queensland Health’s public mental health services⁶ identified there is significant variation in employment of the peer workforce across the state, including considerable differences in responsibilities, training opportunities, pay scales and naming conventions.

The *Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug (MHAOD) Workforce Development Framework 2016-2021*⁷ acknowledges that peer workers are valued by individuals, carers and families in a range of settings and highlights the need for improved clarity on the roles, education and training, career pathways, leadership responsibilities and supports required for the peer workforce.

⁴ <http://peerworkhub.com.au/what-is-peer-work/>

⁵ *Identifying barriers to change: The lived experience worker as a valued member of the mental health team*, Byrne, L., Roennfeldt, H. and O’Shea, P., commissioned by the Queensland Mental Health Commission (QMHC), 2017.

⁶ Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drugs Branch 2018

⁷ *Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug (MHAOD) Workforce Development Framework 2016-2021*

The Framework

This Framework is specific to the mental health peer workforce in Queensland's public mental health services. A framework for the alcohol and other drugs peer workforce will be progressed following implementation of the Queensland Health Mental Health Framework for Peer Workforce Support and Development.

The Framework has been designed to achieve the following benefits:

- Improved state-wide support and consistency for the mental health peer workforce in Queensland Health
- Greater role clarity for the peer workforce, including scope of practice and core competencies
- Improved supervision and support
- Improved training and education opportunities
- A structured career pathway
- Improved reporting structures
- Alignment with national approaches in peer workforce development.

Key components of the Framework include:

1. Peer work values
2. Employment Principles
3. Support for the Workforce
4. Professional Development
5. Scope of Practice
6. Roles and Responsibilities

The Framework does not provide recommendations on numbers of peer workers for mental health services. Future development and expansion of the peer workforce should be considered as part of local and state health workforce and service planning processes.

Development of the Framework has been informed and guided by numerous studies and literature reviews on mental health peer work including Health Workforce Australia 2014, Health Consumers Queensland Literature Scan conducted for Children's Health Queensland (unpublished) in 2017 and the New South Wales Consumer Advisory Group in 2010.

1. Peer Work Values⁸

While peer workers are bound by the values of the HHS in which they are employed there is a set of core values that has been developed that are intrinsic to consumer rights and recovery. The values noted are necessary for the peer workforce and will help guide their roles.

Value	Definition
Self-determination	Being aware of power imbalances and their effects, knowing and respecting human rights, facilitating personal agency and choice.
Connection	Lived/common experience is used to make connection in the relationship. Connection is the basis on which trust and meaningful, effective learning is possible.
Mutuality	Both people learn, grow and are challenged through the relationship. Mutuality means being in relation with another person, developing skill and expertise while staying present and aware of our own reactions, viewpoints, needs and assumptions.
Lived experience as expertise	The expertise that arises from a lived experience is of equal value to other types of expertise including lived experience of being a peer worker or carer peer worker.
Responsibility	We are not responsible for the other person, we are responsible for our own thoughts, feelings and actions. We are considerate, and we share responsibility for the relationship. We acknowledge and respect each individual's boundaries.
Authenticity	We are honest in relating with one another and act from our fundamental humanity.
Transparency	Availability of full information required for collaboration, cooperation, and decision making without hidden agendas.
Hope	Having an expectation of positive outcomes for each other.

2. Employment Principles

All HHSs are strongly encouraged to recruit peer workers to form part of their mental health service teams. Peer workers are specialised non-clinical positions that work are integrated into multidisciplinary teams in mental health services.

To promote the critical role of the peer workforce, it is important to consider the following factors when recruiting:⁹

- FTE requirements will be dependent on the size of the HHS and the number of services provided. In determining requirements, it is essential that the following factors are considered, and peer workers are allowed sufficient time to perform all aspects of their role including:
 - Undertaking administrative requirements such as reporting and responding to emails.
 - Preparation time in preparing group activities, planning events, attendance at meetings etc
 - Mentoring and professional supervision and any other professional development activities.
 - Travel between services, and to and from meetings (for some positions).
- Peer workers should ideally be permanent employees (either full-time or part-time) with consideration of larger HHSs having a casual pool/temporary pool to cover contingencies and be available on an as-needs basis. A casual workforce should not replace permanent opportunities for the peer workforce.

⁸ Adapted from *Consumer Perspective Supervision Framework- A Framework for Supporting the Consumer Workforce*, produced by a partnership between The Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) workforce branch, the *Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council* (VMIAC) and the Centre for Psychiatric Nursing (CPN).

⁹ NSW Mental Health Consumer Workers Committee (NSW MH CWC) & NSW Consumer Advisory Group – Mental Health Inc (NSW CAG), 2013. *Framework for the NSW Public Mental Health Consumer Workforce*. New South Wales: NSW CAG.

- Peer workers are paid employees and peer work differs from voluntary work¹⁰ Volunteers that assist in HHSs have a different role and accountabilities compared to paid peer workers.
- Peer workers maintain similar professional boundaries to other health workers. However, the nature of peer work often involves the sharing of personal lived experience in a way that is unique and dual relationships with the services they work for and consumers and carers may be common.
- It is important that peer workers have sufficient training, support and ongoing, specialised supervision to explore and navigate boundaries in their work to ensure this is implemented appropriately and that they are able to protect their own mental health and wellbeing¹¹
- A peer worker is not a counsellor, a friend, a sympathetic listener or an adviser.¹²

3. Support for the Workforce

Clear line management is necessary for all workers and the peer workforce requires line management which understands, supports and values peer workers.

In some HHS there may be senior peer roles in place, therefore it is suggested that these positions provide line management for the peer workforce. In smaller HHS, line management should be consistent and ensure the worker has appropriate support and supervision.

Line management supervision concentrates on job skills, performance and support in the workplace and not the worker's health or mental health status. The workplace expectations for peer workers are equivalent to the expectations of all Queensland Health employees. It is important that peer workers are offered reasonable adjustments as needed.

As with any position working closely with consumers or carers in HHSs, the peer workforce should be provided with supervision similar to that offered to clinical staff as part of good practice in service delivery.

This supervision should have a similar purpose and structure to clinical supervision. In the peer workforce this supervision will provide a process to:

- Reflect and review current practices
- Discuss strategies for working with consumers and carers, other staff and stakeholders or complex situations, ensuring that this is done in a confidential context
- De-brief on any emerging issues
- Explore new practices, ideas and perspectives related to the peer workforce
- Support the peer worker in their professional role
- Link peer support to the organisational context.

Effective supervision evaluates how well peer workers are using their peer worker skills in the work environment, and the challenges, issues, dilemmas and tensions they encounter in practice. It is recommended that the professional supervisor be a more experienced peer worker who can provide the structure and a safety net to effectively support the peer workforce.

Supervision should be provided on a regular basis and peer workers should have the ability to access supervision when needed or ad hoc as issues emerge.

In the case of smaller rural and remote HHS it may be necessary to provide this supervision from a larger facility via video link. Alternatively, if there is no peer supervisor available, suitable allied health professionals may provide supervision.

Supervisors need to have the skills and training to provide the support and supervision. This training

¹⁰ *Peer work in Australia*. Meagher et al

¹¹ Chappel Deckert & Statz-Hill, 2016 Job satisfaction of peer providers employed in mental health centers: A systematic review, *Social Work in Mental Health*, 14:5, 564-582

¹² Ibid Meagher et al

should be included in professional development planning for the peer workforce.

Additional support can be provided to the peer workforce through peer mentors who can provide an opportunity to discuss non-confidential support matters and provide advice and guidance. Peer mentors provide peer to peer support and should ideally be a more experienced colleague from the HHS or another service. Mentoring should be considered for new employees to enable them to build their skills and better understand the role.

As the peer workforce have a lived experience of a mental health issues it is essential that mechanisms are provided to ensure they are supported in all areas of their employment.

Employment of Queensland Health staff should be in accordance with disability, anti-discrimination legislation and diversity and inclusion principles, including the provision of reasonable adjustments. This includes reasonable adjustment in all areas of employment, including recruitment, selection and appointment.

Reasonable adjustments are defined by the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) as changes to a job which can be made to enable a worker to perform their duties more effectively in the workplace. This includes flexible working arrangements or moving the peer worker to another location if they find situations traumatising. The AHRC has developed a guide to assist managers to improve their capacity to manage workers with a mental illness, *2010 Workers with Mental Illness: a Practical Guide for Managers*¹³, this resource has further information on reasonable adjustment for workers.

4. Professional Development

As with all Queensland Health employees, peer workers should have a professional development plan developed upon commencement of employment. This plan should be reviewed and updated as required and at a minimum on an annual basis at the employee's annual performance review. This plan should be specific to the individual's needs and their current position, as well as take into consideration career aspirations.

The way in which professional development needs are addressed, for example through formal qualifications, informal training and such, should be determined by the professional development need and the individual's learning style and preferences.

Peer workers should be able to access the same professional development activities as other staff. Additionally, there are many professional development activities that should be considered for this workforce, including conflict management, supervision training and trauma informed care.

The Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work (CHC43515), or other comparable qualification, is seen as the minimum qualification requirement for a peer worker. HHSs should consider supporting employees to gain the qualification to assist with their role.

Some specific components of the Certificate IV may be offered as additional training opportunities or as an adjunct to comparable qualifications.

5. Scope of Practice

The identification of core competencies and scope of practice for the workforce is essential in creating a consistent framework for the role of the peer worker. Some of the key functions that can be undertaken by the peer worker as identified by the NSW Consumer Advisory Group,¹⁴ include:

- Peer support
- Advocacy and representation
- Coordination and management
- Education and training
- Health promotion

¹³ 2010 *Workers with Mental Illness: a Practical Guide for Managers*

¹⁴ NSW Mental Health Consumer Workers Committee (NSW MH CWC) & NSW Consumer Advisory Group – Mental Health Inc (NSW CAG), 2013. *Framework for the NSW Public Mental Health Consumer Workforce*. New South Wales: NSW CAG

- Quality and research

Peer Support

Peer workers provide peer support to consumer and carers. Peer workers connect respectfully with consumers and carers and provide a positive example of recovery. There is no universally accepted definition of peer support, however Sherry Mead in 2001 gave the following definition: *"Peer support is a system of giving and receiving help founded on key principles of respect, shared responsibility, and mutual agreement of what is helpful. Peer support is not based on psychiatric models and diagnostic criteria. It is about understanding another's situation empathically through the shared experience of emotional and psychological pain. When people find affiliation with others they feel are 'like' them, they feel a connection. This connection, or affiliation, is a deep, holistic understanding based on mutual experience where people are able to 'be' with each other without the constraints of traditional (expert/patient) relationships."*¹⁵

Advocacy and Representation

Peer workers provide support to individual consumers and carers to help them navigate the mental health system and other services they may require. This includes providing information, liaison with clinicians, supporting self-advocacy and attending appointments with the consumer or carer to assist them in understanding the information provided.

Peer workers may also participate at all levels in the system to provide systemic advocacy, this includes the mental health service, HHS or state-wide representation. Peer workers provide a lived experience perspective in policy development, service redesign and participate in workshops or forums.

Coordination and Management

Some senior peer workers have a mentoring role in supporting peer workers in the HHS. This may also include support to consumer and carer representatives and volunteers.

The tasks or activities within these key functions will differ depending on the level and experience of the peer worker, with some functions specific to workers at a higher level.

Education and Training

Peer workers may be engaged in the provision of education and training to staff and other community stakeholders (e.g. community organisations and universities). This may include presentations at orientation which provide a consumer or carer perspective. Peer workers may also be involved in facilitating education groups for consumers and carers.

Health Promotion

Peer workers may be involved in promoting positive health in relation to mental health and physical health.

Quality and Research

Peer workers may be engaged in research projects to provide a consumer and carer perspective. Peer workers may also be engaged in quality projects and accreditation processes for HHS.

Coordination and Management

Some senior level peer workers have a mentoring role in supporting peer workers in the HHS. This may

¹⁵ Mead, 2001

also include support to consumer and carer representatives and volunteers.

The tasks or activities within these key functions will differ depending on the level and experience of the peer worker, with some functions specific to workers at a higher level.

A scope of practice of activities associated with the role, including activities in and out of scope, is included in Appendix 1.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Clear role descriptions are essential to accurately define the role and support consistency across HHSs.

The survey of Queensland Health mental health services undertaken in 2018 showed inconsistency across the state in naming conventions and occupational streams. This is not unique to the Queensland Health peer workforce, Health Workforce Australia (HWA) (2014): Mental Health Peer Workforce Literature Scan noted a wide range of titles assigned to peer workers and that efforts had been made to better define roles and functions. HWA also noted that the array of titles is potentially confusing.

To improve role clarity and consistency in the role across the state, standardised naming conventions have been developed. These reflect the development of the role beyond consumer or carer to peer worker.

Additionally, a clear career pathway has been developed for the peer worker role to enable progression from AO2 – AO4 as the worker develops and positions become available. This is shown in table 1 below.

Two HHS have employed executive level (AO8) lived experience roles in recognition of the importance and value of the peer workforce. Consideration of the inclusion more senior roles within the career pathway may take place in future planning.

Peer Workforce Career Pathway	
Team Leader Peer Workforce AO6	
Peer stream	Carer stream
Senior Peer Coordinator AO5	Senior Carer Peer Coordinator AO5
Advanced Peer Worker AO4	Advanced Carer Peer Worker AO4
Peer Worker AO3	Carer Peer Worker AO3
Peer Assistant (Peer/Carer) AO2	

Table 1: Peer Workforce Career Pathway

Note: positions that are specialised e.g. CALD, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or Youth will have the same naming conventions as above, with the speciality area or role noted at the end e.g. Advanced Peer Worker - CALD.

Draft role descriptions have been developed for all peer worker roles (Appendix 2). These outline recommended direct accountabilities specific to each role but do not note standard Queensland Health or HHS specific requirements for employment.

To ensure the positions are filled by people with a lived experience of mental illness or caring for someone with a mental illness, the following statements will be included in all role descriptions as part of the role fit:

- **Peer Worker:** The essential requirements of this role are having a personal lived experience of mental health issues and recovery and experience as a mental health consumer (public or private)
- **Carer Peer Worker:** The essential requirements for this role are having a personal lived experience of caring for someone with mental health issues who has been a consumer of mental health services (public or private).

Appendices

Scope of Practice

Below are the key functions and activities for the peer workforce. This outlines what activities can be undertaken by a peer worker at various levels. Note that the level indicated is the lowest levels and can include any pay level above it as well.

Function	Activities in scope	Out of scope	AO2	AO3	AO4	AO5	AO6
Peer Support	Support to consumers or carers at individual and group level		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Promoting peer-led groups and activities		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Running and coordinating peer support programs and activities		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Organising and assisting with recovery groups and workshops			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Facilitating recovery groups			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Providing appropriate consumer or carer activities			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Providing information on recovery		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Provision of support to consumers providing hope, encouraging and empowering them during their recovery		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Providing information on community resources and services			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Assisting consumers and carers to provide feedback via the Mental Health Experience surveys			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Assisting during discharge			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Assisting with referral to appropriate peer support services in the community			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Assist consumers and carers following discharge providing support as needed			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Support to the consumer in the development of treatment planning with mental health staff				✓	✓	✓
	Providing information on employment and rights and responsibilities			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Encouraging consumers and carers to participate in the broad mental health system		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Advocacy and representation	Individual advocacy relating to rights and service needs.	Mental Health Act support, this is the role of the IPRA		✓	✓	✓	✓
	Assist and provide support with case review and case conferencing if requested by consumer or carer			✓	✓	✓	✓

Function	Activities in scope	Out of scope	AO2	AO3	AO4	AO5	AO6
	Advocate with the consumer or carer in relation to services	Complaints management		✓	✓	✓	✓
	Support the consumer or carer through liaison with clinical supports			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Build capacity of consumer or carer so they can advocate for themselves			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Promote consumer and carer rights	Rights in relation to the MHA		✓	✓	✓	✓
	Facilitate consultation with consumers and carers to gather input into issues relating to mental health consumers including service planning				✓	✓	✓
	Provide consumer and carer feedback on policies, procedures and service direction for MHS as required			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Represent the consumer and carer perspective at service management level					✓	✓
	Work with peer workforce to provide a collective knowledge of consumer and carer issues in service development			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Participate on committees requiring input into policy decision making and strategic direction	Committees that require independent consumer/carer representation				✓	✓
	Promote recovery-oriented perspective to service planning and delivery			✓	✓	✓	✓
Coordination and management	Manage peer workers					✓	✓
	Develop a business plan					✓	✓
	Facilitate peer worker team meetings					✓	✓
Education and training	Provide education to staff, consumers and carers about issues from a consumer perspective			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Conduct presentations at orientation and training about providing a consumer and carer perspective				✓	✓	✓
	Contribute to the development and delivery of training programs to staff, consumers and carers					✓	✓
Health Promotion	Developing and implementing consumer and carer health promotion initiatives				✓	✓	✓
	Support the implementation of health promotion initiatives		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Function	Activities in scope	Out of scope	A02	A03	A04	A05	A06
	Developing and implementing anti-stigma activities at the service and within the community					✓	✓
Quality and research	Facilitation of pathways for consumer and carer participation in service evaluation and quality improvement					✓	✓
	Provide feedback to consumers and carers on quality improvement initiatives being undertaken and facilitate mechanisms for ongoing consumer or carer participation			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Promote the development and implementation of consumer and carer directed research					✓	✓
Generic roles	Assist with service accreditation				✓	✓	✓
	Provision of regular reporting to management				✓	✓	✓
	Promote the rights of consumers and carers and principles of consumer and carer participation and recovery		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Example Position Descriptions

Peer Assistant AO2 (Peer/Carer)

Title	Peer Assistant
Classification	AO2
Success Factor Profile	Team Member

About the role

A Peer Assistant works under direction to provide direct interaction and support for consumers of the mental health service. This support and interaction aims to assist the consumer or carer on their personal recovery journey through utilising your lived experience, acting as a positive role model to inspire consumers to have hope for the future and support self-management and personal responsibility.

Key accountabilities of the role are:

- Serve as a positive role model to consumers and/or staff and as a source of information on personal experience of managing mental health.
- Provide general feedback to multidisciplinary team regarding consumer and/or carer participation, education, support and recovery-oriented practice.
- Provide direct support and interaction to consumers in a manner consistent with recovery philosophies including but not limited to;
 - Assist consumers to identify their own strengths and goals to empower positive change
 - Support and encourage consumers to access activities that aim to enhance their recovery
 - Promote physical health and other areas of wellbeing that support recovery
- Perform a range of basic administrative tasks including but not limited to replenishing materials and resources, sending and receiving emails, record keeping, collection of consumer and carer feedback and photocopying.
- Actively participate in and provide support to peer workers to facilitate peer led groups.
- Utilise well developed communication, both verbal and written, to work collaboratively with consumers and multidisciplinary teams within the mental health service.
- Ensure consumers, carers, families and other staff are treated fairly and with mutual respect and understanding, regardless of cultural, religious, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds.
- Actively participate in professional supervision, performance appraisal and development processes.
- Apply thoughtful and ethical decisions to act within operational and professional boundaries.
- Staff are expected to be adhere to accurate input and collection of consumer related information into mental health consumer applications if required.

Role fit

The essential requirements for this role are:

- A personal lived experience of mental illness and recovery or caring for a family member using mental health services.
- Although not essential, experience working within a public mental health service or the NGO sector would be desirable.

How you will be assessed

Within the context of the responsibilities described above, the ideal applicant will be someone who can demonstrate the following:

- Ability to share lived experience of recovery to assist consumers and staff within the role.
- Ability to establish and maintain relationships with consumers, carers, the community, health professionals and all service providers, while promoting an understanding of mental health.
- Ability to relate, empathise with, be aware of and see issues from the perspective of a consumer, their carers and families.
- Ability to maintain professional boundaries
- Positive communication skills by actively listening, conveying consumer's requirements clearly and fluently, displaying appropriate empathy and adapting style accordingly.
- Ability to work within a multi-disciplinary team.
- Basic computer literacy

Peer Worker AO3

Title	Peer Worker
Classification	AO3
Success Factor Profile	Team Member

About the role

A Peer Worker works under direction to facilitate the delivery of supports to consumers of the mental health service.

A Peer Worker is employed to assist consumers, carers and families, service providers and Non-Government Organisations to develop a better understanding of the recovery framework while utilising a lived experience of mental health issues to work towards achieving the best outcomes for consumers.

The Peer Worker provides support in both inpatient and community settings.

Key accountabilities of the role are:

- Serve as a positive role model to consumers and staff and as a source of information on their personal experience of managing their mental health.
- Utilising experience, skills and knowledge in; consumer education, support and provide a responsive framework that meets the needs of consumers.
- Utilise group work skills in delivering, psycho education programs, and participate in facilitating peer based consumer groups.
- Assist with facilitation and planning of groups that focus on a consumer perspective.
- Co-facilitate training to all staff and students as required.
- Utilise well developed communication and consultation to work collaboratively across multidisciplinary teams to promote the functions of the peer role.
- Support consumers to make positive changes towards recovery by identifying strengths and goals and planning to achieve these.
- Collaborate with NGO's and assist with building their capacity to provide service to mental health consumers.
- Work with multidisciplinary teams and complement existing services to assist consumers on their recovery journey within the community.
- Actively identify areas of improvement to the service and the inpatient services environment.
- Assist consumers in their recovery planning from a peer perspective.
- Involvement in the collection of consumer and carer feedback as required.
- Actively participate in professional supervision, performance appraisal and development processes.
- Apply thoughtful and ethical decisions to act within operational and professional boundaries.
- Staff are expected to adhere to the timely and accurate input and collection of consumer related information and provision of service activity into appropriate applications.

Role fit

The essential requirement for this role are:

- A personal lived experience of mental health issues and recovery and ability to advocate for and support people experiencing mental health issues.
- Experience as a mental health consumer (public or private)

Desirable requirements for the role include:

- Applicants hold or are working towards a Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work or equivalent.
- Experience working within a public mental health service or the NGO sector.

How you will be assessed

Within the context of the responsibilities described above, the ideal applicant will be someone who can demonstrate the following:

- Ability to share lived experience of recovery to assist consumers and staff within the role.
- Ability to establish and maintain relationships with consumers, carers, families, the community, health professionals and all service providers, while promoting an understanding of mental health.
- Ability to relate, empathise with, be aware of and see issues from the perspective of a consumer, their carers and families.
- Ability to maintain professional boundaries
- Ability to show proactive and effective communication skills by actively listening, conveying consumer's requirements clearly and fluently, displaying appropriate empathy and adapting style accordingly.
- Ability to work within a multi-disciplinary team.
- Demonstrated skills in computer literacy
- Ability to assist with the planning and delivery of psycho education programs and groups to mental health service consumers.

Advanced Peer Worker AO4

Title	Advanced Peer Worker
Classification	AO4
Success Factor Profile	Team Member

About the role

An Advanced Peer Worker works under general direction to facilitate the development, planning and delivery of support services to consumers of the mental health service.

An Advanced Peer Worker utilises their lived experience of mental health issues to model recovery strategies to enable service providers and NGOs develop a better understanding of the recovery framework to achieve the best outcomes for consumers.

Key accountabilities of the role are:

- Serve as a positive role model to consumers and staff and as a source of information on their personal experience of managing their mental health.
- Connect to consumers, carers and staff providing a positive example of recovery and as a source of information on their personal experience of managing their mental health.
- Support and mentor the AO3 Peer Workers.
- Utilising experience, skills and knowledge in; consumer education, support and provide a responsive framework of psycho education that meets the needs of consumers.
- Utilise group work skills in delivering support groups, psycho education programs, and participate in facilitating peer based consumer support groups.
- Co-facilitate training to all staff and students as required.
- Facilitate and plan groups that focus on a consumer perspective.
- Utilise well developed communication and consultation to work collaboratively across multidisciplinary teams to promote the functions of the peer worker and the consumer team.
- Collaborate with NGO's and assist with building their capacity to provide service to mental health consumers.
- Work with multidisciplinary team and complement existing services to assist consumers on their recovery journey within the community.
- Actively identify areas of improvement to the service and the community clinic environment.
- Involvement in the collection of consumer and carer feedback as required.
- Provide general feedback and advice to the multidisciplinary team regarding consumer participation, education, support and recovery-oriented practice.
- Provide consumer representation on selection and recruitment panels.
- Assist consumers in their recovery planning from a peer perspective.
- Actively participate in professional supervision, performance appraisal and development processes.
- Apply thoughtful and ethical decisions to act within operational and professional boundaries.
- Staff are expected to adhere to the timely and accurate input and collection of consumer related information and provision of service activity into appropriate applications.

Role Fit

The essential requirement for this role are:

- A personal lived experience of mental illness and recovery and ability to advocate for and support people experiencing mental illness.
- A previous service user of mental health services and experience as a mental health consumer (public or private)

Highly desirable requirements for the role include:

- Applicants hold or are working towards a Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work or equivalent.
- Experience working within a public mental health service or the NGO sector.

How you will be assessed

Within the context of the responsibilities described above, the ideal applicant will be someone who can demonstrate the following:

- Demonstrated knowledge of recovery principles and strength based approach in working with consumers who have mental health issues
- Demonstrated well developed communication skills and ability to work as part of a multidisciplinary team
- Demonstrated ability to maintain professional boundaries
- Demonstrated skills in computer literacy
- Demonstration ability to advocate for the consumer perspective to identify service improvement
- Demonstrated ability to plan and deliver psycho education programs and groups to mental health service consumers.
- Demonstrated ability to share lived experience of recovery to assist consumers and staff within the role.

Senior Peer Coordinator AO5

Title	Senior Peer Coordinator
Classification	AO5
Success factor profile	Supervisor

About the role

A Senior Peer Coordinator works to facilitate the delivery, development and planning of support services to consumers of the mental health service.

A Senior Peer Coordinator promotes and provides guidance to the development and ongoing management of consumer participation and provide systems advocacy in relation to consumer, carer and family related issues.

Key accountabilities of the role include:

- Serve as a positive role model to consumers and staff and as a source of information on their personal experience of managing their mental health.
- Effectively communicate with consumers, carers, professional groups, and all service providers to assist in planning, delivering and evaluating a mental health consumer focused service.
- Identify areas for improvement to service, policy and procedures, and be involved in Mental Health Service policy and procedure development, ensuring mental health consumer and carer requirements are addressed and prioritised through providing information from the consumer and carer perspective.
- Participate in professional supervision and performance appraisal and development processes.
- Participate in the recruitment and selection of the peer workforce and mental health professionals as required.
- Utilising experience, skills and knowledge in mental health consumer, carer and family education: support, education and training, provide a responsive framework of education and support initiatives and programs which meet the needs of consumers, carers and families.
- Deliver training and support to staff within the Mental Health Service and other stakeholders in relation to consumer, family and carer support/education strategies and initiatives, and information regarding National mental health standards and State policies regarding consumer, family and carer perspectives.
- Ensure consumers, carers, families and staff are treated fairly and with mutual respect and understanding, regardless of cultural, religious, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds.
- Actively promote consumer focused recovery model of care with consumers, carers, families and community as partners of care.
- Communicate the broad views of consumers to mental health services and other relevant services
- Enable consumer perspectives to be included in all aspects of planning, service delivery and evaluation
- Assisting the mental health service in its aim to provide a person-centred and consumer-focused service
- Develop and maintain effective relationships and network with consumer/carers groups and community organisations that provide support services.
- Develop and maintain effective consumer and carer participation in mental health service planning and delivery through a range of activities and forums.

- Utilise well developed communication, consultation and conflict resolution skills to work collaboratively across multidisciplinary teams, other government and community based agencies.
- Network and consult with relevant National and State peak bodies, consumer organisations and consumer advisory groups that inform strategic planning and maintain current knowledge of consumer and carer participation.
- Develop monthly reports on consumer and carer activities and participate in the Queensland Health data collection and evaluation of programmes.
- Provide general feedback and advice to the multidisciplinary team regarding consumer, family and carer participation, education, support and related issues.
- Actively participate in professional supervision, performance appraisal and development processes.
- Apply thoughtful and ethical decisions to act within operational and professional boundaries.
- Staff are expected to adhere to the timely and accurate input and collection of consumer related information and provision of service activity into appropriate applications.
- Day to day management of the Peer Workers and Advanced Peer Workers, if required
- May assist with and/or provide professional supervision of Peer Workers and Advanced Peer Workers

Role Fit

The essential requirement for this role are:

- A personal lived experience of mental illness and recovery and ability to advocate for and support people experiencing mental illness.
- Experience as a mental health consumer (public or private)

Highly desirable requirements of the role include:

- Experience working within a public mental health service or the NGO sector
- Experience working as a peer worker
- Applicants hold or are working towards a Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work or equivalent.

How you will be assessed

Within the context of the responsibilities described above, the ideal applicant will be someone who can demonstrate the following:

- High degree of knowledge in recovery principles and delivering a strengths-based approach to working with consumers with mental health issues
- Demonstrated high level of communication skills and ability to work as part of a team
- Demonstrated ability to manage and supervise staff
- Ability to drive high quality care and customer service throughout the health service
- Demonstrated ability to maintain professional boundaries
- Demonstrated ability to role model positive and ethical behaviour
- Demonstrated ability to engage and share information
- Ability to take accountability for projects and performance
- Ability to develop and evaluate training programs for staff and consumers
- High degree of computer literacy

Team Leader Peer Workforce AO6

Title	Team Leader Peer Workforce
Classification	AO6
Success factor profile	Supervisor

About the role

The Team Leader Peer Workforce leads and manages the peer workforce through provision of operational and professional supervision.

The Team Leader Peer Workforce provides professional, client focused, high quality support to mental health consumers whilst ensuring compliance with industrial and legislative provisions aligned to meet business needs.

The Team Leader Peer Workforce provides advice in strategic, operational and human resource management utilising a well-developed level of specialist knowledge and high level communication and problem solving skills.

Key accountabilities of the role include:

- Serve as a positive role model to consumers and staff and as a source of information on their personal experience of managing their mental health.
- Coordinate and contribute to the planning, development and implementation of workforce activities.
- Maintain high level knowledge of HHS consumer and carer participation activities / initiatives and the supervision and training needs of consumer and carer workers whom report to this position.
- Liaise and consult with key stakeholders regarding the mental health activities, consumer and carer groups, and participate in the development of collaborative partnerships with service providers to ensure provision of quality services which are responsive to the needs of stakeholders.
- Exercise high level interpersonal, consultation and communication skills with stakeholders, team members and other service providers regarding quality improvement and service development activities.
- Participate as a member of a team in service development, evaluation and quality improvement activities to ensure continuous provision of quality services.
- Provide ethical decision making in the achievement of organisational goals.
- Provide advice and report on the progress of relevant aspects of activities to senior/supervising staff as required to ensure that activities are consistent with organisational requirements and that priorities and timelines are met.
- Participate in information management activities including data collection, data entry and reporting local activities to contribute to service monitoring, evaluation and quality improvement activities.
- Comply with and utilise organisational procedures, policies, regulations and standards, which impact on the position including contemporary human resource management issues, corporate governance, workplace health and safety, employment equity and anti-discrimination and other specific technical standards where applicable.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge in the specialist area of mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention.

- Present and contribute specialist advice to committees, teams and forums within and external to HHS.
- Manage the performance appraisal and development of the peer workforce.
- Participate as an integral member of the senior team and represent the unit at various meetings and forums.
- Identify and participate in research activities.
- Oversee initiatives that promote social inclusion and a recovery focussed service.
- Actively participate in professional supervision, performance appraisal and development processes.
- Apply thoughtful and ethical decisions to act within operational and professional boundaries.
- Staff are expected to adhere to the timely and accurate input and collection of consumer related information and provision of service activity into appropriate applications.

Role Fit

The essential requirement for this role are:

- A personal lived experience of mental illness and recovery or caring for a family member with mental health issues and ability to advocate for and support people experiencing mental illness.
- Experience as a mental health consumer (public or private) or experience in caring for a family member who is a consumer of mental health services

Highly desirable requirements for the role include:

- Experience working within a public mental health service or the NGO sector
- Experience working as a peer worker
- Applicants hold or are working towards obtaining a Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work or equivalent.

How you will be assessed

You will be assessed on your ability to demonstrate the following key attributes:

- Demonstrated experience in managing and supporting a consumer / carer peer workforce, including the provision of supervision, education and mentoring.
- Demonstrated knowledge of contemporary national and state mental health policies, plans, guidelines and frameworks, including an understanding of mental health service provision issues.
- Proven high level communication, interpersonal and problem-solving skills including the ability to effectively consult and negotiate with senior management, clinicians, consultants and key stakeholders on issues requiring organisational input and/or change.
- Ability to understand and respond to the expectations of key stakeholders, consumers, families, carers and the community as a whole.
- Ability to work independently in a multidisciplinary team to achieve results in a work environment characterised by frequent and changeable deadlines.
- Ability to manage a large workload through the use of high level computer skills and knowledge of various software and applications, whilst maintaining high levels of accuracy and confidentiality within identified milestones and timeframes.

Carer Peer Worker AO3

Title	Carer Peer Worker
Classification	AO3
Success factor profile	Team member

About the role

A Carer Peer Worker works under direction to facilitate the delivery of support services to carers and families of the mental health service.

A Carer Peer Worker is employed to assist carers and families, service providers and Non-Government Organisations to develop a better understanding of the recovery framework while utilising a lived experience of caring for someone with mental health issues to work towards achieving the best outcomes for consumers.

The Carer Peer Worker provides support in both inpatient and community settings.

Key accountabilities of the role include:

- Serve as a positive role model to other carers and families and be open to sharing personal lived experience of assisting a person with mental health needs.
- Work within appropriate boundaries and draw on knowledge and expertise gained through reflection on own lived experience.
- Work with multidisciplinary team to complement existing services.
- Provide direct carer peer support to carers, families and significant others, engaging in individual and group peer support, advocacy and educational activities.
- Utilise group work skills in delivering support groups, psycho education programs, and participate in facilitating peer based carer support groups.
- Provide individual advocacy to support the inclusion of carer and family perspectives.
- Participate in the collection of carer and family feedback as required and support individual carers and families, as well as local carer advocacy groups to be involved in service quality activities as appropriate.
- Actively identify areas of improvement to the service and the inpatient/community services environment advocating for a carer and family sensitive and inclusive culture evident in all service practices, procedures and frameworks.
- Utilise well developed communication and consultation skills to work collaboratively across multidisciplinary teams to promote the Carer Peer Worker role.
- Collaborate with community groups and other stakeholders supporting partnerships which assist carers and families and promote recovery orientated frameworks and practices.
- Actively participate in professional supervision, performance appraisal and development processes.
- Apply thoughtful and ethical decisions to act within operational and professional boundaries.
- Staff are expected to adhere to the timely and accurate input and collection of consumer related information and provision of service activity into appropriate applications.

Role Fit

The essential requirement for this role are:

- A personal lived experience as a carer for a family member using mental health services (public or private)

Desirable requirements of the role include:

- Experience working within a public mental health service or the NGO sector
- Applicants hold or are working towards obtaining a Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work or equivalent.

How you will be assessed

Within the context of the responsibilities described above, the ideal applicant will be someone who can demonstrate the following:

- Ability to establish and maintain relationships with consumers, carers, the community, health professionals and all service providers, while promoting an understanding of mental health.
- Ability to relate, empathise with, be aware of and see issues from the perspective of a consumer, their families and people from other cultures.
- Ability to demonstrate honesty, integrity and respect for all consumers, carers, family and staff.
- Ability to show proactive and effective communication skills by actively listening, conveying consumer, carer and family's requirements clearly and fluently, displaying appropriate empathy and adapting style accordingly.
- Ability to work within a multi-disciplinary team.
- Ability to assist in the planning and delivery of psycho education programs and groups to mental health service consumers, carers and families.

Advanced Carer Peer Worker AO4

Title	Advanced Carer Peer Worker
Classification	AO4
Success factor profile	Team Member

About the role

An Advanced Carer Peer Worker works under general direction to facilitate the delivery, development, planning and delivery of support services to carers of consumers of the mental health service.

An Advanced Carer Peer Worker provides recovery orientated, person centred, ethical carer peer support to carers, families and significant others who are supporting people accessing mental health services.

The Advanced Carer Peer Worker provides support in both inpatient and community settings.

Key accountabilities of the role include:

- Serve as a positive role model to other carers and families and be open to sharing personal lived experience of assisting a person with mental health needs.
- Connect to consumers, carers and staff providing a positive example of recovery and as a source of information on their personal experience of managing their mental health.
- Provide carers and family with education, information, referrals and support from personal experience of assisting someone in their recovery
- Support and mentor the AO3 Carer Peer Workers.
- Involvement in the collection of consumer and carer feedback as required.
- Utilise experience, skills and knowledge in carer and family education to support service development of responsive frameworks that meets the needs of carers and families.
- Utilise group work skills in delivering support groups, psycho education programs, and participate in facilitating peer-based carer support groups.
- Co-facilitate training to all staff and students as required.
- Facilitate and plan groups within the community that focus on a carer perspective.
- Utilise well developed communication and consultation skills to work collaboratively across multidisciplinary teams to promote the functions of the carer peer workforce.
- Provide general feedback and advice to multidisciplinary team regarding consumer participation, education, support and recovery-oriented practise.
- Support carers and families to make positive changes towards recovery by identifying strengths and goals and planning to achieve these.
- Collaborate with NGO's and assist with building their capacity to provide service to mental health consumers.
- Work with multidisciplinary team to complement existing services
- Provide carer representation on selection and recruitment panels.
- Actively participate in professional supervision, performance appraisal and development processes.
- Apply thoughtful and ethical decisions to act within operational and professional boundaries.
- Staff are expected to adhere to the timely and accurate input and collection of consumer related information and provision of service activity into appropriate applications.

Role Fit

The essential requirement for this role are:

- A personal lived experience as a carer for a family member using mental health services (public or private)

Highly desirable requirements of the role include:

- Experience working within a public mental health service or the NGO sector.
- Applicants hold or are working towards obtaining a Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work or equivalent.

How you will be assessed

Within the context of the responsibilities described above, the ideal applicant will be someone who can demonstrate the following:

- Demonstrated knowledge of recovery principles and strengths-based approach in working with carers and families of people who have mental health issues
- Demonstrated well developed communication skills and ability to work as part of a multidisciplinary team
- Demonstrated ability to maintain professional boundaries
- Demonstrated skills in computer literacy
- Ability to advocate for the carer and family perspective to identify service improvement
- Ability to plan and deliver psycho education programs and groups to mental health service consumers.

Senior Carer Peer Coordinator AO5

Title	Senior Carer Peer Coordinator
Classification	AO5
Success factor profile	Supervisor

About the role

A Senior Carer Coordinator works to facilitate the delivery of services to carers of consumers of the mental health service

A Senior Carer Coordinator promotes and promotes and provides guidance to the development and ongoing management of carer participation and provide systems advocacy in relation to consumer, carer and family related issues.

Key accountabilities for the role include:

- Serve as a positive role model to other carers and families and be open to sharing personal lived experience of assisting a person with mental health needs.
- Work within appropriate boundaries and draw on knowledge and expertise gained through reflection on own lived experience.
- Effectively communicate with consumers, carers, professional groups, and all service providers to assist in planning, delivering and evaluating a mental health consumer focused service.
- Identify areas for improvement to service, policy and procedures, and be involved in Mental Health Service, policy and procedure development, ensuring mental health consumer and carer requirements are addressed and prioritised through providing information from the carer perspective.
- Actively participate in professional supervision, performance appraisal and development processes.
- Participate in the recruitment and selection of the peer workforce and mental health professionals as requested.
- Utilising experience, skills and knowledge in; mental health consumer, family and carer education, support, education and training, provide a responsive framework of education and support initiatives and programs which meet the needs of consumers, families and carers.
- Deliver training and support to staff within the Mental Health Service and other stakeholders in relation to consumer, family and carer support/education strategies and initiatives, and information regarding National Mental Health Standards and State Policies regarding consumer, family and carer perspectives.
- Act as an advocate for carers and families utilising mental health services.
- Promote the carer and family inclusive recovery focused service model to mental health professionals, consumers, and/or carers, families and community as partners of care.
- Develop and maintain effective relationships and network with carer/family groups and community organisations that provide support to mental health services.
- Actively participate in the development and coordination of education and training that promotes the recovery framework to mental health professionals, consumers and/or carers, the community and other relevant stakeholders.
- Actively participate in the review of mental health service policy and procedure, ensuring recovery, carer/family perspectives are addressed and prioritised.
- Support the collection, evaluation and implementation of activities directly related to carer feedback.

- Develop and maintain effective carer/family participation in planning, service delivery and evaluation through a range of activities, meetings and forums.
- Utilise well developed communication, both verbal and written, to work collaboratively across multidisciplinary teams with the mental health service, and Non-Government Organisation (NGOs) to promote the function of recovery model of service and the peer workforce.
- Provide general feedback and advice to multidisciplinary team regarding carer participation, education, support and recovery oriented practice.
- Provide operational support, regular supervision and mentor the AO3 and AO4 Carer Support Workers, if required
- Actively participate in professional supervision, performance appraisal and development processes.
- Apply thoughtful and ethical decisions to act within operational and professional boundaries.
- Staff are expected to adhere to the timely and accurate input and collection of consumer related information and provision of service activity into appropriate applications.

Role Fit

The essential requirement for this role are:

- A personal lived experience as a carer for a family member using mental health services (public or private)

Highly desirable requirements of the role include:

- Experience working in a public mental health service or NGO carer role
- Applicants hold or are working towards obtaining a Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work or equivalent.

How you will be assessed

Within the context of the responsibilities described above, the ideal applicant will be someone who can demonstrate the following:

- High degree of knowledge in recovery principles and delivering a strengths based approach to working with consumers with mental health issues
- Demonstrated high level of communication skills and ability to work as part of a team
- Demonstrated ability to manage and supervise peer staff
- Ability to drive high quality care and customer service throughout the health service
- Demonstrated ability to role model positive and ethical behaviour
- Demonstrated ability to engage and share information
- Ability to take accountability for projects and performance
- Ability to develop and evaluate training programs for staff and consumers
- High degree of computer literacy

Abbreviations

HHS	Hospital and Health Service
HWA	Health Workforce Australia
MHAOD	Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drugs
QH	Queensland Health

Glossary

Carer	A person who provides care, support or assistance to someone with a mental health challenge, generally a family member, partner or friend not employed in a paid professional carer role
Consumer	A person who has or is currently using a mental health service due to mental health issues. Their service use may be voluntary or involuntary according to their circumstances at the time and the particular mental health service providing the service. May also be referred to as consumers, clients or patients in clinical settings
Lived experience	Refers to having a personal experience of mental illness and/or service use and recovery from either a consumer or carer perspective. Some people may have both consumer and carer experiences.
Peer support	A range of supports offered to consumers of mental health services by peer workers.
Peer worker	A person who is employed in a role that requires them to identify as being, or having been a mental health consumer or carer. Peer work requires that lived experience of mental illness is an essential criterion of job descriptions, although job titles and related tasks vary
Reasonable adjustment	Changes to a job which can be made to enable a worker to perform their duties more effectively in the workplace
Recovery	A deeply personal, unique process of changing one's attitudes, values, feelings, goals, skills and/or roles. It is a way of living a satisfying, hopeful and contributing life. Recovery involves the development of new meaning and purpose in one's life as one grows beyond the effects of psychiatric disability.

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