

Expert Experience and Co-design

Consumer Engagement and
Participation Project

Acknowledgement to Country

We would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet today and of the many lands upon which we work and play. We also pay our respects to Elders past and present.

QuIVAA (QLD Injectors Voice for Advocacy and Action)

- QLD's peer based drug user organisation
- Run BY drug users FOR drug users
- Advocacy, drug law reform, representation, health & human rights.
- Working towards health and human rights of people who use drugs



QuIHN (QLD Injectors Health Network)



- Harm reduction & health services for people who use substances
- Cairns, Townsville, Sunshine Coast, Gold Coast, Capalaba, Brisbane.
- NSP (Needle Syringe Programs), counselling, psycho educational groups, therapeutic groups, outreach, bulk billing medical clinic, case management, workforce development

Engaging people who use drugs

- AOD engagement is unique
- Drug use is criminalised – identification as a drug user
- Lack of understanding amongst AOD workers /sector about engagement
- Many barriers – Us and Them attitude, stigma, professional as experts

Engaging people who use drugs

- Not embedded in the AOD sector
- Lack of funding for engagement – very limited peer/consumer roles
- Language – peer/consumer/lived experience
- Often tokenistic or only 'recovered/abstinent' people
- Connection to community is vital

Consumer Engagement Participation Project (CEPP)

- Funding for CEPP / Project Officer 16 hours per week
- Engage consumers and peers of QuIHN & QuIVAA (people who use substances) in organisational engagement opportunities and opportunities throughout the QLD AOD sector
- Build capacity of people who use substances to be involved in the decision that affect their lives
- Peer & Consumer Led project:
 - Steering Committee (with consumers) informing development
 - Consumer informed training development
- Organisational readiness – Embedding engagement practice

Stages of Project-“on the hop”

- Foundation Building
- Audit
- Recruiting- EOI
- Steering Committee
- Forum for Training Package
- Quarterly Reporting
- Including family and significant others

Anticipated Opportunities for Consumer Participation



Opportunities

- Internal and external- pool- like HR Vic
- CAG CAC
- Steering committees
- Forums and conferences
- Co-design of QuIHN service delivery including P&P, workshops and training
- Providing valuable, information from the substance using community
- Interview panels for potential staff

Barriers Current and Anticipated



Barriers to Engagement

- Getting the word out
- Access to ITC for potential participants
- Resource paucity
- Lack of evidence from other AOD services initiating project
- Staff /management /board – different understanding of project – resistance / lack of knowledge/understanding
- Reimbursements- remuneration / funding cash v vouchers

Barriers Identified by Consumers

- Language (health literacy)
- Stigma and discrimination
- Outing self- illegal activities
- Feeling out of their depth
- Privacy and confidentiality
- ITC skills and access
- Acceptance by worker
- Stereotypical "drug addict"



Outcomes



Tangible Outcomes

- Filming for “Coming to Terms” project about health literacy by North Metro MH and AOD services
- Focus Group attendance - training packages
- Attendance and Presentation HCQ Forum
- Steering Committee members
- Organisational audit- how to decipher this
- Foundational documents – policy – role descriptions etc

Other outcomes?

- Predicted outcomes
- Sense of belonging - connection
- Being heard
- Skills and knowledge building
- Confidence building
- Breaking the cycle of marginalisation including sub culture intolerance

Where do we
see this
going?



What's Next?

- Extending CEPP to other QuIHN offices
- Build community of consumer reps
- Continued funding???
- Secure position to lead project
- Build a Peer Worker community

Jennifer-Anne Jones Expert by Experience



Expert by Experience

- My story
- Outing myself? How is this different to saying I have a physical health concern.
- My experience with QuIHN and QuIVAA
- My contact with the substance using community
- How I feel when I participate in decisions that effect my life-What it means to be heard
- The future of Consumer participation

We would like to acknowledge and honour the contribution of the Consumer Representatives with QuIHN and QuIVAA who are integral to the success of this project. We acknowledge and honour all people who are taking the courageous stand to represent the voice of the vulnerable and those disconnected or unheard. We thank you.

We would like to acknowledge the people who have been a part of the substance using community and are no longer with us.

We also understand that the best way to honour those who have died in the drug war is to end it.

The war on drugs is a war on people.

Thank you audience and participants

