

## Queensland Mental Health Consumer Representative Peak Establishment Project Steering Committee Communique

*The Queensland Mental Health Consumer Representative Peak Project Steering Committee met for the first time on 1 July 2020.*

### **Acknowledgement**

The Queensland Mental Health Commission (the Commission) acknowledges all people who have personal experience of mental ill-health. We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land we live and work on, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and future. We also acknowledge the many organisations, service providers and community members who work in partnership with us and who generously share their views, their knowledge and expertise. Your voices are all essential to our work.

### **Diverse voices, shared vision**

Our project to establish a new mental health consumer representative peak organisation for Queensland, initially under the auspice of the Commission, has begun! The Department of Health (DoH) through the Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drugs Branch (MHAODB) has driven initial work to date for the establishment of the new mental health consumer peak, which will:

- model recovery-oriented practice
- collaborate with government and other stakeholders to support lived experience engagement and participation
- provide policy advice and systems advocacy that represents the common interests of people across the lifespan who use Queensland's public mental health services
- empower, through training, mentoring and support, people who use services to provide advice to government, and to take emerging issues to government and other stakeholders for consideration.

In this establishment phase, the new mental health consumer peak will have an initial focus on consumers who use the public system. However, we also acknowledge the important and close relationships between mental health and carers, people have problematic alcohol and other drugs use, and people with suicidal ideation. The Department will continue to support other system advocacy work that can benefit all people in the community.

### **Lived experience driven**

The work of establishing the new mental health consumer peak is being led by people with lived and living experience. A Project Steering Committee has been convened to provide advice, strategic direction and guidance to the lived experience project team.

The Project Steering Committee brings together 12 passionate people with diverse background and learned experiences. All Project Steering Committee members have a shared vision: to develop a robust and sustainable mental health consumer peak for Queensland.

The Project Steering Committee met for the first time in Brisbane and via video-conference on 1 July 2020. The primary purpose of the meeting was to develop a shared understanding of the scope and parameters of the project, and the pre-work which had already been carried out, to provide a solid foundation for future discussions and the decisions.

Project Steering Committee members provided feedback to the project team on the plan guiding this establishment project and other documents related to the committee

### **Who are the Project Steering Committee members?**

The Project Steering Committee members bring a wide range of perspectives to the table and are all genuinely committed to delivering a consumer peak which is inclusive of Queensland's unique communities.

Profiles of our brilliant [Project Steering Committee members](#) and the [Project Team](#) have been published on the consumer peak webpage.

### **Funding commitment**

The DoH representative gave an overview of the work leading up to this project, including the consultations that were undertaken. The importance of establishing a new mental health peak body was emphasised, and it was confirmed that at this time it will have a consumer focus. The DoH sees it as a prudent approach for the new organisation to start with a modest scope and expand as it matures and solidifies its presence. During the meeting, DoH also advised that recurrent operational funding had been secured to support a mental health consumer peak. This is critical to providing the organisation's sustainability and its place within the mental health sector. This is incredibly exciting news and demonstrates DoH's commitment to ensuring the voice of individuals with a lived/living experience of mental ill-health is heard at all levels of the public mental health system. That was a great and historic start to the first Project Steering Committee meeting!

### **Engagement and communication**

Extensive consultation and engagement activities with consumers, carers and other stakeholders were undertaken between 2018 and 2019 in the lead up to this project. The Project Steering Committee and the project team want to ensure the views of the diversity of people with lived/living experience of mental-ill health continue to be heard and inform the establishment of the new organisation and its operations – both in its early stages and beyond. At the next meeting, the Project Steering Committee will be informing the development of a Communication and Engagement Strategy. Together with the project team, they will be agreeing on the range of approaches that will be used to inform, involve, and engage with consumers and other stakeholders.

### **Keep up-to-date**

Anyone who is interested in following this project is encouraged to register for updates via the Queensland Mental health Commission's [eNews](#).

The [Consumer Peak webpage](#) will also be used to post important messages that will alert opportunities that consumers and other stakeholders can participate and will be a repository for these updates.

If you would like to get in contact the Project Steering Committee or the project team, please email: [ConsumerPeak@qmhc.qld.gov.au](mailto:ConsumerPeak@qmhc.qld.gov.au)

Please note, the email account isn't monitored outside of business hours or at weekends.