

Expression of Interest

Expert Advisory Group – Perinatal Mental Health Screening

OFFICIAL

Background

The Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System identified a need to review approaches to perinatal mental health screening to address inclusivity, cultural appropriateness, and the therapeutic context of screening.

In response to this recommendation, the Department of Health commissioned an independent review of perinatal mental health screening in Victoria (the review), which found that most pregnant people miss out on screening and only half are screened postnatally using EPDS. The review also found that screening is effective, but screening tools and approaches do not meet the needs of some communities. Workforce capacity and capability also affects screening, as does the continuity of care and access to timely services. Ten recommendations were delivered in response to these findings. A summary of the report may be found [\[here\]](#).

The Victorian Department of Health is preparing to respond to the recommendations, which will aim to strengthen screening practice, build workforce capability and confidence, and improve experiences and continuity of care.

Role and Scope

This Expert Advisory Group will oversee the development of Victorian perinatal mental health screening guidelines. The screening guidelines will also incorporate guidance for Aboriginal communities and multicultural communities which will be co-designed with experts from those communities. The following key principles will guide the work:

- be evidence informed
- be transparent
- hold purpose at the forefront, focused on health and health-related outcomes
- where applicable, be self-determined by, and for, the Aboriginal community
- be guided by the voice of lived experience
- remain aligned with the NHMRC standards for guideline development

Specifically, the responsibilities of the Expert Advisory Group are to:

- guide the development of a consultation draft of the Victorian perinatal mental health screening guidelines with reference to findings of the Review into Perinatal Mental Health Screening
- ensure the guideline is relevant, feasible to implement, contains actionable recommendations, and is useful for decision making.
- provide advice on other review recommendations as required.

Period of appointment and expected time commitment

Expert Advisory Group members will be required to meet online for one or one and a half hours, up to eight times in 2024, commencing from May. Meeting dates and times are to be determined. Meeting frequency and period of appointment may be subject to review pending outcomes of the public consultation.

Conditions and remuneration

Members whose participation is not part of their position of employment will be remunerated at a rate of \$237 for four hours. Reasonable expenses will also be covered for both the chair and advisory group members.

This remuneration is aligned with the following guidance:

- [A guide to consumer remuneration | Safer Care Victoria](#)
- [Victorian Government Board appointment, remuneration and diversity guidance](#)

Expertise and experience preferred

This expression of interest is open to

- Koorie Maternity and/or Aboriginal Maternal Child Health clinicians and or service managers in either mainstream or Aboriginal controlled organisations.
- Maternity service managers.
- Maternal Child Health coordinators and/or nurses practicing in Victoria, including staff of the Maternal Child Health Line.
- Clinicians or managers from the Perinatal Emotional Health Program.
- An academic representative with leading expertise in perinatal mental health screening approaches
- Clinical psychiatrists or psychologists with an expertise in perinatal mental health
- Consumers with lived experience of perinatal mental health in either the antenatal or post-natal period.

Do you have

- A special interest or passion for perinatal mental health and a strong desire to see service system improvements in the field?
- Relevant experience, knowledge or qualifications in the fields of perinatal and/or mental health care?
- Expertise and/or experience in guideline or other policy development either at the service or system level?
- Knowledge or experience of the needs of diverse communities, for example, Aboriginal communities, LGBTIQ+, disability and multicultural communities including people from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds.

Selection process

Applications will be reviewed in confidence. Shortlisting and Expert Advisory Group member selection will be led by the Victorian Department of Health.

How to apply and further information

If you would like to express interest please complete the attached application form, or for more information please contact maternity@health.vic.gov.au. Please ensure that you obtain support from your manager or coordinator prior to submitting your application (if applicable).

Applications close midnight Friday 19 April 2024.

To receive this document in another format, phone +61 3 8633 4830, using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or [email](mailto:maternity@health.vic.gov.au) <maternity@health.vic.gov.au>.

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In this document, 'Aboriginal' refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. 'Indigenous' or 'Koori/Koorie' is retained when part of the title of a report, program or quotation.