

## Elevating consumer voices: Lived and Living Experience participation in the Mental Health Improvement Program

Lived and Living Experience voices are helping to shape reform in Victorian mental health and wellbeing services through the Mental Health Improvement Program (MHIP).

People with Lived and Living Experience are consumers, their carers, families and supporters who have accessed and have current or past experience with Victoria's mental health and wellbeing system. The Lived Experience workforce have long championed for services and systems that respect human rights and offer holistic support.

The 2021 Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System identified that people with Lived and Living Experiences are crucial to reforming Victoria's mental health and wellbeing experience.

The Mental Health Improvement Program (MHIP) is helping mental health and wellbeing services implement key reforms to improve the quality and experience of care and safety for people who access services and those who work within services.

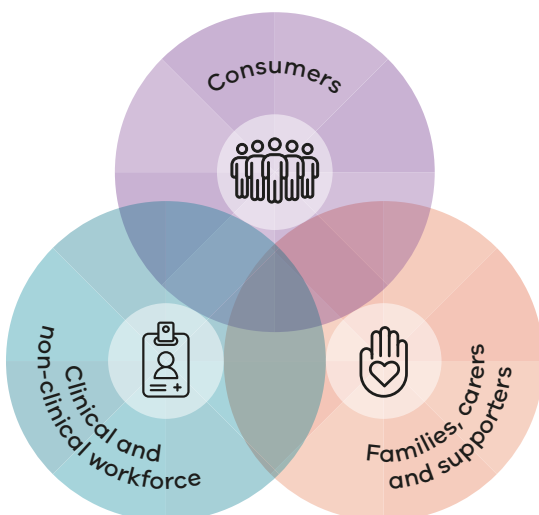
By including the voices of people with Lived and Living experience in reform initiatives, services and the MHIP can work together to help deliver a balanced system that:

- gives people more choice in their care;
- improves care and provides equitable access to that care;
- helps people feel supported as they recover and heal; and
- helps clinical and non-clinical workforce and consumers get knowledge in a way that they both understand

## Embedded in the Mental Health Improvement Program

Lived and Living Experience workforce members are embedded across MHIP teams and part of the design, planning and implementation teams. The MHIP works closely with consumer advocates, peak bodies and community groups. People with Lived and Living Experience are active members of the MHIP project committees and advisory groups.

The Lived and Living Experience workforce is growing, and the MHIP continues to partner with mental health and wellbeing services to increase and support Lived and Living Experience representation.



**Sensitive  
content  
warning**

This publication may contain content that readers may find distressing. For support, reach out to Lifeline (13 11 14), Beyond Blue (1300 224 636), 13YARN (13 92 76) or Rainbow Door (1800 729 367).

## Lived and Lived Experience workforce members

As a **Consumer consultant at Mercy Hospital**, **Adam Pepi** helps ensure they always keep the consumer – and their families, carers and supporters – at the centre of decision-making.

“ In my role, I have the chance to help build a system that for every person who accesses the service, to feel that they have the power to have a voice and to feel supported and heard by their care team.



**Keir Saltmarsh is a Senior Lived Experience Advisor** in the MHIP at Safer Care Victoria.

“ I am part of the lived experience workforce for the MHIP.

“ We, better than most, know that our mental health system hasn't always worked as well as it could, but now, we are helping to work towards improving services.

“ Those of us with Lived and Living Experience bring our eyes, our ears, and our insight into what we do every day as part of reforming our mental health and wellbeing system. I think this will help make lasting change to the mental health experience in Victoria.

### Questions?

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