



**A Framework for Mental Health Peer Work in
Southern and South Eastern NSW**

Consultation Draft

Table of Contents for the Framework

Prepared by Craze Lateral Solutions Pty Ltd ABN 700 52 350 731

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1 Introduction

Building on the joint commitment of COORDINARE, Southern NSW Local Health District (SNSWLHD) and Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) to make mental health a joint regional priority, implementation of the South Eastern NSW Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan has begun.

The first action of this Plan is to develop a regional Peer Workforce Framework and the NSW Ministry of Health has provided funding through SNSWLHD to complete this work. The Framework is in line with NSW Mental Health Commission's [Lived Experience Framework for NSW](#), launched on 4 December 2018 by the Minister for Mental Health.

Dr Leanne Craze AM, is the lead consultant, commissioned by COORDINARE to facilitate this collaborative project developing the regional Framework. The Project has three phases of consultation and co-design:

- **Discovery** – gathering ideas and looking at existing frameworks (January to March 2020);
- **Design and Development** (April to June 2020) – co-designing a framework (dates); and
- **Positioning for Success** (June-July 2020) – guides for implementation and an evaluation plan.

Where we are up to – An overall summary of what we heard during the Discovery Phase of the Project is [now available here](#). Summaries are also provided for each of the different parts of the consultations to date.

- Initial discussions with Peer Worker Networks and Advisory Groups
- Peer Work Network Consultations
- Weekly Peer Work Practice Conversations
- Informal brainstorming

The ideas and suggestions provided have informed the development of this consultation draft of the Framework's Table of Contents.

Views about the Table of Contents are now sought. For more information about the Project visit <http://bit.ly/regionalpeerworkforceframework>

2 Draft Table of Contents

Introduction

- Purpose of the framework – outlining the context and key purposes of the framework and its expected benefits for people experiencing mental health issues, family, friends and carers, peer workers, mental health services and organisations and local communities across the region
- A regional vision for peer work – describing a regional commitment to growing the peer workforce and further empowering the expertise of lived experience
- Explanation of language used in the framework – e.g. approach to terms like consumer, carer, mental illness etc

Section 1 What is peer work?

- E.g. origin, values, principles, key terms (definitions e.g. peer, peer work, peer worker), uniqueness, types of roles, the connection between natural and intentional peer relationships, relationship to other peer work disciplines, contribution within mental health practice and services
- Why peer work? The value of peer work – quick overview as well as providing links to existing analyses of the evidence base; the value of peer work in regional, rural, remote and isolated settings
- Peer work today and into the future - discussion of:
 - the range of settings that peer workers are employed in across the region;
 - range of roles and positions across the region;
 - current specialisations as well as those emerging within peer work across the region and more widely;
 - Peer work and diversity;
 - New frontiers across the region and more widely – e.g. in Emergency Departments and settings, private practice, peer-run services in both clinical and non-clinical services, peer educator roles etc
- The language of peer work
- Questions of professional identity – a discussion of some of the unresolved questions within peer work practice and concerning professional identity

Section 2 Peer work in regional, rural, remote and isolated settings

- A description of the region

- What is known about the current peer workforce
- Discuss how peer work is different in regional, rural and remote areas as well as what 'isolated' means
- Discuss unique challenges and opportunities for peer work across the region
- Outline the contribution of peer work during times of community crises (including what has been learned this year e.g. bushfire, drought, floods, COVID-19, economic downturn)

Section 3 Peer work skills and capabilities

Discuss the skills that peer workers bring and are required across different:

- **Experience levels e.g.**
 - Essential – core skills across levels and settings
 - Advanced e.g. team leader or senior roles
 - Management.
- **Settings e.g.**
 - In hospital e.g. emergency departments, inpatient units both acute and rehabilitation/recovery
 - With people subject to involuntary treatment orders
 - Community settings
 - Policy, strategic and administrative
 - Regional, rural, remote and isolated settings

Section 4 A blueprint for professional development and career pathways across the region

- Keeping the peer in 'peer work' - experience and qualification and pathways into peer work
- Recommendations for on-the-job training, co-reflection (peer supervision), peer debriefing, professional development and networking
- Expanding career pathways across the region

Section 5 Becoming a peer work employer of choice

Some helpful principles for employers and managers

- Foundational standards e.g. See for example the [Charter of Peer Support](#) and MHCSA's [NGO Mental Health Lived Experience Workforce Standards and Guidelines](#)
- Principles for viable and sustainable peer work positions

- Position descriptions – their formulation, content and review
- Employment terms and conditions
- Remuneration principles
- Management of peer workers including support structures and access to ongoing professional development for managers and employers
- Workplace readiness
- Self-assessment tools and resources for organisations

Section 6 Positioning for success

- Key partnerships – local, regional, state-wide and national
- Pivotal enabling strategies
- Workforce development resources
- How will success of the Framework’s implementation be measured?
- Moving towards a benchmarking framework for employment of peer workers in the region to guide services and organisations, including a benchmarking framework.

Section 7 Recommendations

Recommendations to further the development of the peer workforce

Section 8 Resources to assist the framework’s implementation

- **Tool kit for self-care and practice challenges** e.g.
 - maintaining ‘peerness’ and role authenticity
 - working in regional, rural and remote and isolated settings
 - publicly known and recognised as a peer workers
 - stigma and discrimination
 - the practice trauma dance
 - Prioritising self-care
- **Peering into Peer Work** – some guides for
 - consumers
 - families
 - employers and managers
 - clinicians
- **Helpful resources**

3 Next steps and Design Stage consultation

Tell us what you think

Views about the Framework's Draft Table of Contents are now sought via:

- An [online survey](#) open to all interested people, closes COB 17 July 2020
- Ongoing Weekly Peer Worker Conversations – every Wednesday for all peer workers across the region, 2.00-3.00pm via [Zoom](#).

Design and development

As feedback is received the Table of Contents will be refined and work commenced on drafting and compiling the contents.

It is expected that consultation on a draft Framework will occur in July 2020.

For more information

Leanne Craze E: Leanne.craze@bigpond.com M: 0408 869 051