



Position Statement on Co-Production

Queensland Lived Experience Workforce Network (QLEWN) is the peak body for the Lived Experience (LE) Workforce throughout Queensland. Our core mission is to offer sector leadership in Lived Experience Workforce advocacy and influence system reform across the mental health, alcohol and other drug and suicide prevention sectors.

It is fast becoming accepted that Lived Experience voices are an essential component of any sector activities. The recent report from the Queensland Parliamentary Inquiry¹ includes:

- *Recommendation 21: Co-design mental health and alcohol and other drugs services with people with lived experience*
- *Recommendation 105: ...Queensland Government embeds people with lived experience in co-designing all aspects of planning, delivering and reviewing mental healthcare and alcohol and other drugs services in Queensland.*

The necessity to be Lived Experienced inclusive is further reinforced in other key reports including the Productivity Commission Inquiry (2020), Royal Commission into Victoria (2021), National Suicide Prevention Advisor Final Advice (2020). “These reports found that the **central involvement of people with lived experience** across all areas of the mental health and suicide prevention systems - from policy development, setting outcomes at national, state, and local levels, service design, planning and delivery, to research and evaluation – to be a **key enabler of the transformational change** required to create more compassionate, responsive, equitable and inclusive supports and services”²

This position statement is for government and non-government agencies or independents seeking to engage QLEWN’s participation in activities, projects and/or events.

Genuine co-production has the potential to create profound and sustainable change³ however to achieve this change collaborations and partnerships with Lived Experience need to be genuine and purposeful in their intent of inclusion.

QLEWN recognises the importance of a collaborative approach, and seeks to work in partnership with other sector stakeholders. This position statement aims to provide leadership in, and guide effective LE participation in co-production opportunities across the sector.

QLEWN acknowledges:

- A genuine co-production approach involves people with a LE through **all levels** of service, including:
 - **Co-planning:** identifying and defining system problems and/or concerns
 - **Co-design:** defining and developing solutions

- **Co-delivery:** delivering the solution; and
 - **Co-evaluation:** what and how we collect information and measure outcomes.
- Where possible, anything LE should be owned and/or driven by LE.
 - In projects that are not LE-owned, persons with LE views should be prioritised and decision making should be made jointly, equally and fairly.
 - Co-participation opportunities should be aligned by trauma informed practices.
 - Any involvement in co-participation comes with the expectation of paid contribution to the person with lived experience, in fair compensation of their time and expertise. Lived Experience expertise is a valued commodity, and therefore any participation is expected to be compensated.

“The most important part of co-production is shifting mindsets and establishing a culture that embraces exploration and learning, and genuinely values consumer knowledge and expertise.”⁴ QLEWN acknowledges that for many, engaging a Lived Experience workforce is a new experience. We invite others in to discuss with us if there is any confusion or uncertainty about co-production activities.

When working in partnership, QLEWN expects:

- To be included and involved in projects from the outset. Ideally no work should begin before consultation and agreement has been determined between parties.
- Relevant information and updates should be exchanged between parties with transparency and regularity.
- Where possible, meetings should be co-chaired.
- QLEWN is governed by an Executive Committee of Management. The Executive Committee has the right of refusal of any activities, projects or events that are deemed disingenuous or tokenistic.

This position is heavily influenced by the following publications. We highly recommend anyone seeking to recruit/engage Lived Experience expertise, become familiar with these resources.

1. “Co-production - Putting principles into practice in mental health contexts”, 2018 © Cath Roper, Flick Grey & Emma Cadogan
2. The Participation ladder – a consumer/survivor lens, Indigo Daya
http://www.indigodaya.com/wpcf7_captcha/2020/10/Participation-ladder_consumer_survivor-lens-2.pdf
3. QLD Lived Experience Workforce Framework, Qld Mental Health Commission 2019
<https://www.qmhc.qld.gov.au/documents/qmhclivedexperienceworkforceframeworkwebpdf>
4. National Lived Experience Workforce Guidelines, National Mental Health Commission, 2021
<https://www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/lived-experience/lived-experience-workforces/peer-experience-workforce-guidelines>
5. Various papers by Dr Louise Byrne <https://livedexperienceleadership.com.au>.

END

Enquiries: projects@qlewn.com.au

References

¹ Queensland Parliamentary Inquiry Report, May 2022

² National Mental Health Commission, Carrie Lumby “Lived Experience: Key Recommendations from key mental health and suicide prevention reform reports and strategies” June 2022

³ Spencer et al, 2013, p.7

⁴ Co-production - Putting principles into practice in mental health contexts, 2018 © Cath Roper, Flick Grey & Emma Cadogan