

Expression of Interest now open: National Mental Health Workforce Working Group

The Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (the Department) is seeking a mental health family, carer and kin lived experience representative to contribute to the work of the National Mental Health Workforce Working Group (Working Group) under the [National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement](#) (the National Agreement). Mental Health Carers Australia (MHCA) is inviting expressions of interest on behalf of the Department for this national paid participation opportunity.

Background to this opportunity

The National Agreement supports joint action by the Commonwealth and state and territory governments. Its implementation is overseen by the [Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Senior Officials Group](#) (MHSPSO) and supporting Working and Project Groups.

Following the Productivity Commission's review in 2025, the current National Agreement has been extended until 30 June 2027 while governments develop the next agreement. Lived experience representation arrangements are being refreshed during this transition. A range of lived experience positions will be available across MHSPSO and its Working and Project Groups. Positions are for an initial 12-month period from July 2026 to June 2027 aligning with the 12-month extension of the National Agreement, with a possibility of extension.

Positions are eligible for remuneration in line with the National Mental Health Commission's [Paid Participation Policy](#). While meetings will predominantly be held online, where face-to-face attendance is required, reasonable travel costs associated with participation will be covered in line with the policy.

As the national peak body for mental health families, carers and kin, MHCA has established a paid participation register to support fair, transparent and well-matched lived experience representation across national opportunities.

We are seeking people who can bring lived experience, strategic insight and a broader collective advocacy perspective to this work. This may include experience supporting someone living with mental health challenges, suicidal distress, or experience of bereavement by suicide.

For this particular opportunity, the successful applicant will also need specific experience as a **family/carers peer worker** providing direct support services. They

should have knowledge and experience of the broader mental health and suicide prevention system, including non-clinical and suicide prevention areas, and a practical understanding of how workforce issues shape experiences of care and support.

The successful applicant will be someone who can contribute confidently and collaboratively in a high-level national governance setting, including alongside government, sector peak bodies, lived experience representatives, First Nations representatives and workforce leaders.

Successful applicants will also have the opportunity to participate in MHCA's Level 1 Strategic Advocacy Development Series. This reflects MHCA's commitment to ensuring lived experience advocacy is supported, prepared and continuously developed. These opportunities aim to build advocacy capability, support reflective practice, and create strong feedback loops between representatives and the broader family, carer and kin community.

Successful individuals will be provided with access to the following:

- Onboarding documentation and resources
- Handover brief with outgoing lived experience member/s
- Introductory meeting with Working or Project Group Chair and/or Secretariat
- Support from MHCA with information and debriefing
- Pre-briefings with Chair/Secretariats prior to each official meeting, as required.

Applications

Interested individuals are asked to submit an expression of interest (up to 300 words in total) addressing:

- Your lived experience as a mental health family member, carer or kin, and how your perspectives and capabilities would contribute to the National Mental Health Workforce Working Group.
- Your experience as a peer worker providing direct support services.
- Any experience you have using lived experience to inform policy, programs, workforce reform, service improvement, education, governance or advocacy.
- Your understanding of how workforce issues can shape the experiences of people accessing mental health and suicide prevention services, and the families, carers and kin who support them.
- What support, preparation or development would help you participate meaningfully in this national governance opportunity

- How you would work with others to ensure perspectives beyond your own experience are considered, including diverse and intersecting family, carer and kin perspectives.

How to Apply

To be considered for this opportunity, you must first register with MHCA's National Contact Register as a 'Family Member, Carer, or Kin' and opt in to receive paid participation opportunities.

[Click here to sign up and register your interest in MHCA's paid participation opportunities](#)

Once you have created an account and signed in, you can submit your Expression of Interest (EOI) using the link below

[Click here to apply for National Mental Health Workforce Working Group EOI](#)

Please note that if you have not registered and opted in to paid participation opportunities, you will not be able to access or complete the application form.

Expressions of interest close: Friday 24 July 2026

Shortlisting and selection: Week commencing 27 July 2026

Notification of successful outcome: Friday 31 July 2026

MHCA is committed to a fair and transparent selection process. EOIs will be reviewed against the requirements of the opportunity, the applicant's demonstrated capacity to contribute to collective lived experience advocacy, and the need to support diverse representation across the family, carer and kin community.

National Mental Health Workforce Working Group

There is one mental health family, carer and kin position to be filled for the Working Group. The Working Group is expected to meet four times per year over the 12-month period with the first meeting in 2026-27 to be held in August 2026. Out-of-session work may be required.

About the Working Group

The Working Group was established to oversee and guide the implementation of the 10-year National Mental Health Workforce Strategy (Strategy) and consider workforce-specific clauses under the [National Agreement](#).

The Working Group operates as a subcommittee under the oversight and direction of Health Workforce Taskforce (HWT) to provide mental health workforce advice to Commonwealth, State and Territory Health Ministers. The Working Group will oversee and report on the implementation of the Strategy to Health and Mental Health Ministers through HWT and the Health Chief Executives Forum (HCEF).

The Working Group is responsible for:

- Reporting on actions under the Strategy to the HWT and MHSPSO;
- Discussing, planning and progressing implementation of mental health workforce initiatives outlined in the Strategy and National Agreement;
- Identifying priority mental health workforce issues, and solutions to be progressed by the most appropriate party;
- Referring specific mental health workforce matters to governance committees with a stronger remit, where relevant, to streamline decision-making and reduce duplication of effort;
- Overseeing the National Mental Health Workforce Sector Advisory Group with relevant sector, consumer and family, carer and kin representatives, to provide multidisciplinary and system-level advice relevant to mental health workforce challenges;
- Endorsing priorities, develop corresponding work plans and monitor progress against them;
- Supporting activities that complement existing national workforce reforms and strategies, such as the National Medical Workforce Strategy 2021-2031 and the

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan 2021-2031; and

- Keeping updated on work led by the Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Data Governance Forum to report on progress towards increasing the number of FTE mental health professionals per 100,000 population, outlined in the National Agreement.

The Working Group consists of representatives from the Commonwealth and all states and territory health departments, sector peak bodies, lived experience representatives, and First Nations representatives. Representatives from national and jurisdictional agencies with responsibilities relating to the mental health workforce may be invited to inform the Working Group as required. The Working Group is also supported by the National Mental Health Workforce Sector Advisory Group.

Position requirements

The successful individuals must have lived experience as a mental health family, carer or kin. Additionally, they should:

- have specific experience as a peer worker providing direct support services;
- have knowledge and experience of the broad mental health and suicide prevention system, including non-clinical and suicide prevention areas; and
- a practical understanding of how workforce issues can contribute to someone's lived experience of the mental health and suicide prevention system.