

Position Description

Director, Consumer Lived Experience Workforce

Classification:	Lived Experience Worker Level 8 (AK57 – AK58)
Business unit/department:	Mental Health Division (MHD)
Work location:	Austin Hospital ☒ Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital ☐ Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre ☐ Other ☐ (please specify)
Agreement:	Victorian Public Mental Health Services Enterprise Agreement 2024-2028
Employment type:	Fixed-Term Full-Time for 12 months
Hours per week:	38
Reports to:	Director, Mental Health Division
Direct reports:	Nil
Financial management:	Budget: N/A
Date:	October 2026

Austin Health acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we operate, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung People of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Position purpose

Consumer Workforce – the consumer workforce is a growing workforce across Austin Health Mental Health Division (MHD) and is acknowledged as a ‘discipline group’ alongside social work, occupational therapy, psychology medicine and nursing. This is a newly created position that will sit in the executive of MHD.

The leadership of this role will be pivotal regarding the strategic planning and implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Mental Health Services.

This position will oversee the development of the lived experience voice in all Mental Health Division activities, including governance, operations, workforce business development recruitment quality and evaluation. The role will work in close collaboration with the MHD executive team to ensure responses to opportunities arising from the reforms place the lived experience voice at the centre, in keeping with the spirit of the reforms.

As a senior manager, the incumbent will be required to be part of the executive team and will contribute to strategic planning and will champion the participation and leadership of people with lived experience at every level of the organisation. The incumbent will be required to work with a large

range of internal and external stakeholders, including internal corporate services and external community and clinical partners.

The position will be based at Austin Health, MHD Executive APU Level 1 but will be expected to attend/visit meetings in other Austin Health service locations. The position will report to the Medical Director Mental Health Division.

Applicants will be required to undergo a police record check and Working with Children Check, for preemployment safety screening purposes.

About the Division

The Mental Health Division provides care and services through a comprehensive range of teams to meet the needs of mental health consumers and carers throughout Victoria. Services are located across Austin Health campuses and in the community.

The Mental Health Division incorporates three program areas:

- Adult & Older Adult Mental Health Services
- Infant, Child and Youth Mental Health Services and,
- Mental Health Specialty Services.

The development of the lived and living experience workforce is dynamic, with the establishment of Victoria's mental health and wellbeing workforce strategy.

Lived Experience roles, regardless of position type or level of authority, are distinguished by a commitment to using lived experience to benefit others, uphold human rights and achieve systems transformation.

The Mental Health Division at Austin Health is building a three tiered Lived and Living Experience Workforce (LLEW) of peer workers, consumer consultants, and advisor or discipline senior roles. There are number of these roles already established in Mental Health Division.

Position responsibilities

Role Specific:

- The implementation and evaluation of A Workforce Development and Support Strategy which focuses on the structure of the Consumer Lived and Living Experience Workforce and providing the appropriate level of supervision, professional development, and support.
- Support and provide advice regarding the implementation of the recommendation of the Royal Commission into Mental Health Services.
- Working with internal stakeholders to support organisational readiness to respond to and implement reform activity.
- Identify, lead and participate in coordinated change management activities that contribute to the development of lived experience participation and leadership across the division, championing diversity and the inclusion of a diverse range of lived experience voices.
- Development of service models that respond to reform and Mental Health Division strategic objectives through coproduction processes.
- With the Carer Senior Staff and Allied Health Discipline Seniors, convene the Consumer and Carer Advisory Group (CCAG) and ensure the appropriate flow of information between this meeting and local teams.
- Ensuring that quality improvement activities always consider opportunities to partner with consumers in planning, design, and evaluation as per the National Quality and Health Service Standards, in particular Standard 2: Partnering with Consumers.



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- Promoting consumer feedback mechanisms (e.g. feedback and complaints, surveys) to assist with the identification of consumer experience to inform service improvement.
- Providing LLEW perspective and expertise at MHD and Austin Health quality and governance committees.
- Oversight to all requests for LLEW to be members on Austin MHD committees and make recommendations regarding the priority of these issues.

Key relationships:

Internal:

- Austin Health Mental Health Division (MHD) Executive
- Austin Health MHD Consumer Consultants and Consumer Peer Support Workers
- Local Consumer Advisory Groups
- Austin Health MHD Discipline Lead Lived Experience Carer
- Austin Health MHD Divisional Managers
- Austin Health MHD Discipline Seniors
- Austin Health MHD Clinical and senior staff
- Austin Health (General)

External:

- Centre for Mental Health Learning (CMHL)
- Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council (VMIAC)
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Division in the Department of Health
- DFFH including Lived Experience Branch, Safer Care Victoria, Office of the Chief Psychiatrist
- Other Area Mental Health Services

Key Accountabilities:

- Engage/maintain relationships with internal Austin Health stakeholders.
- Fulfill all administrative requirements including recording on client contact hours in the CMI database.
- Engage in a minimum of one formal performance appraisal per year, with a mid-year review of performance in relation to the goals identified in the appraisal documentation.
- Source relevant professional development training opportunities
- complete all Austin Health mandatory competencies and ATLAS training as required.
- Other duties as required.

Critical Thinking and Analysis:

- Use the best available evidence to improve current practice.
- Demonstrate an understanding of psychiatric crisis and the nature of the crisis cycle.
- Ability to exercise professional judgement and seek advice and assistance when required or appropriate.

Collaborative and Therapeutic Practice:

- Shows compassion and provides support to colleagues and consumers.
- Utilize the resources of the organization responsibly in a cost-effective manner.
- Maintain standards for infection control.



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Selection criteria

Mandatory Qualifications and experience:

- Direct personal (lived) experience as a consumer with mental illness who has required treatment in the Victorian Public Mental Health system.
- Relevant Tertiary Qualifications and/or extensive experience in a leadership role as a Lived and Living Experience Worker (LLEW) within the mental health system.

Essential skills and experience:

- Well- developed understanding of contemporary trends and issues regarding mental health services from a Lived Experience consumer perspective.
- Demonstrated experience leading and supporting mental health services through substantial change with a sound knowledge of change management theory and practice.
- Demonstrated knowledge and experience working within co design and co-production frameworks.
- Skills and ability to recruit, retain, support and manage staff of a Lived and Living Workforce
- Highly developed communication, negotiation and representation skills including a proven history of being able to successfully guide groups to shared decision making.
- A demonstrated ability to develop and enhance partnerships with key stakeholders including government departments and NGO's
- An understanding of current mental health service delivery systems and issues with familiarity with the recommendations of the Victorian Royal Commission into Mental Health (2021).
- The ability to use Consumer Lived and Living Experience perspective to influence leadership and staff and to provide hope and a belief in recovery.
- Effective communication skills, verbal and written including the ability to develop reports
- Ability to work closely, collaborate and communicate effectively, both in writing and verbally, with a wide variety of consumers, their carers, staff, and relevant committees.
- Well-developed interpersonal skills, including the ability to develop and maintain effective working relationships with consumers, families/carers, colleagues, clinical staff and other health and welfare services.
- Proficient IT skills including ability in Microsoft Office, basic report and policy documentation, outlook calendar, email and meeting functions and ability to use internet/intranet.
- Excellent time management and ability to manage competing priorities.
- A Police Check and Working with Children Check is required prior to appointment.

Desirable but not essential:

- Demonstrated experience in an Area Mental Health Service in a peer support or lived experience role.
- Demonstrated experience in an Area Mental Health Service in the development and implementation of consumer participation.
- Demonstrated experience in providing the consumer perspective into planning, design, implementation and/or evaluation aspects in a large organisation.
- Certificate IV in mental health, peer work, welfare social sciences or community development (or equivalent experience) and/or:
- Training in the Intentional Peer Support (IPS) model, or the willingness to complete this training.
- A current Victoria driver's licence.



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Quality, safety and risk – all roles

All Austin Health employees are required to:

- Maintain a safe working environment for yourself, colleagues and members of the public by following organisational safety, quality and risk policies and guidelines.
- Escalate concerns regarding safety, quality and risk to the appropriate staff member, if unable to rectify yourself.
- Promote and participate in the evaluation and continuous improvement processes.
- Comply with the principles of person-centered care.
- Comply with requirements of National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards and other relevant regulatory requirements.

Other conditions – all roles

All Austin Health employees are required to:

- Adhere to Austin Health's core values: *our actions show we care, we bring our best, together we achieve, and we shape the future.*
- Comply with the Austin Health's Code of Conduct policy, as well as all other policies and procedures (as amended from time to time).
- Comply with all Austin Health mandatory training and continuing professional development requirements.
- Provide proof of immunity to nominated vaccine preventable diseases in accordance with Austin Health's immunisation screening policy.
- Work across multiple sites as per work requirements and/or directed by management.

General information

Cultural safety

Austin Health is committed to cultural safety and health equity for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander People. We recognise cultural safety as the positive recognition and celebration of cultures. It is more than just the absence of racism or discrimination, and more than cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity. It empowers people and enables them to contribute and feel safe to be themselves.

Equal Opportunity Employer

We celebrate, value, and include people of all backgrounds, genders, identities, cultures, bodies, and abilities. We welcome and support applications from talented people identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, people with disability, neurodiverse people, LGBTQIA+ and people of all ages and cultures.

Austin Health is a child safe environment

We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. Austin Health has zero tolerance for any form of child abuse and commits to protect children. We take allegations of abuse and neglect seriously and will make every effort to mitigate and respond to risk in line with hospital policy and procedures.



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