

Consumers adding value to Public Mental Health Services

Tania Lewis, Lived Experience Educator, Barwon Health, May, 2018

A bit about me...



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- Current age: 56
- Age at onset: 23 (1985) – work related stress
- Diagnosis: Bipolar 1 Disorder (1990)
- Public Psychiatric Hospital Admissions: 2
 - one involuntary in 1985
 - one voluntary in 2002
- 2 Ambulatory setting: 2 occasions
- 2002 – insight and management strategies

Working in the Mental Health Sector

- SANE Speaker 2004
- Consumer Consultant – Project work
- Work Well Consulting
- Mental Health First Aid Instructor
- Consumer Educator - consultant
- Lived Experience Engagement Manager BH
- Psychiatric Educator – Lived Experience Practitioner

Benefits:

- Supporting other carers and consumers
- Providing a different lense
- Advocacy
- Contributing to employment processes
- Influence policy and service provision
- Reduce stigma
- Examples:
 - 2014 Mental Health Act training – Advanced Statements
 - Reviewing complaints

Challenges:

- Tokenism
- Stigma
- Staff Attitudes
- Hours of work
- Vulnerability
- Lack of role clarity
- Lack of voice



Lived Experience (LE) roles

- Consumer and Carer Consultant
- Peer Support Worker
- Recovery Coach
- Lived Experience Manager
- Lived Experience Educator/Researcher

Considerations when employing LE staff

- Staff Preparation
- Orientation
- Supervision
- Appropriate training
- Reasonable adjustments
- Providing support
- Being cognisant of potential trauma

Employing MH Consumers vs physical health volunteers

- Experience of a person accessing physical health services
- Experience of an involuntary patient in a public mental health service



Managing yourself.....

