

Position statement: Lived and living experience

This position statement outlines the value of lived/living experience in the mental health and wellbeing system.

Lived and living experience definition: *MHV uses the term “person with lived and/or living experience” to encompass all people with personal experience of mental health issues, including family, carers and supporters of someone with mental health issues.*

People with lived and/or living experience have knowledge, experience, understanding and expertise that is vital to improving and strengthening the mental health and wellbeing system. By enabling lived/living experience to be at the centre of design, delivery, evaluation, and ongoing improvement, we can ensure the mental health system's intentions meet the needs of the people and communities it is designed to serve.

Key principles

1. People with lived and living experience have insight, knowledge, life experiences and expertise that is of critical value to the mental health and wellbeing system.
2. All aspects of the mental health and wellbeing system should elevate and embed the experiences and expectations of people with lived/living experience.
3. Lived/living experience perspectives are a powerful enabler to drive changes in attitudes and culture around mental health.
4. People with lived/living experience have a diverse array of experiences and expertise that deserve individual and collective recognition and respect.
5. Leadership by and partnership with people with lived/living experience is necessary across service development, design, delivery and systems change.
6. Family-inclusive practices are key to empowering and fostering collaborative relationships between consumers, carers, families, supporters and members of the workforce.
7. The lived/living experience (peer) workforce is vital to facilitating mental health service delivery that is based on person-centred, trauma-informed and recovery-oriented approaches to care.
8. Industrial protections reflective of the needs of workers with lived/living experience should be provided and defined in legislation and industrial agreements.