

Submission:

Northern Territory Lived Experience Framework



NORTHERN TERRITORY
MENTAL HEALTH
COALITION

11 September 2023

ABOUT:

This submission is written on behalf of the Northern Territory Mental Health Coalition (NTMHC), members and stakeholders. The NT Mental Health Coalition presents this submission in line with our policy position statements and in consultation with our members and stakeholders, as well as representatives of the lived experience community.

The Northern Territory Mental Health Coalition (NTMHC) is the peak body for community managed mental health services across the Northern Territory. We work in collaboration with a wide network of community mental health organisations, people with lived experience, and their families and supporters. We work at the local and national level to improve mental health and wellbeing for all Territorians.

On behalf of our members and stakeholders we welcome the opportunity to make this submission on the Northern Territory Lived Experience Framework. The submission is intended to capture the themes from consultation, highlights evidence and other examples of best practice, and makes recommendations of amendments to the framework that are referenced in the submission below.

For the purpose of this submission, use of the term lived experience incorporates carers, family, friends, consultants etc. Unless where a specific group is identified e.g., carers.

THEMES:

Thought consultation with members and stakeholders we have identified the following themes which will be the focus of this submission:

1. Process and Purpose
2. Structure and Language
3. Alternative Models
4. Governance, Leadership and Accountability
5. Training and Empowerment
6. Remuneration Schedule

PERSPECTIVES OF THIS SUBMISSION

- Organisations delivering mental health and wellbeing services in the NT
- Staff working within organisations that comprise the membership and stakeholders
- Staff who identify as having lived experience, working in identified roles or not

Themes:

1. Process and purpose
 - The process of calling for submissions to an already drafted framework does not align with best practice principles of co-design. The process of engagement used for framework draft, is in itself consultation on the IAP2 participation spectrum that is referenced in the document.

- It is not clear that the document has been drafted by a person or people with Lived Experience; or with existing evidence and feedback from persons and carers with Lived Experience
- The document currently appears to focus predominantly on Lived Experience Engagement. If this is the intent, it is recommended the title of the document be amended to better reflect its purpose.
- The document needs to clearly define whether engagement is with the Lived Experience workforce, the boarder community, or subsets of the community such as carers, family and friends, and people from specific population groups (e.g., men, LGBTIQ+, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) who will offer different perspectives.
- It is recommended the document acknowledges the historical and ongoing work taking place in the Territory regarding Lived Experience models and projects. The draft framework should also be amended to better reflect the recommendations of research and evaluation that has already taken place in the Territory. For example, Menzies Peer Led Education Pilot etc.

Recommendations:

- 1.1 Creation of a draft framework should be led by an independent Lived Experience group, outside of existing government structures. Voices and experience's need to be external to the power dynamic of the Department itself.
- 1.2 Clearly define how the framework will be embedded and implemented in government
- 1.3 Clearly articulate expectations of government funded organisations in relation to implementation of this framework, and detail what resources are available to support organisations to achieve successful implementation of this.
- 1.4 Provide definitive explanations of all key terms and concepts including; *partnerships with lived experience; and co-development*.
- 1.5 Clearly define how safety is assured and measured in Lived Experience engagement.

2. Structure and language

- It would be helpful to have the purpose of the document at the beginning of the document to clearly articulate its aim for readers.
- NTMHC has received multiple feedback from the sector and others that the document is generally difficult to read and understand. Simpler and more direct language would make the framework more accessible for everyone.
- It is not clear how the framework will be used and implemented. Along with the purpose of the framework, this information would be better positioned in the opening pages.
- Feedback received by NTMHC has indicated that the statement used in the first paragraph of section 10 titled "Lived Experience participation" was difficult for people to read as it undervalues the role that people with Lived Experience play.
- Language used in section 12 of the document is deficit focused, not strengths based.
- There is no reference to working with consumers and carers from CALD backgrounds. Language barriers and cultural issues may lead to exclusion.

Recommendations:

- 2.1 Provide and publish a two-page accessible summary.
- 2.2 Purpose and process for implementation to be placed at the beginning of document.
- 2.3 Use of strengths-based language to describe engagement processes.
- 2.4 Information to be presented in person's first language and/or use of interpreters where required.

3. Alternative Models

- The current consumer advisory group hasn't achieved the desired outcomes and it's not clear that feedback and advice offered has been heard by the various levels of government.
- Limited modes of engagement creates the potential of isolating a single voice as being representative of a broader demographic.
- There are alternative models to engagement with Lived Experience than the ones offered in the framework. Examples are listed below and referenced in the resources at the bottom of the submission.

Recommendations:

- 3.1 Utilise multiple pathways for people with Lived Experience to provide feedback; i.e., groups, individual submissions, face-to-face meetings, and other ways as described in the resources below.
- 3.2 Provide ongoing opportunities for voices to be heard over longer periods.
- 3.3 Incorporate multiple methods of engagement (examples below).
 - . **Indigo Daya**: The Participation Ladder: A consumer/survivor lens.
 - . **WA Mental Health Commission**: Lived Experience Workforce Framework.
 - . **Byrne**: Effective Peer Employment Within Multidisciplinary Organisations: Model for Best Practice.

4. Governance, Leadership and Accountability

- Implementation of framework and indicators of success should be co-produced with independent Lived Experience representation. It remains unclear who has been involved in the design of framework
- It is unclear how, and to what degree feedback from this consultation will be incorporated into framework.
- It is unclear how government will be held accountable for embedding and implementing the framework once complete.

Recommendations:

- 4.1 Publish feedback received on the draft framework and transparently advise how the feedback will be included in the final draft of the framework.
- 4.2 A government report on framework to be published annually; with an independent role created for the Chief Psychiatrist to review this each year.

5. Training and empowerment

- NTMHC has concerns regarding the lack of clarity around training and vocational pathways for Lived Experience participants and facilitators.
- In order to cultivate a sustainable workforce, additional support measures will be required for participants and facilitators; such as opportunities for debriefing etc.
- Having local facilitators is an opportunity to establish a Lived Experience network. Having a Lived Experience network would support locally trained facilitators to develop and build a strong and supportive peer network.

- 5.1 Cultivate a framework to grow and empower the voices of lived experience representatives.

5.2 Training for participants and facilitators to be underpinned by development and implementation of clear vocational pathways to support increased participation of a peer-led mental health workforce.

Training example: Roses in the Ocean (See resources).

6. Remuneration Schedule

- There is a lack of clarity around participation remuneration for people with Lived Experience.
- Remuneration for Lived Experience engagement should be in line with the current national mental health commission paid participation policy.
- Provide clarity around roles and responsibilities for all involved in the engagement process.

Recommendations:

6.1 Incorporate remuneration guidelines or a schedule into section 11.

6.2 Clearly define roles e.g. :-

- Lived Experience Consultant
- As Part of a Lived Experience Group
- Lived Experience employee; where their position description clearly states they contribute to consultation and co-design workshops and engagement.

RECCOMENDATIONS:

- 1.1 The process for the creation of the framework should be led by an independent Lived Experience Group outside of existing government structures. Voices and experience's need to be external to the power dynamic of the Department itself.
- 1.2 Clearly define how the framework will be embedded and implemented in government.
- 1.3 Clearly describe whether organisations funded by the department will be expected to apply the framework; and what resources will be offered to achieve this.
- 1.4 Clearly define explanations of all key terms and concepts including; *partnerships with lived experience; and co-development*.
- 1.5 Clearly define how safety is assured and measured in Lived Experience engagement.
- 2.1 Develop and publish plain language two-page accessible summary.
- 2.2 Purpose and process for implementation to be placed near the beginning of document.
- 2.3 Use of strengths-based language to describe engagement processes.
- 2.4 Information to be presented in person's first language and/or use of interpreters where required.
- 3.1 Utilise multiple pathways for people with Lived Experience to provide feedback; i.e., through groups, individual submissions, face-to-face meetings, and other methods as described in the resources below.
- 3.2 Provide ongoing opportunities for voices to be heard over long periods.
- 3.3 Use of multiple methods for engagement (examples below).
 - . **Indigo Daya**: The Participation Ladder: A consumer/survivor lens.
 - . **WA Mental Health Commission**: Lived Experience Workforce Framework.
 - . **Byrne**: Effective Peer Employment Within Multidisciplinary Organisations: Model for Best Practice.
- 4.1 Publish the feedback received on the draft framework and transparently advise how the feedback will be included in the final draft of the framework.
- 4.2 A government report on framework to be published annually; with an independent role created for the Chief Psychiatrist to review this each year.
- 5.1 Cultivate a framework to grow and empower the voices of lived experience representatives.
- 5.2 Training for participants and facilitators to be underpinned by development and implementation of vocational pathways to support increased participation of a peer-led mental health workforce.
Training example: Roses in the Ocean (See resources).
- 6.1 Incorporate remuneration guideline or schedule to section 11
- 6.2 Clearly define roles and terms
 - o Lived Experience Consultant
 - o As Part of a Lived Experience Group
 - o Lived Experience employee; where their position description clearly states they contribute to consultation and co-design workshops and engagement.

REFERENCE AND RESOURCES:

1. Tujague, N., & Ryan, K. (2022). Cultural Safety in Trauma-Informed Practice from a First Nations Perspective: Billabongs of Knowledge. Palgrave Macmillan.
2. National Mental Health Commission Paid Participation Schedule
<https://www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/getmedia/afffd63-8100-4457-90c7-8617f2d3c6d6/Paid-Participation-Policy-revised-March-2019>
3. Daya, I (2020). The Participation Ladder: A consumer/survivor lens
http://www.indigodaya.com/wpcf7_captcha/2020/10/Participation-ladder_consumer_survivor-lens-2.pdf
4. Meaningful Engagement of People with Lived Experience: a framework and assessment for measuring and increasing lived experience leadership across the spectrum of engagement.
<https://respect.international/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/2023-Meaningful-Engagement-of-People-With-Lived-Experience-Toolkit.pdf>
5. Byrne, L., Roennfeldt, H., & Wolf, J., Linfoot, A., Foolesong, D., Davidson, L & Bellamy, C. (2021). Effective peer employment within multidisciplinary organizations: Model for best practice. Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research.
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10488-021-01162-2>
6. WA Lived Experience Workforce Framework
https://livedexperienceworkforces.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/mhc-lived_experience-pw-framework-oct2022-digital.pdf
7. Roses in the Ocean
<https://rosesintheocean.com.au/what-we-do/integration-and-partnership-with-lived-experience-expertise/>
8. Menzies: Evaluation of a Peer-Led Education Pilot for people with psychosocial support needs in Darwin, Northern Territory
https://www.menzies.edu.au/icms_docs/320338_Evaluation_of_a_Peer-Led_Education_Pilot_for_people_with_psychosocial_support_needs_in_Darwin_Northern_Territory.pdf