



EOI: Engagement Consultant/Researcher

Closes Tuesday 25th October COB

Strategy Towards the Elimination of Seclusion and Restraint

- Community Engagement Consultant with research background
- Reports to Policy and Research Lead and CEO
- Duration: October 2022 to February 2023 – project must complete by submission date.
- Rates: Budget provides for an hourly or day rate comparable to academic sessional staff rates – or your EOI may be whole project budgeted. This would be finalised at signing of contract.
- Specifics of availability requirements: A mix of office and remote working between 3 or 4 business days per week with the possibility of some weekend work to enable flexibility around consultations.

Background on VMIAC

The Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council (VMIAC) is the only Peak Consumer body in Victoria. VMIAC provides peer led services and supports using a rights-based approach to mental health advocacy. We recognise the importance of empowering consumers to build their own capacity to self-advocate and actively participate in opportunities to improve the quality and breadth of services they use.

We undertake individual, group and systemic advocacy and our work includes research and evaluation, education and training, information provision and resource development, as well as limited specialist support programs. We have a strong and continuous focus on engagement with members, and on informing and supporting them in becoming empowered and having their voices heard.

VMIAC is owned, governed, managed and staffed by people with a lived experience. We aim to be an organisation in which the diversity of people with a lived experience can meaningfully and powerfully contribute and the employer of choice for the mental health lived experience workforce.

www.vmiac.org.au

Background on this project

The Victorian Government has committed to implementing recommendation 54 of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System which includes to 'act immediately to reduce the use of seclusion and restraint in mental health and wellbeing service delivery, with the aim to eliminate these practices within 10 years.

A key output for Recommendation 54 is to co-design a strategy – with consumers, families, carers and supporters, the workforce and service providers – to reduce the use of seclusion and restraint that: improves accountability for, and transparency of, the use of these practices, leads and supports changes in workforce practice and ensures consumer voice is at the centre of efforts.

This EOI is an exciting opportunity to communicate consumer ideas, hopes and expectations of the Strategy to inform its development.

VMIAC has produced three Seclusion Reports that can serve as useful background reading. The 2021 VMIAC Seclusion Report (Report #3) told of the 7461 instances of seclusion and restraint in the period of 2020/21.

Deliverables

This role will require engagement with consumers who have experienced, witnessed or felt threatened by restrictive interventions and you will work in partnership with the engagement and policy teams. The deliverables within the period of October 2022 to February 2023 are as follows:

1. Develop and implement a project plan including the following:

- a) Semi-structured interview guides aligned with the strategy framework**
- b) Schedule and conduct up to 50 consumer interviews including:**

- *Schedule all logistics requirements*
- *Formulate an EOI process for consumer participation in interviews*
- *Co design interview methodologies / interview questions*
- *Working in partnership with the VMIAC engagement, comms and policy team, sector and community partners to reach a diverse range of consumers which includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, CALD, and LGBTQI+ consumers, and from multiple participation registers of MH and AOD organisations.*

2. Write a report based on the 50 consumer survey responses

- *Preliminary Report (approx. five pages)*
- *Final Report (approx. 15 pages)*

3. Consumer Surveys

- *Conduct a small complimentary schedule of online meetings (up to one hour duration) supporting consumers to complete an anonymous survey*
- *Collate these survey results*

Responsibilities/Accountabilities

- Collaborate with partnering organisations of this project: Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) and Mental Health and Wellbeing Division (MHWD), Dept. of Health in addition to stakeholders who are included in the Departmental Stakeholder Engagement Plan for Recommendation 54
- Assess the process, requirements, and provision of peer support for all consumers engaged in the process (especially interviews and surveys).
- Provide briefs to the external working group to implement Recommendation 54 for the strategy towards the elimination of seclusion and restraint, the VMIAC Consumer Register and membership base, and the broader VMIAC Team.
- Report to VMIAC Policy and Research Lead, CEO, including conversations on project updates and wellbeing check-ins
- Purposeful, intentional and considered use of own lived/living experiences
- Accountability for own wellbeing and self-care and the care others including knowledge, and practice of, trauma-informed strategies for wellness.

Selection Criteria

This is a lived/living experience role.

It is a requirement of the role that applicants have a lived or living experience of seclusion and restraint (direct experience, witnessed or being under the direct threat of seclusion or restraint).

People with intersectional experiences of diversity (e.g. gender, sexuality, ability, ethnicity, Aboriginality) are encouraged to apply.

Essential

1. Commitment to VMIAC's goal of the elimination of seclusion and restraint, and demonstrated knowledge of the context around this (e.g. relevant policy, legislation, reports and/or other literature)
2. Experience in quantitative and qualitative mental health research, designing and conducting surveys, interviews, report writing and evaluation processes

3. Excellent project management skills including planning, information and time management
4. Strong skills in stakeholder engagement particularly with consumers of services
5. Proven capacity to self-care and balance other's needs - manage own response to trauma, proactively seeking support as necessary.
6. Experience working from a consumer lived and living experience perspective
7. A current Victorian Driver's Licence and is prepared to travel for work purposes (including use of public transport to access regional areas if preferred)

Desirable

1. Understanding of intersectionality and experience working with diverse and marginalised groups
2. Personal or professional contribution to the consumer movement regarding the reduction and elimination of seclusion and restraint.
3. Completed Intentional Peer Support (IPS) Training

Supports provided from the host organisation

To be negotiated prior to commencement including:

- *Inclusion in the VMIAC Staff Team including team meetings, and social and wellbeing events*
- *External Consumer Perspective (Discipline Specific) Supervision*
- *Access to Employee Assistance Program (EAP)*
- *Flexible working arrangements and reasonable adjustments*

How to apply

- Submit a one-page cover letter describing your match to the role and a document succinctly addressing the selection criteria along with your estimate fee.

Suggested reading prior to applying:

- *VMIAC's Policy Position on Seclusion and Restraint – [click here](#)*
- *VMIAC's Seclusion Report #3 4pg Summary – [click here](#)*
- *Recommendation 54 – Towards the Elimination of Seclusion and Restraint – [click here](#)*

Please direct enquiries to: Policy and Research Lead: Gabriel Aleksandrs on 0499 212 896 email: gabriel.aleksandrs@vmiac.org.au or Narelle Fousketakis on 0499 982 370 email: narelle.fousketakis@vmiac.org.au