

MHCC Advisory Council: Expressions of Interest are open

Information and Background

The Mental Health Complaints Commissioner (MHCC) deals with complaints about public mental health services in Victoria. We also provide information, education and advice to services about effective responses to complaints and make recommendations for service and system improvements.

We formed an Advisory Council in 2016 to bring the voice of people with lived experience to the forefront of the MHCC's work. Our Advisory Council helps us to work in partnership with people with a lived experience as consumers, families and carers, and people with experience of working in services.

In October 2020 we launched our '[Driven by lived experience framework and strategy](#)' to guide the MHCC further on our road of honouring and respecting the collective experience and wisdom of mental health consumers, families and carers.

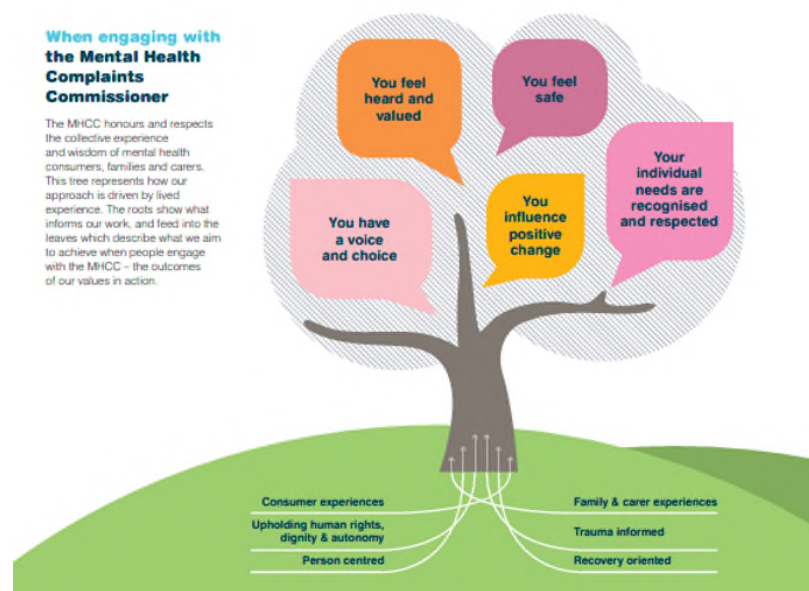
The driven by lived experience tree (below) provides a visual representation of our new driven by lived experience principle. The statements in the speech bubbles describe the experiences we would like everyone, including consumers, families and carers, services, staff and Advisory Council members, to have when they engage with the MHCC.

What does the Advisory Council do?

- Enables consumers, families, carers and services to shape and participate in the MHCC's work.
- Contributes to ongoing projects and informs practice guidance.
- Provides advice and support around the MHCC's planning, service delivery and evaluation.

When engaging with the Mental Health Complaints Commissioner

The MHCC honours and respects the collective experience and wisdom of mental health consumers, families and carers. This tree represents how our approach is driven by lived experience. The roots show what informs our work, and feed into the leaves which describe what we aim to achieve when people engage with the MHCC – the outcomes of our values in action.



What is involved?

We usually meet at the MHCC offices on a weekday, during normal business hours, every two months. The meetings run for two hours and videoconferencing is available. During COVID-19 we have been meeting via Microsoft Teams and we will support people to set this up if needed.

From time to time, Advisory Council members will also be offered opportunities to participate and contribute to MHCC projects. For example, our Advisory Council has recently:

- worked with us to develop the 'Driven by lived experience framework and strategy', which also sets out our plans to involve the Advisory Council more closely in developing our education and engagement materials, including videos, presentations, and training
- advised us on our approach to communications, reporting and what's important to include on our new website (under development).

In line with the objectives of our 'Driven by lived experience strategy 2020-2023' the focus of our Advisory Council's future work will include:

- increased use of existing lived experience networks of Advisory Council members
- increased lived experience input into learning from complaints and compliments made about the MHCC
- development of a series of consumer and carer information videos focusing on the mental health principles and what they mean in practice
- development of a complaints process and culture self-assessment tool, to support services to review and improve their approach to complaints and to inform planning and delivery of MHCC education to services
- ensure all staff receive orientation and ongoing training and development informed by lived experience perspectives, to support our practice and approaches to be driven by lived experience.

Who are we looking for?

We have up to five positions available on the Advisory Council and are looking for consumers, families, carers and individuals working in mental health services. The term of membership is a period of four years.

We are also looking for someone who, as well as being an Advisory Council member, would be interested in being the Advisory Council Chair. This would involve leading the Advisory Council meetings and making sure the agenda is dealt with in an orderly and efficient manner. Previous experience as a meeting Chair is desirable.

Members who are contributing outside of their paid work receive remuneration of \$165 per meeting (preparation and attendance) and a rate of \$55 per hour for work on projects.

The MHCC aims for our Advisory Council to represent the views and experiences of our whole community. We therefore welcome and encourage applications from people with diverse life experiences.

How do I apply?

Please complete our expression of interest form here: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AC_EOI

- The closing date is Wednesday, 6 January 2021.
- For more information or to receive the expression of interest form in a different format, please contact info@mhcc.vic.gov.au or leave a message for Rachel Vague on 1800 246 054.
- All expressions of interest will be reviewed by the Senior Advisor, Lived Experience & Education and all those shortlisted will be invited to attend a short interview. Interviews will take place between 18 to 22 January 2021 and the first Advisory Council meeting will be on Tuesday, 16 March 2021.