Part B
Additional Information about Entry
In many ways, MHCC have spearheaded peer workforce development in Australia, most notably through their coordination of national peer projects funded by NMHC. In 2011 MHCC co-hosted the first national forum on peer work, in partnership with the National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum (NMHCCF), CMHA and the Community Skills and Health Industry Skills Council (CS&HISC). This commenced a national dialogue on how to develop the peer workforce in Australia, identified the skills and competencies required for peer work, and informed the CS&HISC Mental Health Peer Work Competency Development project.

Based on international evidence and identified sector need, the CS&HISC developed the Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work to meet the needs of the emerging peer workforce, and the qualification was released in 2012. RTOs were slow to provide the training due to the intensive and costly process of developing training and assessment resources, including learner resources, assessment tasks and training plans for trainers.

In response, MHCC proposed that a national and consistent suite of training resources be developed and made available for RTOs across Australia, so they could deliver the qualification without delay or duplication of development effort. The NMHC provided funding for the Mental Health Peer Work Qualification Development project in 2013, coordinated by MHCC on behalf of CMHA.

With support of the NMHC, also MHCC went on to deliver the Champions of Mental Health Peer Work, to build a qualified national peer work trainer and assessor workforce to deliver the qualification. This swiftly removed a potential barrier for RTOs to provide training. MHCC also provided a national pilot to allow use of the resources prior to national release, and this saw the first 13 peer workers attain their qualification from the new national training program, with important learning arising from participants to inform future training.

To ensure peer voice shaped all project aspects, MHCC collaborated with state peaks and the NMHCCF, convening a broad network of peer experts across all states and territories to establish a steering committee, a technical writing group and a National Consumer and Carer Peer Work Qualification Reference Group of 24 experienced peer workers and service representatives across Government, private and community managed sectors. These groups contributed their experiences and wisdom to ensure resources were high quality and would propel the peer workforce forward. Selection of pilot participants and Champions was conducted by an independent National Selection Panel with representation from consumer peer work, carer peer work, Mental Health Carers ARAFMI NSW and Being (NSW CAG).

MHCC were well positioned to turn their focus to a state-wide roll out of the Cert IV in Mental Health Peer Work for NSW. Preparations were multifaceted with sector relationships being crucial for understanding the breadth and spread of the current peer workforce as well as organisations’ future recruitment plans.

MHCC grew their lived experience training workforce, linking also with the recently qualified Champions. Commitment to a proven training model that provides a pairing of consumer and carer perspective and a blend of peer work experience across CMO and Government service settings was essential. Approaches to familiarize with new content and delivery, learn from experienced peers and engage in regular peer support assisted this growth.
Plans for training rollout were timed to address the financial barrier for peer workers and organisations, as MHCC secured subsidies and incentives from the state VET sector reform initiatives, alongside implementation of a peer work scholarship scheme funded by the Ministry of Health which also subsidised training. This provided added incentive to train and made it viable for organization to put increased number of workers through the qualification.

In the 9 months following pilot, MHCC commenced training in 5 locations, with reach to several regional areas of NSW. Traineeships were established and a Recognition program released for experienced peers, with positive impacts and benefits reported from peer workers and organisations.

1. Evidence of a significant contribution to the field of mental health on a local, state or national level.

Since the LD was established in 2007, it’s contribution at a state level is understood through the provision of professional development, qualification pathways and workforce development products for the mental health and community sector workforce. This equates to professional development training to over 5600 workers and the issuing of over 1400 qualifications, with a retention rate over 70% which is well above the national average.

MHCC’s involvement in peer workforce development at a national level, required them to qualify the first peer workers to undergo the NMHC funded national program. One consumer peer worker and one carer peer worker were endorsed as competent by a national panel of experts in peer work and accredited training, as is the best practice strategy when a new qualification is introduced. These trainers went on to train and assess the national pilot and the Champions of Mental Health Peer Work, which respectively granted certificates for 13 peer workers and 29 peer trainer and assessors in each state and territory. This seeded the process for RTOs across Australia to start delivering training.

Six months after completing skills recognition workshops, 29 Champions had completed the peer qualification with 8 engaged with an RTO and preparing to deliver training and 4 already providing the training. Now RTOs in the majority of states are in preparation or have commenced delivery of the Cert IV in Mental Health Peer Work, providing increasing access for peer workers nationally to engage with this nationally consistent peer endorsed program.

For the 14 pilot participants, 13 were granted the Certificate IV, with important impacts reported by participants.

“A huge thank you to MHCC for giving me the opportunity to participate in the pilot program. I have not only gained a new qualification, but also gained a new sense of confidence and pride as a peer worker. The course has definitely enhanced my professional development, as I am starting to move into a different direction with my career”

The value of the pilot project is evident not only for providing access and benefits to peer workers who participated, but for the opportunity it provided to enhance the training experience moving forward. It allowed a rethinking of the assessment strategy to allow small regular assessments, and revision to the distribution of training days to address learner fatigue and workplace staffing. Learning around effective student support approaches was vital, as students reported the value of additional assessment workshops, study skills resources, telephone and email support, which all contributed to the high retention rate and a positive experience for students.
Since the pilot training was completed in June 2015, MHCC went on to deliver training to over 150 participants in the following locations across NSW: Illawarra, Newcastle, Orange, Sydney and Wagga Wagga. A streamlined skills recognition program has also commenced for peer workers with more than 5 years’ experience. Based upon the 5-day program provided to the national Champions, this consists of a series of individual, pair and group assessment tasks which are assessed during the workshop and enable students to gain the qualification in 5 face to face days.

In relation to the roll out of the Cert IV in Mental Health, MHCC has further progressed the aims of the NMHC funded national peer projects, to

- Ensure consumer and carer peer workers have their skills recognised by completing a nationally recognised qualification
- Acknowledge and validate the importance of peer workers
- Assist to support and grow the peer workforce
- Assist to cement the peer workforce as an occupational group in community, Government and private mental health services
- Ensure the Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work is available to consumer and carer peer workers

The impact of the delivery of the Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work to peer workers across NSW is most obvious in feedback from training participants. In a recent survey 91% of training participants commented that training had enhanced the confidence, skills and knowledge they bring to their peer role. Over half of respondents also reported that since commencing the Cert IV they had observed impacts for their organisation.

Consolidated feedback from Cert IV Peer Work training participants revealed

- 79% agreed the course was relevant and met student needs
- 88% would recommend the course to others
- 100% felt the trainers showed thorough knowledge, encouraged participation (93%) and made the course interesting (92%)

Trainers feedback identifies that training has achieved benefits beyond a formal qualification, observing personal growth for individuals who actively contribute to learning through sharing with a group of peers:

‘The Cert IV PW process is a terrific opportunity [for peer workers] to broaden their network of contacts across the peer workforce. Even for anybody who is shy and reserved, the in-class sessions create perfect ambience for close connections to other peer work professionals. This process is purely organic, meaning it happens from simply being present in the room. It closes the gap between peer workers working in remote locations and brings knowledge and learning together to broaden the most seasoned of minds.’ (peer work trainer)

2. Evidence of innovation and/or recognised best practice.

The design and implementation of the Cert IV Mental Health Peer Work training by MHCC is considered innovative and best practice across multiple aspects, encompassing training content that advocates peer work and best practice support approaches, contemporary adult learning and assessment strategies and the participation of consumer and carer peer workers in every step of the process.

Training that promotes peer work as a best practice approach

The availability of the training succeeds in promoting peer work as an internationally recognised best practice approach to supporting mental health recovery (Davidson, et al, 2012). As recommended by the national reference group, the training program seeks not to singularly define peer work but distils a rich diversity of peer approaches from Australia and
overseas in to the resources, showcasing innovative programs and peer approaches, such as health and wellbeing programs, advocacy resources, carer support approaches, countless tools and templates.

“The diversity and depth of lived experience perspectives involved in developing this qualification was outstanding and has come together into a program that will give our next generation of peer workers a brilliant edge.” (national reference group member)

Best practice adult learning and assessment approaches
The training and assessment strategies employed by MHCC are recognised as cutting edge and industry best practice approaches in vocational education. The training resources combine content to ensure learners are fairly and holistically assessed and avoids over-assessment and duplication of content. Training caters to all learning styles and is tailored to existing peer workers or those commencing peer work in mental health services. It provides scope for adult learners to actively contribute to their own learning through interactive group tasks that elicit experience and knowledge. Incorporating real workplace practices assists learners to transfer knowledge and skills from training in to the workplace. Facilitation by an experienced duo of consumer and carer peers working across CMO and Government service settings adds richness through mutual sharing of experiences and establishes a safe learning environment. The only contemporary recognition program of its kind in Australia, based upon the program for the Champions of mental health peer work project was created by MHCC, and provides experienced peer workers with a fast track option of live assessment, removing the need for evidence portfolios.

“the activities were about ‘real practice’ and many competencies were cleverly being assessed together” (Champion participant)

A process driven and delivered by consumer and carer peer workers
According to MHCC’s vision that ‘People with lived experience are the drivers of positive change in all mental health services and mental health reforms’, the delivery of the Certificate IV in mental Health Peer Work by the LD was a process both informed and executed by consumer and carer peers, and continually built upon feedback from what peer workers on what works. This is seen through the growth and support of a lived experience trainer and assessor workforce, robust mechanisms for gathering student and trainer feedback following each training event and immediately adapting resources and delivery in response to continually improving the learning experience for peer workers.

“Thank you for genuinely listening, it’s great to see my comments actually reflected in the resources” (reference group member)

3. Evidence of participation of mental health consumers, in the planning, implementation and evaluation as relevant.

Since early 2013, MHCC have been engaged with a broad national network of experienced peer workers to ensure the Cert IV in Mental Health Peer Work resources were genuinely developed and informed by a national peer voice. This included a steering committee to guide the overall project and endorse final resources. A technical development group with subject matter expertise in peer work and accredited training, provided hands-on involvement in creating content and ensuring compliance with the national package. A National Consumer and Carer Peer Work Qualification Reference Group of 24 diverse and experienced peer workers shaped key content and training structure.

Commitment to national peer reference group
When it came to provision of the peer qualification in NSW, MHCC remained true to the intentions of the National Consumer and Carer Peer Work Qualification Reference Group in their recommendations to:
• Facilitate training by consumers and carers who also brought experience of peer work
• Adopt a two-trainer model to ensure a safe space for learners and facilitators, and that importantly incorporates the perspective of a consumer peer worker and a carer peer worker
• Provide training to consumer and carer peer workers in the same training group to promote collaborative work practices and increased understanding across roles

“*It was great to have [carer peer work trainer] there to learn about the carer perspective*”

“*By the end I couldn’t remember who was a consumer and who was a carer, it didn’t matter, we were all peer workers, isn’t that great?*”

**A lived experience trainer workforce**

The LD continued to facilitate genuine consumer and carer involvement through training delivered by a diverse qualified and experienced peer workforce. This workforce enrich learning through a breadth of experience, including personal lived experience of mental illness, experience as a carer, personal experience of trauma, and peer work experience of working in the community sector across roles in public and community managed services.

A framework for trainer support arose directly out of feedback from trainers on what was needed. The need to feel confident with new training material, their facilitation skills and marking of assessments, resulted in newer trainers being paired with more experienced trainers, with flexibility to take an increasingly active role over time. Assessments are also co-marked by an experienced assessor for a period of time and feedback provided. Peer trainers raised the importance of having a regular forum to meet and discuss their experiences in delivering the new peer training, sharing successes and challenges and providing peer support to each other. With teleconference facilities provided through MHCC, peer trainers have owned and invested in this process for enhancing their facilitation.

**Peer selection process**

MHCC implemented initiatives that provided training subsidies and other incentives to create impetus to complete training, such as the Peer Work Scholarship Scheme and Western NSW Peer Workforce project. As funding for these opportunities were limited, fair and equitable access across the state was to be ensured. MHCC convened an independent selection panel to review applications and make decisions on participation, based on equity considerations such as

• Designated places for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people (CALD)
• Consumer and carer peer work representation
• Peer workers in CMO and Government mental health services
• Metropolitan and regional/rural locations

The panel incorporated both consumer and carer peer work, including representation from NSW consumer and carer peak organisations, Mental Health Carers ARAFMI NSW and Being (formerly NSW CAG).

4. Evidence of Partnerships and Linkages (collaboration for continuity between organisations).

The successful and extensive distribution of the Cert IV in Mental Health Peer Work by MHCC LD would not have been possible without collaboration with member organisations, local health districts and community mental health services to ensure access to training for peer workers that was uniquely tailored, relevant and responsive.
**Professional Development Scholarships Scheme for Peer Workers – A partnership with NSW Ministry of Health**

In 2015 the NSW Ministry of Health funded the MHCC to deliver a project to provide 80 funded places in the Cert IV in Mental Health Peer Work. The project removed the financial barrier to the qualification and supported workers to have their experience, knowledge and skills formally recognised through the training.

With MHCC’s track record in provision of mental health qualifications to the NSW sector and their involvement in the national projects, the Ministry looked to MHCC to identify a suitable framework for a scholarship program that would achieve equitable access to quality peer work training. This incorporated dedicated student support strategies, study skills resources and assessment workshops to ensure learner retention. MHCC and the Ministry worked in effective partnership through regular communication on progress with uptake and a proactive approach to issues such as promoting applications from ATSI and CALD people and peer workers in Government services. Commencing with training in September 2015, 79 scholarship places have been so far allocated with the following distribution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consumer peer workers</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carer peer workers</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATSI</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMO peer workers</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Metropolitan NSW</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>67</td>
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This program has contributed to developing a trained and skilled peer workforce in NSW, providing funding to complete the qualification for peer workers who otherwise may not have had the means to do this. The first round of scholarship applicants are due to complete face to face training in June 2016.

**Western NSW Peer Workforce Project – A PIR initiative to build a peer workforce**

In 2015, MHCC commenced a partnership with Western NSW Partners In Recovery (PIR) and Local Health District to contribute to their Peer Workforce Project which was funded by Western NSW PIR. This involved providing access to the Cert IV in Mental Health Peer Work to people providing peer support across the region in LHDs and CMOs including consumer operated services and support groups.

MHCC worked collaboratively with Western NSW LHD and the PIR consortium to address potential issues in delivering training to this broadly dispersed group. A model that provided not only subsidised training through a scholarship, but an allocation for travel and accommodation, made participation in the qualification viable for this emerging workforce. The dedication of the consortium members enabled extensive promotion of the opportunity throughout the region, and enabled provision of workplace experience with a consortia organisation, for training participants requiring peer work experience. This has been arranged for students requiring experience in peer work beyond that provided in their current role, in order to satisfy qualification assessment requirements. The first training has commenced with 22 students in Orange, and is due for completion in September 2015.

**Smart and Skilled funding – a plan to maximise benefits to the workforce**

MHCC were fortunate to gain funding places in the NSW Smart and Skilled program, a VET Reform response to increase access to qualifications and build skilled workforces in priority industries. These training subsidies and traineeships were used in combination with other available incentives to enable MHCC to map out a delivery strategy that provides broad coverage of training across metropolitan and regional NSW.
This involved working closely with services to better understand where peer workers were currently placed and identify priority areas that would allow generation of sufficient interest. Working collaboratively across with CMOs, LHDs, and consumer and carer organisations, a state-wide delivery plan was conceived. This encompassed tailored solutions for in-house training within organisations, public courses offered in popular locations, and equitable use of available subsidies to generate viability for training in regional areas that have infrequent access to training.

5. Verification and evaluation of the program’s effectiveness.

MHCC LD maintains a qualification retention rate of over 70% which is well above the national average. The estimated completion rates in NSW for Cert IV training commenced between 2009-13 is 40.9% (NCVER, 2015). MHCC believe that tailored relevant training enabling transfer of skills and knowledge directly to the workplace and role is a key contributor to why students remain in training.

“I have been able to use many tools to improve my work practice”

“I take the resources back to my workplace and use them with my team, to help other workers understand more about what peer work is”

A robust student support framework is also an essential component of effective training delivery with a suite of successful strategies to equip students to navigate accredited training requirements, complete assessments and have a valuable training experience:

• Prompt response to email and telephone requests for assessment help
• Establishing a training plan with each student and tracking assessment progress throughout to proactively identify and address any support needs
• Development of a supervisor resource for managers and supervisors to outline training requirements, topics covered and assessment structure which ensures managers are informed, aware of key dates and aware of their role in assessments such as third party supervisor report
• Ongoing liaison with workplace supervisor to ensure any required workplace support and resources are in place, eg allocated work time to focus on training and assessment
• Contact with trainer/assessor to clarify assessment issues
• Hosting assessment workshops to provide students with the opportunity to discuss assessments directly with a trainer/assessor
• Identifying cases where reasonable adjustment is required and coordinating this process for the individual

“I’ve sent emails to [Student Support Officer] if I’m ever in doubt or need her to explain something for me. She’ll come back to me really quickly, for example to explain an assessment question. I make sure I really use her as a resource, she’s a really good resource”.

In a recent survey conducted with all participants of MHCC’s Cert IV in Mental Health Peer Work training, students reflected on the impacts of being involved in the training, revealing some key themes:

the opportunity to network with fellow peers, the trainers and learn through sharing of experiences:

“Meeting trainers who had been in the industry a long time and networking with other peer workers in my area”

“The main thing that stuck out for me was the friendliness and cooperation of everyone, the trainers and the good will of other students, their sense of inclusiveness so we all felt of equal value in the group and had something to contribute.”

“We had so many interesting group discussions and meaningful group feedback”
enhancing their provision of peer support:

“I found the training provided me with a greater understanding of peer work and I gained practical skills which I can apply to my work”

“Formalizing and strengthening my role with training has brought skills and confidence in my work”

“It helps me during each day’s work know what to do in different situations”

personal growth, increased self-confidence:

“What this course has taught me is that I can study. This has given me a qualification. Now I’m doing a diploma of leadership and management through OTEN and after I complete that I’m going to do an online Bachelor in Management.”

“Cemented my commitment in this area of work... become more involved in the peer movement, networked, gained experience”

“I’d often think ‘I’m just a carer’ and I no longer say that. I’m not just a carer, I’ve got more to give.”

“I knew this would mean more than just a piece of paper. This is my chosen career now until I retire”

sharing what they have learned with others and shifting perspectives:

“respect in my role from my peers and also consumers I work with”

“I’m having the opportunity to share my perspective on a range of issues”

“the organisation understands more what peer work is, more than just sharing lived experience”

changes in the approach of the organisation

“Made them consider making the peer worker role a designated role. This discussion is ongoing.”

“I’m having a big input to changes at work, like with forms, how we ask questions of clients and the way we speak in the team and to others. Language is such a huge factor.”

“Led to recruitment and a pathway for training”

prompting a new direction or new opportunities:

“My end goal is to use my lived experience and knowledge of mental health to facilitate training.. I want people to come away and think ‘I really got something from it that I can use in my work and life’ “

“I’m hoping to go on to peer leadership training”

“made me realise I would like to be a trainer or project worker in the future”

The real impact is likely to be realised into the future, and can be considered in terms of the ripple effect on individual peer workers, the consumers and carers they support, their colleagues and organisations, as increasing numbers of peer workers complete the training.

“The resources are world class and will assist in increasing the credibility and profile of peer workers across Australia” (reference group member)
Conclusion

The contribution of MHCC LD to the growth and capacity building of the mental health peer workforce is unquestionable. At the helm of the NMHC funded national peer projects, MHCC continued to look to the consumer and carer peer workforce and their employing organisations to conceive a training delivery model that could ensure access to training for peer workers that was uniquely tailored, relevant and responsive.

In doing so MHCC have achieved state-wide reach of the Cert IV in Mental Health Peer Work to workers that is yet to be matched in Australia. Their work has enabled large numbers of new and existing peer workers to access a high quality and evidence based qualification program, built upon the expertise of the national reference group and enhanced by proven contemporary educational approaches.

Training is continually enhanced through the feedback and experience shared by peer work students, organisations who support this workforce, and lived experience trainers

“I believe that this is going to support the emergent peer workforce to take its place as a recognised, valued & integral part of mental health services in Australia.” (reference group member)

With over 150 students completed or currently engaged in the qualification, MHCC continues to deliver multiple locations across NSW, with the number of students expected to reach over 200 by end of 2016.

References

NCVER 2015, Australian vocational education and training statistics: the likelihood of completing a government-funded VET program, 2009–13, NCVER, Adelaide

Referees
Removed for privacy

Appendix of Support Material

Support material includes:

1. National flyer promoting the Mental Health Peer Work Qualification Development project
2. Photos of National Consumer & Carer Peer Work Qualification Reference group
3. Screen shot of NMHC webpage showing project info and resources
4. Photos of Champions of Mental Health Peer Work
5. Champions of Peer Work brochure
6. Invitation and photo from pilot participant’s graduation day
7. MHCC Cert IV Peer Work brochure
National brochure produced by MHCC to promote the Mental Health Peer Work Qualification Development project

“The most exciting and ground breaking advancement for the Australian Peer Workforce in decades!”

The peer workforce is arguably the fastest growing workforce in mental health in Australia. If you are a consumer or carer peer worker employed by government, private or community managed mental health services, you can now convert your knowledge and experience into a Nationally Recognised qualification.

The diversity and depth of lived experience perspectives involved in developing this qualification was outstanding. It has come together into a program that will give our next generation of peer workers a brilliant edge.”

Indigo Daya

“I believe that this is the resource that is going to support the emergent peer workforce [to] take its place as a recognised, valued & integral part of mental health services in Australia.”

Eschleigh Balsano

“This is a watershed project and one of the most exciting, ground breaking advancements for peer work in decades. These resources are world class and will assist in increasing the credibility and profile of peer workers across Australia.”

Michael Burge, OAM

Who is this training for?

This qualification is specific to people with lived experience of ‘mental illness’, as either a consumer or carer working in roles that provide individual support to other consumers or carers.

The Mental Health Peer Work Qualification Development Project was funded by the National Mental Health Commission (NMHC) and coordinated by the Mental Health Coordinating Council on behalf of Community Mental Health Australia.

This project has been shaped by a national network of peer work expertise.

For more information on the NMHC visit: www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/
For more information on the project, scan the QR code or visit: http://bit.ly/1nw8BZo
The National Consumer & Carer Peer Work Qualification Reference group at a reference group meeting in Sydney 2014

Reference group members working on sequencing of content for the Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work – Suzie Adam and Ailsa Rayner
The resources developed through the Mental Health Peer Work Qualification Development project, are now available from the website of the National Mental Health Commission.

Champions of Mental Health Peer Work Project – built a national peer work trainer and assessor workforce to deliver the peer qualification.

Some of the Champions completing their assessment work in Sydney
Flyer developed to promote the Champions of Mental Health Peer Work project nationally, through state peak bodies.
Champions attending Sydney to complete 5 day Skills Recognition Workshop to complete their Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work – March 2015.

Champions at the Melbourne Skills Recognition Workshops in June 2015.
National pilot program for Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work – Invitation for graduation event held by MHCC in December 2015.

MHCC would like to invite you to a morning tea in celebration of the achievements of those who participated in the Cert IV Mental Health Peer Work pilot training 2014-2015,

Peer Work trainers and participants of the Nationally funded Champions of Peer Work initiative will be invited to speak on the day.

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<td>Friday December 4th</td>
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<tr>
<th>Venue</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aftercare training rooms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Building 501</td>
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<td>Callan Park, Lilyfield</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buses run frequently along Balmain Rd/Perry St.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Street parking available on Glover St. Enter Callan Park via the Glover St Gates</td>
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<th>RSVP</th>
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<td>You are welcome to invite up to 2 guests, including a representative from your organisation</td>
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RSVP by Friday 20 November by emailing vanessa@mhcc.org.au

Photos of some of the pilot participants and the trainers on their graduation day
MHCC’s dedicated webpage, including updates, key dates and options for accessing the Cert IV in Mental Health Peer Work training

Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work

This is a Nationally Recognised training product

Introduction

The peer workforce is arguably the fastest growing workforce in mental health in Australia. Based on international evidence and identified sector need, the Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work has been developed to meet the needs of this emerging workforce.

This training provides an opportunity for peer workers to build upon their lived experience and their on-the-job experience and receive a nationally recognised qualification in mental health.

Upcoming training

- Wagga Wagga - commencing 12-13 May 2016 - APPLY NOW
- Central Coast - commencing 6-7 July - APPLY NOW
- Sydney Group 2 - commencing 21-22 July - APPLY NOW

Note: NSW Traineeships may be available for this qualification through your organisation. Traineeships are set up by the organisation through an Apprenticeship Centre. For information on traineeships and to find the closest centre either call 13 88 73 or use their website: http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/find-my-ao/full-list.

For applicants, please see the green buttons to the right of this page for more information.

Employers please download the Supervisors Handbook.

Our trainers

Lorna Downes  Peter Farrugia  Irene Gallagher

Who is this training for?

MHCC has customised the delivery of this qualification so peer work roles (paid or unpaid) within the mental health sector in government, private or community managed services.

Assessment tasks and workshop activities will reflect participants to provide workplace evidence and examples of their own practice.

Entry Requirements

To be eligible to study the Certificate in Mental Health Peer Work with MHCC a participant must be either:

- Consumer Peer Worker currently working (paid or unpaid) in an identified peer role providing direct ongoing support to other consumers as part of their day to day work
- Career Peer Worker currently working (paid or unpaid) in an peer identified role providing direct ongoing support to other carers as part of their day to day work

AND have basic numeracy and literacy skills including reading, understanding and following WHS and other work related instructions, recording information and perform basic calculations such as additions and subtraction.

MHCC can provide some assistance through reasonable adjustment processes, and provide appropriate referrals for support.

Smart and Skilled Funding

Subsidised training places are available under Smart and Skilled. This training is subsidised by the NSW Government. You can complete the qualification for as little as $1970 if you meet the eligibility requirements. See exemptions and concessions are available. For details click here. This training is delivered by Mental Health Coordinating Council Inc. RTO Code: 91296.

For organisations interested in funded places available or group training, please contact Learning and Development on (02) 95668386 ext 106 or email training@mhcc.org.au.

For more information about Smart and Skilled visit https://smartandskilled.new.gov.au or call 1300 772 104.

What others have said about this course

“Reflecting on the experience I had at work in the past, I can appreciate the breadth of content in [this training] could have solved a lot of the heartache I had along the way. This is going to propel the [peer] workforce forward.”

Click the following for more information

Completion Options
Course Content
Meet the Trainers
Other Recommended Courses
CERTIFICATE IV in Mental Health Peer Work

COURSE CODE: CHC43515

ABOUT THIS COURSE

The peer workforce is arguably the fastest growing workforce in mental health in Australia. Based on international evidence and identified sector need, the Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work has been developed to meet the needs of this emerging workforce. Consumer and peer peer workers will have a unique opportunity to build upon their lived experience and their on-the-job experience and receive a nationally recognized qualification in mental health.

“reflecting on the experience I had at work in the past—the breadth of content in this training could have solved a lot of the heartache I had along the way. This is going to propel the [peer] workforce forward.”

WHO IS THIS FOR?

MHCC has customised the delivery of this qualification to meet the needs of people currently working in identified consumer or peer peer work roles (paid or unpaid) within the mental health sector in government, private or community managed services. This qualification is specific to workers with lived experience of mental health problems who are either a consumer or carer and who work in services and roles which support consumer or carer peers.

COURSE TOPICS

- Foundations of Peer Work
- Trauma-Informed Peer Work
- Cultural Diversity
- Reflect on Practice
- Support Wellbeing & Physical Health
- Promote & Facilitate Self-Acceptance
- WHS (online)

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

To be able to study the Certificate in Mental Health Peer Work with MHCC a participant must be either:

- Consumer Peer Worker currently working (paid or unpaid) in an identified peer role OR
- Carer Peer Worker currently working (paid or unpaid) in an identified peer role AND providing direct ongoing support to other consumers as part of their day to day work.

AND have basic numeracy and literacy skills including reading, understanding and following WHS and other workplace related instructions, recording information and performing basic calculations. MHCC can provide some assistance through reasonable adjustments processes, and provide appropriate referrals for support.

COURSE FEES

Subsidized training places are available under Smart and Skilled. This training is subsidised by the NSW Government.

You can complete the qualification for as little as $1970 if you meet the eligibility requirements.


BENEFITS OF BECOMING A QUALIFIED PEER WORKER

FOR WORKERS

- use your personal lived experience purposefully and with appropriate boundaries
- work collaboratively with others to support holistic and seamless services
- identify information and resources to support self-determination
- maintain a positive work life balance and address your wellbeing needs
- equip yourself to drive meaningful change in your sector

FOR ORGANISATIONS

- understand the role and unique contributions of consumer and carer peers
- receive role clarity, role confusion and role conflict in a timely manner
- provide trauma-informed strengths-based and recovery-oriented peer support for service users

HOW DO I APPLY?

- Check your eligibility
- Request an enrollment pack, visit https://www.mhcc.edu.au/learning-and-development to download the pack OR contact MHCC directly (see below for contact details)
- Read the information in your pack
- Set up your Unique Student Identifier (your pack explains what this is and how to set it up)
- Send in your enrolment forms and proof of citizenship status to MHCC
- Receive notification of the outcome and confirmation of fees if you are accepted

Contact us for more information about this qualification or other training delivered by MHCC Learning & Development

For more information call 1300 777 704 OR visit learning-and-development.mhcc.edu.au

The Mental Health Coordinating Council is a Registered Training Organisation RTO 23876

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