



Partners for Change

A Sydney Mental Health Consumer Worker Network

The main objectives of this network will be to connect mental health peer workers working for public and private organisations, volunteers and consumers considering entering the peer workforce. This will allow us to: share knowledge, provide personal support, facilitate mentoring and training, and to improve peer worker career pathways. The network group will initially meet on a monthly basis and will share information through a Google Group. To join the group please apply at the link below and explain why you'd like to join: <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/innerwestconsumerworkers>

Expressions of Interest:

Next Meeting: Friday 25th of September, 1pm-3pm, headspace Ashfield Meeting Room, 260 Liverpool Road Ashfield. Lunch provided.

Please RSVP or register interest in joining the group with Travis King, Consumer and Carer Coordinator at Inner West Sydney Partners in Recovery: tking@newhorizons.net.au

Potential activities of the network:

- A mentoring aspect of the network could use a buddy system to pair peer workers with each other to provide personal support and coaching
- Training opportunities can be provided for professional development
- Leadership opportunities for consumers to facilitate training to industry staff and their peers
- Development of a peer worker best practice guidelines, transferable to other services
- At the first forum the network will discuss topics including:
 - o How the network will function and be structured, committee, members, meetings...
 - o Prioritising the activities of the network and payment of participation
 - o What issues and training courses are most important for peer workers?
- Advocacy activities for peer worker rights and responsibilities about issues such as:
 - o Career pathways (To better allow career progression from CSW/PSW roles)
 - o Peer worker job descriptions – (how to ensure employers use clearer and more detailed job descriptions and appoint peer workers in more active roles)
 - o Flexible employment options (What happens if a person becomes unwell? This discussion needs to happen before person employed, Part-time work options)
 - o Access to supervision and support. (It's difficult to share personal issues with a supervisor. Personal support could be provided by peer support relationships)