

# Mind's Lived Experience Governance Framework

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All quotations in this booklets are from Mind team members and partners who actively contributed to the development of this Framework, unless otherwise indicated

# Acknowledgement of Country

Mind acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the Traditional Custodians of the unceded lands on which we work, and we pay our respects to Elders past and present.

We recognise the ongoing intergenerational impacts of invasion, dispossession and colonisation and the strength and resilience of **First Nations peoples**, their custodianship of lands, waters, languages, knowledge and culture. Mind supports the sovereignty and self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

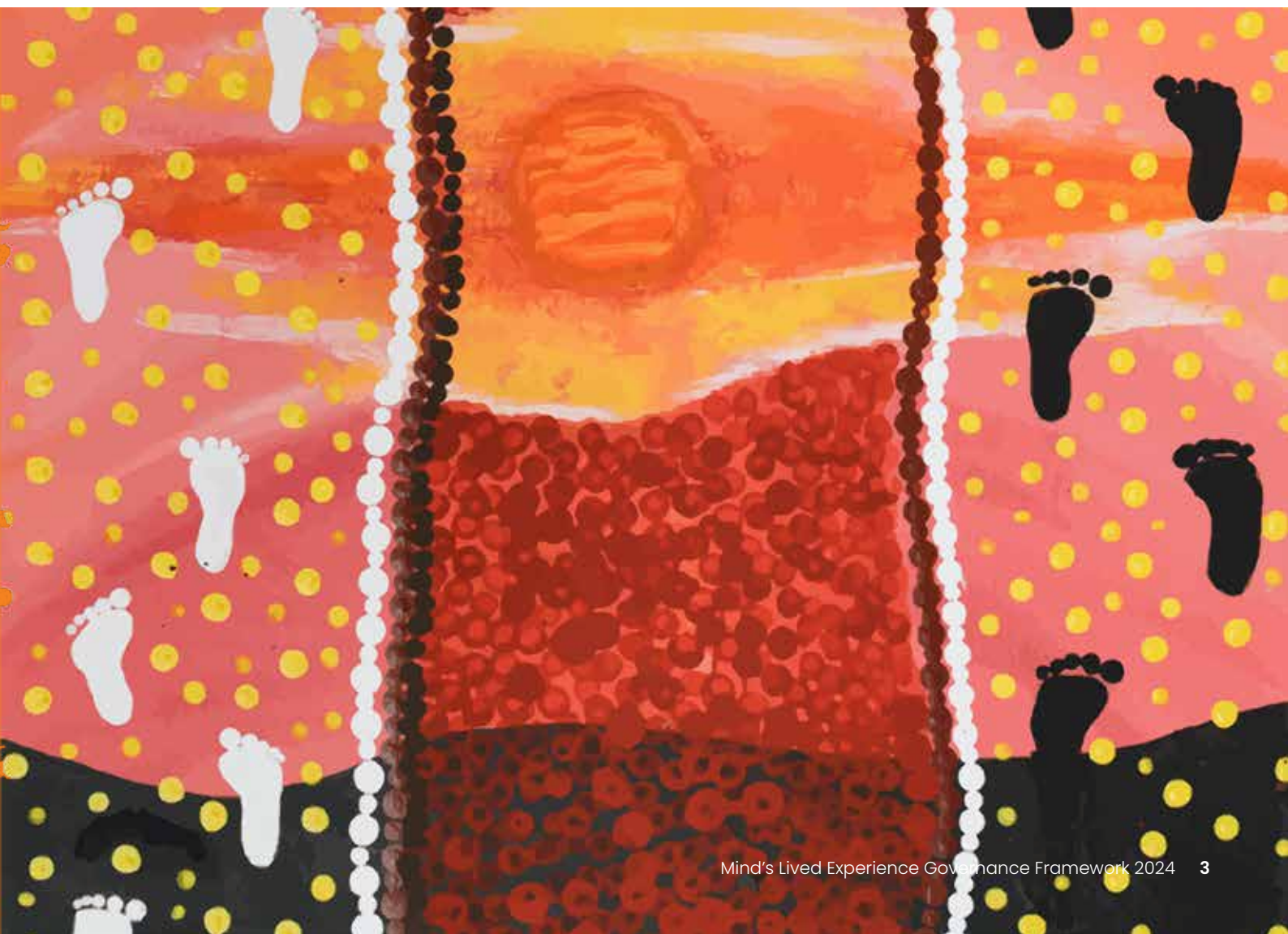


The Australian Indigenous concept of country is not just about the land, the sea, and the sky. It includes all living things and the stories, songs, dances, and responsibilities that go with sustaining an environment in which everything is interconnected.<sup>1</sup>

Laura Brearley, Restoring Indigenous Leadership



Artist: Stephen Oliver  
*'Walking and Working Together'*





## Recognition of lived and living experiences

Mind values the expertise and leadership of people with **lived and living experience** of mental health challenges, distress, and alcohol and other drug use, and the expertise and leadership of families and carers, as we work together to influence and transform the services and systems in which we work.

We value and affirm the perspectives and contributions of people from all cultures, genders, sexualities, bodies, abilities, spiritualities, ages and backgrounds, and the survival and resistance of those most impacted by services and systems that have harmed and oppressed.



# Purpose of this framework

Mind Australia (Mind) commits to leading by example and transforming mental health systems by offering services that genuinely have people most impacted at the centre; their lived experiences, their rights, needs and preferences, and their agency.

Mind also commits to cultivating growth in lived experience (peer) workforces, support them to be the leaders of today and the future in the sector.

To uphold their commitments, Mind recognises the importance of progressive, inclusive and robust governance structures that (1) embed lived experience across the organisation and at all levels, and (2) support, endorse, and authorise lived experience (peer) workforces and their practice.

Mind's Lived Experience Governance Framework (the framework) fulfills these two functions in operations, strategy, leadership and governance, as well as service planning, design, delivery, and improvement. The framework sets clear intentions to enable lived experience governance to thrive and have impact within the organisation and to guide decision-making. It is a foundational piece with organisational backing and processes to support lived experience (peer) workforces, allies and broader workforce in their work and ensure that as individuals and teams they align practice and decisions with the framework's intent and vision, with space to respectfully discuss and resolve tensions when they emerge.

The framework promotes accountability to people with lived experience, particularly those most impacted and people who use Mind's services or are involved in decision-making and other activities. It honours the history and

legacy of people with lived experience who have paved the way or led before us, while extending this commitment to current and future lived experience movements. It will also need to be responsive to emergent needs harvested through participatory approaches such as co-production and lived experience led input and action.

Whilst the framework will initially be used for governance of Mind's peer-led services, it is not limited in its relevance to other types of services and business areas. Where applicable, there is a bold intent that practices and approaches documented within the framework inform and may be integrated into all of Mind's functions and decisions to strengthen their commitment, responsibility and accountability to people with lived experience. These practices rely on the organisation and workforces reframing and responding to risk differently, building on relational ways of being and acceptance for where people are at, and trauma-informed de-escalation approaches that promote safety cultures and the agency and leadership of people with lived experience. Defined structures for ensuring the integrity and fidelity of the framework to lived experience (peer) values, positionality and approaches, as well as guarding against peer drift, co-option and dilution, are paramount.

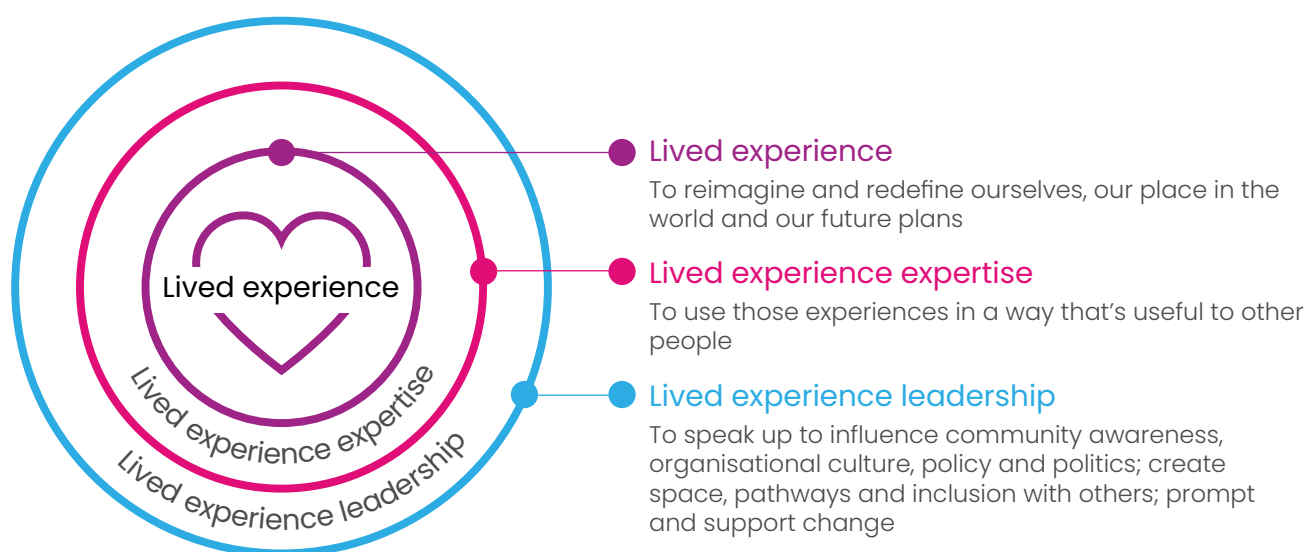
The framework is a shared responsibility, it is proactive, and everyone has a role for its successful use. The framework applies to people who use Mind's services or are involved in decision-making and other activities, Mind's Board, Executive, Support Hub, management and frontline team members. Each group has distinctive roles and responsibilities for its implementation and success, with a responsibility to and with, not for or over, people with lived experience.

# Understanding the nuance of 'lived experience' and lived experience governance's intersection with other governance approaches

Within Mind's framework an expansive understanding of lived experience beyond direct personal experiences is recognised as lived experience expertise and lived experience leadership. This is where peoples' experiences are passionately, intentionally and

skilfully leveraged as a technical skillset for the benefit of others and to transform systems.

The diagram below is copied from the Lived Experience Governance Framework and differentiates between these levels<sup>1</sup>.



Lived experience governance is aligned with and complementary to corporate governance mechanisms. The purpose of lived experience governance is to support safe, effective, and person-directed or -led practice and decision-making.

While existing governance structures claim to focus on these aspects, what differentiates lived experience governance is its central emphasis on people with lived experience and those most impacted. Other governance structures, such as clinical and practice or financial governance, are framed from the organisational perspective, seeking a set of principles supporting organisations to achieve outcomes of high-quality clinical outcomes, maintaining accountability to systems that may be more harmful than helpful or maximising corporate profits (corporate governance). These components

are important when they are in the service of people, rather than profits or power over approaches.

Another differentiating factor is that lived experience governance seeks to transform workplaces and their practices by ensuring organisations are not complicit in perpetuating harmful systems and structures. This can be done through re-thinking the dominant biomedical paradigm and the practice approaches to risk to come from a harm reduction, non-coercive and relational framing. This way, people with lived experience – or who use services of an organisation governed by lived experience re-claim their rights, autonomy and decision-making power, and are safe enough in the process. A lived experience governance framework thus operationalises this for organisations.

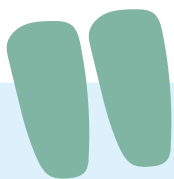
## Referencing the Lived Experience Governance Framework<sup>1</sup>

*The framework provides a mechanism for organisations and sector leaders to have a clear understanding and oversight of expectations, objectives, accountabilities, and performance that ensures the voice, contributions and decision-making power of people with lived experience is evident at all levels.*

*The framework challenges the notion that clinical governance's current approach to risk is the only way that safe and effective practices and 'treatment' can be achieved and maintained. A key point of difference is*

*that lived experience governance centres the person's agency to make choices for and have control of their life, with a lens to dignity, equity, rights and justice.*

*The Lived Experience Governance Framework provides a guidepost across the interrelated foundational concepts and domains to assist leaders, organisations, and systems to transform practice and navigate the complexities that exist in this space. It invites everyone to approach risk differently, shifting toward safety culture and practices most supportive of recovery, healing, and autonomy of people interacting with or being supported by systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs, and services.*



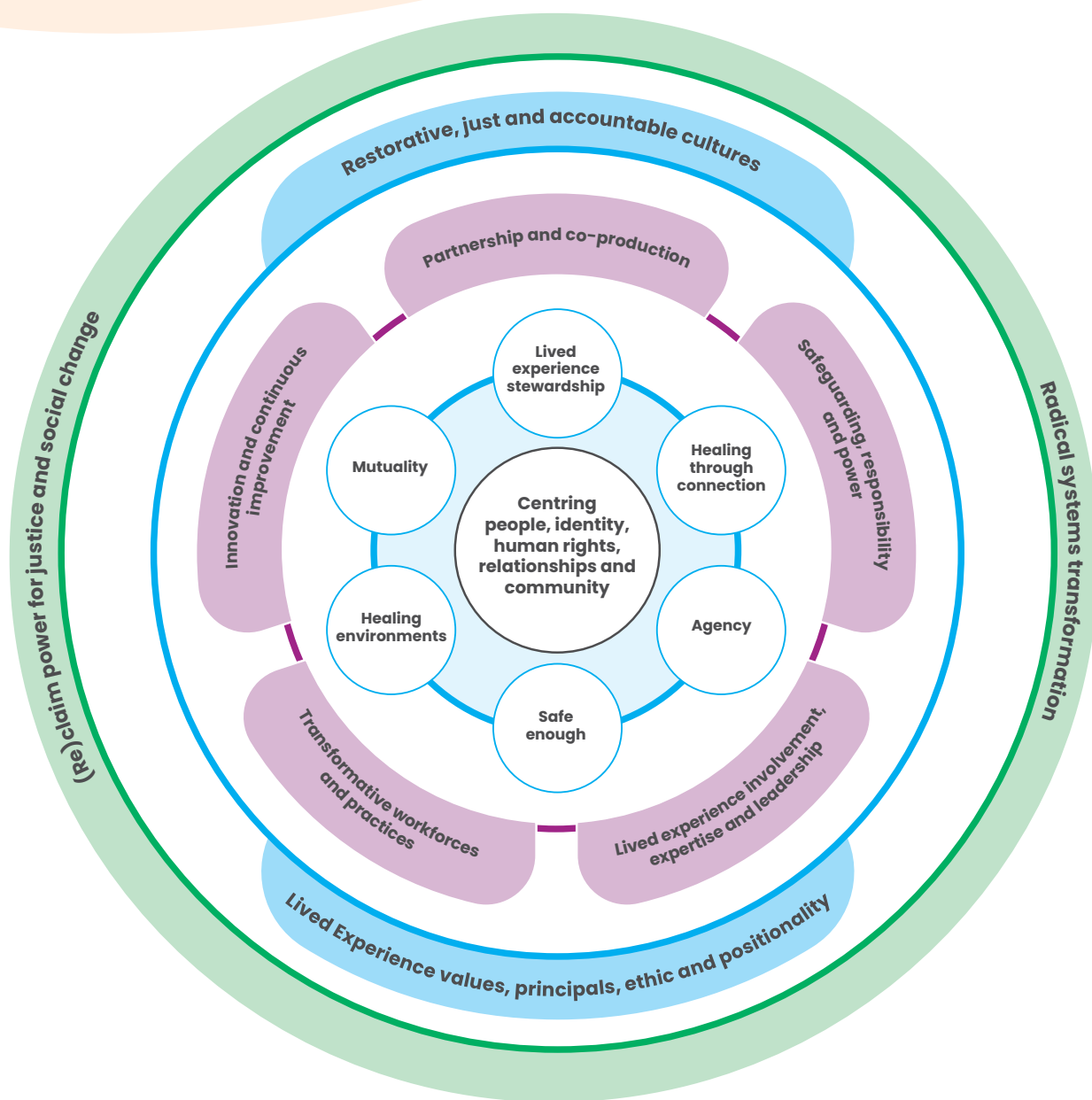
*Governance is governance is governance. There's only good governance and lived experience governance has no exemptions from that rule. If you're running an organisation it needs to have finance health. It needs to have the right culture, it needs to have the right structure and the requisite capability to do everything that governance needs to do. Transparency, accountability upwards, sideways, downwards. All those concepts of good governance apply. ... It's about boards, it is about leaders, but it also a collection of principles that can be adhered to and inform key decision-making. All the protocols of the current system cause harm. You're not wanting to replicate that so thinking that you can just transplant lived experience into the current medical model structures and call it lived experience governance is not what we want. That's just gaining and putting power to one person, it's always good to have multiple perspectives coming in and holding space together.*

<sup>1</sup> Hodges, E., Leditschke, A., Solonsch, L. (2023). The Lived Experience Governance Framework: Centring People, Identity and Human Rights for the Benefit of All. Prepared by LELAN (SA Lived Experience Leadership & Advocacy Network) for the National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum and the National PHN Mental Health Lived Experience Engagement Network. Mental Health Australia, Canberra.

# Related frameworks and companion pieces of work

Mind's Lived Experience Governance Framework aligns with the conceptualisation and national standard set within the *Lived Experience Governance Framework*<sup>1</sup> and adopts the overarching structural framing of the Lived Experience Governance Framework's core, foundations and domains.

Additionally, *Mind's Connections and Community: Transformative Lived Expertise-Led Approaches* document and Our Safety Together guidance are companion pieces to this framework. The interrelationship between the key components of these models are outlined in the diagram below.



**Figure:** Integration of Connection and Community: Transformative Lived Expertise-Led Approaches and the National Lived Experience Governance Framework domains (which have been adopted in this framework also)



## Related Mind Group documents

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- Mind's Lived Experience Strategy 2021-2024
- Mind's Lived Experience Workforce Plan
- Mind's Peer Work Framework
- Mind's Participation and Co-design Framework
- Mind's Diversity and Inclusion Framework
- Mind's Quality Framework
- Mind Australia Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan
- Mind's approach to working with families and carers
- One Door Recover 2gether Framework
- Community and connection
- Our safety together.

## Other related guidelines, standards and documents

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- NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators
- National Mental Health Standards for Mental Health Services
- QIC Health and Community Services Standards
- National Lived Experience (Peer) Workforce Development Guidelines
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (UNCRPD)
- Alternatives to Suicide Groups Charter
- Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System
- The Burdekin Report, from the National Inquiry into the Human Rights of People with Mental Illness.



# Enabling conditions for lived experience governance

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Lived experience governance is a necessary innovation in the mental health and social sectors, at this moment in time however it presents many tensions and conflicts with current dominant ideologies, preferred ways of responding to distress, governance structures and approaches to commissioning. Embedding the framework across Mind's lived expertise-led services in the first stage will require ongoing leadership, courage and holding steadfast at points of challenge, doubt and when things are deemed to 'go wrong' in the eyes of others.

The framework is enabled and strengthened by the following organisational conditions:

- **Commitment:** A dedicated adherence to the courses of actions related to framework development, and the framework's values, principles, and practice actions. It involves a sense of responsibility to people with lived experience and a determination to fulfill originally outlined intentions and obligations and achieve desired outcomes, even in the face of challenges.
- **Knowledge:** Understanding, awareness, familiarity with and intentional embedding of lived experience (peer) approaches acquired through experience, education, or training.
- **Authorising environment:** The conditions and cultures within Mind to support specific actions, initiatives, or changes related to the implementation of the framework and doing differently.
- **Culture:** A culture that values lived experience and is committed to cultivating the conditions for people to share, utilise and lead with their lived experience. This is built on psychological safety, trust, empathy, and openness to change that is generalisable across the organisation.

- **Power sharing:** Intentional distribution of authority, influence, and decision-making among individuals or groups involved in the implementation of the framework. It also involves creating mechanisms for collaborative decision-making and ensuring multi-stakeholder perspectives contribute to governance structures overall and what is preferred.
- **Role modelling:** Leadership and management demonstrating desired behaviours, values or competences to inspire others within Mind to embody and emulate the heartset and mindsets that are implicitly and explicitly named in the framework.
- **Implementation strategy:** A systematic plan or approach designed to embed the framework into Mind's operations, strategy and governance. This includes timelining the steps for embedding the framework which will include the development of additional operational and practice guidelines or companion documents and a review of existing organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services that may hinder its adoption. Intentional steps to socialise and support Board, executive leadership, support hub, management, and frontline team members with implementation will also need consideration.
- **Resource allocation:** Strategic distribution and management of available resources to develop and effectively embed the framework will be required.



*Space for ideas, vulnerability, humanity, for not knowing and not jumping to blame. How we collectively respond. ... A move from you are responsible for, to how are you holding space.*

# Meeting our legal obligations through human rights

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Mind values human rights as core to who we are and how the organisation operates. But as a human services organisation, there is also a legal obligation to comply with them. Most directly, this includes the Queensland (Human Rights Act 2019), Victoria (Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006) and the ACT (Human Rights Act 2004), under which Mind must consider and comply with human rights across all activities – including governance, design and operation of all services.

In all places Mind operates, mental health legislation and policy standards also oblige and encourage the consideration of principles of rights, recovery and cultural safety. The Our Safety Together Framework will give effect to and operationalise these duties.



*This is the document that defines who we are as an organisation. ... It allows all decision-making, structures and practice systems to be values-led, courageous and built on respect, mutuality and connection. ... It is the mechanism to ensure that we stay true to our 'why'.*

# Mind's commitment to lived experience

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Mind has been a sector leader in its support for and inclusion of people with lived experience in their workforce. The framework is the next bold step in ensuring Mind continues to lead and advance the rights, needs, preferences, agency and decision-making power of people who use services or are involved in decision-making and other activities, including the lived experience (peer) workforces.

Mind's 'why for lived experience' lies at the heart of the framework, detailing what it means to value lived experience.

*Valuing lived and living experience benefits everyone. At Mind we:*

- *value and embed lived expertise by employing Lived Experience roles throughout the organisation*
- *lead change and build an understanding of lived experience at all levels of the organisation, to improve how we work and how we partner with people accessing our services*
- *valuing lived experience is core to ensuring human rights and justice-informed approaches are central to how we work*
- *respect and work with the unique lived experience knowledge people accessing our services, their families and significant others bring to their mental health journey, leading to better outcomes*
- *create a safe and accepting work culture for all team members to be and feel accepted, even when times are tough*
- *practice and role-model positive attitudes towards mental health, fostering hope and understanding that mental health challenges are a natural part of life.*

# Domain 1:

## Partnership and co-production

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Mind commits to authentic involvement, partnership and co-production that involves building an ongoing open two-way dialogue and connections where the organisation, team members and people with lived experience, including those most impacted, can initiate conversation and action, share power, and make decisions together. This will mean that relationships, services and emerging outcomes will be genuine, designed for purpose, and highly impactful.

Partnerships with other organisations will be approached in the same manner, where people who use services or are involved in decision-making and other activities are centred and relationship, connection and mutual benefit are nurtured.



*We need to safeguard the beautiful and unique cultures of care and new forms of practice that have already been developed.*





## Genuine implementation requires:

- **Lived experience prioritised and embedded** – Strategic directions, priorities and decisions embed centring and amplifying the perspectives, voices, and contributions of people with lived experience in the co-production of organisational systems, structures, policies, practices, programs, and services.
- **Relational not transactional** – Systems, structures, policies, process, practices, programs and services embed relational rather than transactional interactions and methods. Meaningful connections that are authentic, inclusive, culturally responsive, mutually beneficial, structure safety and are nurtured over time are prioritised.
- **Person-defined impacts** – People interacting with or being supported by Mind have opportunities to determine the value and impact of initiatives and this information is used as a measure of safety, quality, and outcomes for evaluation, reporting, and funding purposes.
- **Lived experience-initiated opportunities** – Mechanisms are available for lived experience-initiated partnership and co-production opportunities that involves both new and frequent contributors with a range of different experiences, intersectionalities and relationships to the organisation, program or service.
- **Learning and improvement focused** – Facilitation of formal and informal feedback and complaints mechanisms, informed by participatory and inclusive methodologies, to learn and improve policies, practices and services. People with lived experience are included in the investigation of complaints, and information on actions, recommendations and outcomes are provided.
- **Investment and time** – Budgets and timeframes support lived experience involvement and leadership. People with lived experience are appropriately remunerated and provided with the resources and supports they need to participate from the earliest time possible when planning, designing, delivering and evaluating systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services that affect them.



## Roles and responsibilities:

### People who use services or are involved in decision-making and other activities:

- Partner in the co-planning, co-design, co-delivery, and co-evaluation of organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services that affect them.
- Contribute to services that are developed by, for, and with people with lived experience.

### Support hub:

- Ensure systems are in place so team members employed have the appropriate skills and knowledge required to fulfil their roles, including access to learning and development.
- Have clear mechanisms and protocols in place to ensure that people who use services or are involved in decision-making and other activities, as well as members of the lived experience (peer) workforces meaningfully contribute at the right time to the development of organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services.
- Ensure timely reporting and sharing of information across appropriate roles against performance or organisational activities that facilitate partnerships and measuring outcomes, as well as enabling co-production methodologies and learning to be incorporated into service delivery and decision-making.
- Complete any training required to do this well.

### Board:

- Model and work to instil a culture that supports partnership and co-production with people with lived experience and those most impacted across the organisation.
- Ensure that Mind is delivering on its purpose and mission to the people they support.
- Structure the Board to be effective and add value, ensuring people with lived experience are accounted for in membership and decision-making authority.
- Oversee the development of strategic priorities that support people with lived experience to contribute to the co-planning, co-design, co-delivery, and co-evaluation of organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs, and services.
- Set organisational expectations and accountability standards for partnerships and co-production with people with lived experience and those most impacted in ways that are clearly understood and able to be meaningfully implemented.
- Receive accurate and timely performance and monitoring reporting of organisational activities that enhance partnerships and co-production with people in lived experience across all of Mind's operations, strategy and governance.
- Openly discuss strengths and weaknesses, providing clear direction for involving people with lived experience to improve Mind as an organisation and sector leader.



### Executive:

- Model and work to instil a culture that supports partnership and co-production with people with lived experience and the lived experience (peer) workforces across the organisation.
- Oversee the development of strategic priorities that support people with lived experience and those most impacted to contribute to the co-planning, co-design, co-delivery, and co-evaluation of organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs, and services.
- Implement organisational expectations and accountability standards related to partnership and co-production with people with lived experience across the organisation.
- Provide accurate and timely performance and monitoring reporting of organisational activities that enhance partnerships and co-production with people with lived experience across all of Mind's operations, strategy and governance.
- Adequately fund partnership and co-production initiatives and ensure funding allocation is appropriate to the need and capacity for meaningfully including those most impacted.

## Management:

- Model and work to instil a culture that supports partnership and co-production with people with lived experience in service planning, delivery and improvement.
- Ensure operational processes support people with lived experience to contribute to the co-planning, co-design, co-delivery and co-evaluation of systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services.
- Ensure operational processes support people with lived experience and those most impacted to access opportunities to provide feedback on, improve and refine organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services.
- Ensure operational processes address power imbalances between Mind, its services, team members and the people who use these services or are involved in decision-making and other activities in partnership and co-production activities.
- Equip frontline team members to connect and communicate with people with lived experience and those most impacted in ways that enhance their rights, needs, preferences and agency.
- Support frontline team members to implement Mind's preferred approaches for partnership and co-production.

## Frontline:

- Consider and address imbalances of power when partnering or implementing co-production initiatives with people with lived experience and those most impacted.
- Take a lead role in partnering and co-producing with people with lived experience enabling their contribution to the improvement of organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services they are part of.
- Be informed of and supported to implement Mind's preferred approaches for partnership and co-production with people with lived experience and those most impacted.
- Complete mandatory training required to do this well.







## Domain 2: Safeguarding, responsibility and power

Described as a steward whose conscious efforts are to promote safety cultures and act to benefit people who use their services, Mind has a responsibility to and with, not for and over people with lived experience and those most impacted. Mind commits to progressing towards a relational and self-determined safety culture that this framework provides the guardrails for. Key to this are non-coercive approaches that nurture healing through connection, mutuality, agency and a felt sense of being safe enough.

By centring lived expertise-led approaches and relational practices, Mind is adopting an intentional and evolving relationship with 'risk' and 'risk tolerance' and engaging in robust governance and decision-making processes that maintain the safety of, agency and

decision-making power of people who they are supporting or seeking expertise from. When this has not been done well within the service system, people with lived experience have been harmed.

Lived experience governance provides a path for reframing and working with risk differently. There is broader consideration for the bi-directional nature of 'risk', asking the question of what risks to who and when, and what the person actually needs in those moments. Rather than mitigating them to the detriment of service users, this is a move toward people with lived experience holding their own safety and decisions for addressing it whilst in relationship with trained and well supported lived experience (peer) workforces.



*Traditional approaches to risk mitigation and management will be challenged. This will require a shift in thinking and understanding of risk, and for leaders to give permission for change to occur through policy development and conversation.*

## Genuine implementation requires:

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- **Rights are upheld** – Rights of people interacting with or being supported by organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services are known, understood, strengthened, and upheld. People are able to openly express themselves, their hopes, needs, preferences and agency without fear of force, coercion, restriction or detention.
- **Dignity of risk** – People holding power and responsibility over their own experiences and lives is accepted as providing the best approach for recovery, healing and growth to be fostered rather than a potential risk that must be managed. It is approached from a relational and safety promoting lens where people's agency and self-determination lead.
- **Responsibility to, not for or over** – Organisational systems, policies, processes, practices, programs and services centre and demonstrate a 'responsible to' people framing and ethic that is inclusive of an actioned commitment to eliminate coercive and restrictive practices.
- **Restorative, just and accountable organisational culture** – Governance processes and structures must embrace restorative, just cultures instead of those based on avoiding and mitigating risk or laying blame. They are reflective, fair and open to understanding and being responsive to diverse and intersectional experiences. Harms are acknowledged and any factors which caused or contributed towards them are addressed. They encourage proactive approaches in which adaptations are made when the potential for physical, psychological or other harm is forecast or identified, as opposed to only after harm has occurred.
- **Decision-making transparency** – Clear, transparent articulation of who can make particular decisions, as well as why and how these parameters are set are developed and known by the workforce and people who use services or are involved in decision-making and other activities.
- **Redistribution of power** – Mind actively works toward equitable distribution and sharing of power with those most impacted by the issue or decision being made and with consideration of the layers and overlap of diverse and intersectional experiences they may have.
- **Decision-making of people most impacted is given primacy** – People's ability to make decisions and have these decisions respected, without manipulation or force, are enabled and documented collaboratively where relevant through organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practice, programs and services.

## Roles and responsibilities:

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### People who use services or are involved in decision-making and other activities:

- Supported to develop and exercise their own power to be better equipped to influence and make decisions, as well as see the results of their input.
- Supported to exercise their agency, autonomy and decision-making power.

### Support hub:

- Develop organisational processes, policies and practice guidelines to ensure the workforce is appropriately qualified and trained to provide safe high-quality care aligned with dignity of risk, self-determined safety and agency of people who use services.
- Ensure systems are in place for team members to have the appropriate skills and knowledge required to fulfil their roles, including access to learning and development.
- Ensure organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services reflect the requirements of the Safeguarding, Responsibility and Power domain within this framework.
- Ensure mechanisms for appropriate supervision are available and that leaders are adequately equipped to support team members to reframe and respond to risk in different ways built on relational ways of being and trauma-informed de-escalation approaches.

### Board:

- Model and work to instil a culture that supports safeguarding and agency of people with lived experience and those most impacted across the organisation.
- Oversee the development of strategic priorities and governance structures that value and support people to exercise their agency, autonomy and decision-making power.
- Oversee the development of strategic priorities and governance structures that ensure workforces provide ethical and safe systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services.
- Set organisational expectations and parameters for promoting approaches aligned with dignity of risk, self-determined safety and agency of people who use services in ways that are clearly understood by the workforce and people who use or interact with services.
- Ensure decision-making and responses to risk are informed, managed and governed using relational and trauma-informed approaches aligned with dignity of risk, self-determined safety and agency of people with lived experience, including those most impacted.
- Receive accurate and timely performance reporting of harm reduction and safeguarding activities.

## Executive:

- Model and work to instil a culture that promotes safety and agency of people with lived experience and those most impacted across the organisation.
- Oversee the development of strategic priorities and governance structures that value and support people to exercise their agency, autonomy and decision-making power.
- Oversee the development of strategic priorities and governance structures that ensure workforces provide ethical and safe systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services.
- Implement organisational expectations and parameters for promoting approaches aligned with dignity of risk, self-determined safety and agency of people who use services in ways that are clearly understood by the workforce and people who use or interact with services.
- Navigate legislative and regulatory compliance related to 'risk and safety' and Mind's guidance for lived expertise-led approaches and lived experience governance.
- Be aware of emerging approaches and practices in service delivery and governance aligned with dignity of risk, self-determined safety and agency of people with lived experience and how they can be applied at Mind.
- Provide accurate and timely performance reporting of harm reduction and safeguarding activities.

## Management:

- Model and work to instil a culture that supports safeguarding and agency of people with lived experience and those most impacted in service planning, delivery and improvement.
- Model, expect and report on best practice care promotion of safety cultures built on relational ways of being and trauma-informed de-escalation approaches.
- Promote a culture of psychological safety, trust, empathy and openness to change with frontline team members in all aspects of service delivery, with each other, and with the people they are supporting.
- Transition from risk culture to safety cultures for the workforce and people who are using services.
- Ensure frontline team members are informed of, equipped, and supported to practice in ways aligned with dignity of risk, self-determined safety and agency of people with lived experience and those most impacted.
- Approach relationships and the safety of others, including problem-solving concerns, with a 'responsibility to and with, rather than for or over' mindset and practices aligned with *Mind's Connections and Community: Transformative Lived Expertise-led Approaches* document and *Our Safety Together* guidance that are companion pieces to this framework.



## Frontline:

- Cultivate a culture of openness in service delivery where team members feel empowered to share their own lived experience, tension points, opportunities for doing different and work through personal and professional dilemmas.
- Be informed of, and skilled in practices aligned with dignity of risk, self-determined safety and agency of people who use services to prevent them from experiencing harm from services.
- Be able to identify and reduce potential for experiences of coercion and service harm for people being supported by Mind or those involved in decision-making and other activities, including those most impacted.
- Access training and organisational guidelines that centre the rights, needs, preferences, agency and decision-making power of people being supported.
- Complete mandatory training.



# Domain 3: Lived experience involvement, expertise and leadership

Mind commits to reimagining the possibilities of lived experience stewardship and recognition of the role that people with lived experience have held and will continue to in transforming systems. It involves extending beyond current efforts, such as service-level advisory groups and community consultations and moving towards genuine and meaningful partnership, and visible impact and influence at strategic and governance levels for the contributions of people with lived experience and those most impacted.

The reimagining includes an intentional shift from approaches being person-centred to being person-directed or -led as much as possible, and where lived expertise-led services are embedded and expanded. To do this well centring identity, relationships, community and humanity for all in the

human services is necessary. It also requires paradigm shifts and spaces to be provided for the personal, professional and socio-political elements of lived experience leadership to be embraced.

Lived experience leaders who hold the values, principles, ethic and positionality of lived experience in their practice serve as a physical embodiment of the framework, ensuring fidelity for its implementation and accountability to the broader lived experience communities.

All efforts must have intentional ways of broadening the diversity and intersectionality of people with lived experience who contribute to and are represented in Mind's operations, strategy, leadership and governance.





*In my darkest moments my spirit told me that if I found my way through then the rest of my life would be to find and contribute in ways that tried to create an easier path for others.*

## Genuine implementation requires:

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- **Strategic recognition and action** – Strategic direction ensures lived experience expertise and leadership is recognised as a vital form of expertise and has dedicated roles that are sought out in planning, design, implementation, evaluation, governance and decision-making processes, across organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services.
- **Opportunities and integration** – Lived experience involvement, expertise and leadership are embraced. This includes opportunities for capability and capacity building, role progression, full integration and real influence of people with lived experience and those most impacted across organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services.
- **Equivalent decision-making authority and remuneration** – Lived experience leaders hold a diversity of roles across the decision-making hierarchy and have equivalent decision-making authority, recognition and appropriate remuneration in line with those in non-lived experience roles. This includes designated lived experience (peer) positions on the board with full voting rights, like other positions which fulfill corporate and legal functions with the additional responsibility to advise on and uphold fidelity to the lived experience movement and the community.
- **Presence and authority** – Human and other resourcing ensures there is a notable presence of lived experience leaders with decision-making authority at leadership and governance levels within organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services. This includes robust policies and procedures to define role, responsibility, scope of practice, and organisational commitment to employee social and emotional wellbeing for all people.
- **Shared responsibility** – All workforces understand, create space and enable lived experience to be integrated, utilised, and able to have the impact it can.
- **Critical reflection** – People with lived experience in non-designated roles are supported to reflect on how they make sense of and may draw on their experiences. This requires clear recognition of the difference between having lived experience and the contrast of being employed primarily for one's lived experience expertise and the unique skillset and practice experience required to show up, centre and continue to live it within designated roles.

## Roles and responsibilities:

### People who use services or are involved in decision-making and other activities:

- Informed about opportunities to use their lived experience for change and contribute to organisational systems, structures, policies, practices, programs and services they interact with or are supported by.

### Support hub:

- Develop position descriptions and recruitment processes that support the ongoing commitment to increase designated lived experience (peer) roles at all levels of the organisation.
- Embed clear pathways for progression for those in lived experience (peer) roles articulated in the Mind Workforce Strategy.
- Ensure leadership training is accessible, inclusive and supportive of team members in lived experience (peer) roles.
- Ensure Terms of Reference for committees etc include the involvement and leadership of people with lived experience, including those most impacted.

### Board:

- Model and work to instil a culture that supports the involvement of people with lived experience and lived experience (peer) workforces across the organisation.
- Oversee the development of strategic priorities and governance structures that embed lived experience expertise at all levels and across all service areas of Mind, including in leadership and governance structures.
- Ensure there is meaningful contributions of people with lived experience and their rights, perspectives and agency are understood and considered by Board and in decision-making across all levels of the organisation.
- Provide real opportunities for people with lived experience, their expertise and leadership to meaningfully influence Board decisions and outcomes.
- Invest in and endorse structures that embed the voice, influence and leadership of people with lived experience and build their capability do so effectively, including those most impacted.
- Create an authorising environment for progressive, viable and sustainable lived experience (peer) workforces to develop, embed and thrive at Mind.





### Executive:

- Model and work to instil a culture that supports the involvement of people with lived experience across the organisation.
- Oversee the development of strategic priorities and governance structures that embed lived experience expertise at all levels and across all service areas of Mind, including in leadership and governance structures.
- Work with key roles and groups at Mind to effectively integrate lived experience voice, influence and leadership into organisation operations, strategy and governance.
- Advocate for and create pathways and platforms for lived experience involvement and leadership in system-level change.

### Management:

- Model and work to instil a culture that supports the involvement of people with lived experience in service planning, delivery and improvement.
- Ensure operational processes support the insights and contributions of people with lived experience being embedded in organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services.

### Frontline:


- Explore and accept opportunities to use their own lived experience expertise in leadership and governance structures.
- Encourage, support and provide involvement opportunities for people with lived experience, including those most impacted to contribute to the design, delivery and evaluation of organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services.



## Domain 4:

# Transformative workforces and practices

Mind commits to disrupting the existing status quo and being leaders of transformative workforces, practices and healing relationships and environments that are grounded in an intent to do better by people with lived experience and those most impacted. Done well, Mind will increase its accountability to the people who use their services or are involved in decision-making and other activities, not just those who fund them. This will forge new ways of thinking, being and doing, pushing the edges of practice and leading the way in service delivery across sectors and Australia.



*I am in a position of power and privilege that I can use. Choosing to live is my act of resistance. Choosing to show up is how my heart expresses in this world. Choosing to do this work are my acts of service.*

### Genuine implementation requires:

- **Person-directed and person-led** – Workforces actively centre, prioritise and respond to the rights, needs and preferences of people interacting with or being supported by systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services, as well as their carers, family, kin, other supporters of choice and communities.
- **Organisational commitment to adopt and align** – Commitment to align systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services with implementation of The National Lived Experience (Peer) Workforce Development Guidelines and National Mental Health Workforce Strategy (once finalised).
- **Shared understanding and cohesion** – Interprofessional collaboration, communication and ongoing education and professional development opportunities for all workforces ensure understanding and utilisation of the different skills, expertise, knowledge base, values and responsibilities held by the various workforces. Lived experience, clinical and managerial expertise and their practice are aligned to create stronger and more cohesive systems, structures, policies, programs and services.
- **Role clarity** – Clear scopes of practice, practice frameworks and decision-making guidelines assist with the understanding of role clarity, responsibilities, skills and knowledge base of each workforce to better enable communication, collaboration and practices best aligned with rights-based and person-led approaches.
- **Intentional strengthening of the lived experience (peer) workforces** – There is ongoing investment into development of workplace supports and career pathways for lived experience (peer) workforces to ensure they remain viable, sustainable and effective.

- **Best practice development** – Ongoing investment in training and development to ensure contemporary best practice across workforces is embedded in systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services.
- **Allyship** – Systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services support lived experience allyship, whereby people within other workforces, different roles and perspectives draw on, enable and amplify the skills and strengths of people with lived experience, lived experience expertise and leadership.



## Roles and responsibilities:

### People who use services or are involved in decision-making and other activities:

- Partnered with and encouraged to contribute to organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services that are delivered on or implemented by competent, high-quality, safe and supported workforces that value lived experience.

### Support hub:

- Oversee appropriate selection, recruitment and onboarding of team members including the involvement of a lived experience representative on all recruitment panels.
- Oversee credentialing 'scope of practice' guidelines to ensure the workforce is suitably qualified and supported to draw upon their skills and experience in relational and effective ways.
- Ensure the workforce is appropriately trained to provide safe and high-quality care aligned with dignity of risk, self-determined safety and agency of people who use services or are involved in decision-making and other activities.
- Source and/or deliver training to increase recognition and integration of lived experience involvement methodologies and the lived experience (peer) workforces.



## Board:

- Model and work to instil a culture that supports transformative workforces and practices at Mind, including embedding lived experience involvement, expertise and leadership across the organisation and at all levels.
- Make strategic and governance decisions that at present benefit existing lived experience (peer)-led services and workforces, and in the future align with the expansion and growth of programs and practices at Mind.
- Set boundary conditions around the funding and commissioning opportunities that will and will not be pursued based on value alignment and capacity to deliver contemporary services that are truly person-directed at minimum and person-led as the ideal.

## Executive:

- Model and work to instil a culture that supports transformative workforces and practices at Mind, including embedding lived experience involvement, expertise and leadership across the organisation and at all levels. And where team members feel supported, safe, connected and satisfied in their roles and workplace.
- Oversee practice standards and guidelines, as well as workforce and service performance, evaluation and improvement activities to ensure alignment with reframed and relational responses to risk and promotion of dignity of risk, self-determined safety and agency of people who use services or are involved in decision-making and other activities.
- Set a narrative around the lived experience (peer) workforces to ensure they are strategically embedded in organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services.
- Set boundary conditions around the funding and commissioning opportunities that will and will not be pursued based on value alignment and capacity to deliver contemporary services that are truly person-directed at minimum and person-led as the ideal.
- Ensure designated lived experience (peer) roles exist at all levels and people with lived experience, including those most impacted, have visible and meaningful career progression opportunities.
- Demonstrate acceptance, support and allyship with people with lived experience in designated and non-designated roles.
- Cultivate a culture and environments where the broader Mind workforce are able to identify with and consider how their lived experience intersects with their role and are provided opportunities to move between designated and non-designated lived experience (peer) roles.



## Management:

- Model and work to instil a culture that supports transformative workforces and practices at Mind, including embedding lived experience involvement, expertise and leadership across the organisation and at all levels.
- Demonstrate acceptance, support and allyship with people with lived experience in designated and non-designated roles.
- Cultivate a culture and environments where team members feel supported, safe, connected and satisfied in their roles and workplace.
- Actively integrate lived experience (peer) practices, ways of being and roles into generalised service delivery models with intentional effort paid to maintain their fidelity with lived experience (peer) values, principles, ethic and positionality.
- Pursue funding opportunities that meet the boundary conditions set by the board and executive.
- Ensure operational and governance processes support workforces to provide competent, high quality, ethical and safe systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services; including valuing and enabling the lived experience (peer) workforces to use their lived experience expertise effectively.
- Guide, equip and partner with frontline team members to provide best-practice care, measure outcomes and improve service delivery aligned with dignity of risk, self-determined safety and agency of people who use services or are involved in decision-making and other activities.
- Manage team mix and ratios whilst managing operational budget to ensure design, delivery and governance of models and practices aligned with lived expertise-led approaches.
- Ensure all team members have appropriate induction and orientation that enable them to approach relationships and the safety of others, including problem-solving concerns, with a 'responsibility to and with, rather than for or over' mindset and practices aligned with Mind's *Connections and Community: Transformative Lived Expertise-led Approaches* document and *Our Safety Together* guidance that are companion pieces to this framework.
- Offer more structured supervision options for lived experience (peer) workforces and outsource when necessary, such as in cases where lived experience (peer) workforces are line-managed or supervised by non-lived experience (peer) managers.
- Ensure team members complete mandatory training relevant to their specific role.

## Frontline:

- Have opportunities to train, grow and strengthen their practice informed by all forms of evidence, including lived experience expertise, leadership and governance.
- Commitment to ongoing learning to build capabilities and engage in responsive practices that are aligned with dignity of risk, self-determined safety and agency of people with lived experience and those most impacted.
- Have understanding of and value the roles, skills, and expertise held by other workforces and actively seek out opportunities to collaborate with and make use of their different knowledge base, skills, roles and perspectives.
- Workforces operate within their respective scopes of practice, working together, and alongside people interacting with or being supported by systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services to support optimal experiences, decision-making and outcomes.
- Approach relationships and the safety of others, including problem-solving concerns, with a 'responsibility to and with, rather than for or over' mindset and practices aligned with *Mind's Connections and Community: Transformative Lived Expertise-led Approaches* document and *Our Safety Together* guidance that are companion pieces to this framework.
- Deliver competent, high quality and safe systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services.
- Engage in professional learning that contributes to building their own capability and capacity as well as that of people who use services or are involved in decision-making and other activities.
- Access regular development opportunities, practice supervision, line management and performance reviews to support effective practice, wellbeing and achievement of career goals.
- Complete mandatory training.
- Build knowledge and upskilling related to IPS principles and other lived experience (peer) practices.
- Learn from internal and external experts to stay informed about best lived experience (peer) practices.
- Value and support people who use services or are involved in decision-making and other activities to exercise their agency, autonomy and decision-making power in services, operations and governance.
- Deliver competent, high quality and safe systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services that value lived experience.

# Domain 5: Innovation and continuous improvement

Mind has a deep commitment to innovation and continuous improvement in its services and position as a sector leader. Mind will continue to think outside of the box and innovate beyond the constraints of pre-thought ideas, structures, and frameworks set up by current systems. This includes walking beside and enabling people with lived experience, as well as being strong advocates and allies in active efforts to (re)claim power

for justice and social change, and radical systems transformation.

Mind recognises that what is experienced and driven by people with lived experience and working in the now is subject to change at any time and that reflection, learning, flexibility and adaptability, as part of continuous improvement cycle, is essential to vision and shape new ways of operating, strategising, leading and governing.



*I am here because I have participated in perpetuating a system that has caused harm and I have the capacity and capability to change what that looks like for people by being a strong ally, listening and using my privilege to effect change.*



## Genuine implementation requires:

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- **More than compliance approach** – Accountability mechanisms and cultures are designed across the system to enable a ‘more than compliance approach’ with improvement targets that demand more than the minimum and aim for doing the best.
- **Accessible open pathways for involvement, feedback and redress** – Feedback and input are regularly sought in a variety of accessible ways from people interacting with, being supported by or delivering on systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services, including through open processes for complaints and redress and regularly reporting back on actions and outcomes.
- **Measures that matter** – Visible and highly valued measures and targets, that account for different worldviews and ways of knowing, regarding people’s experiences of safety, autonomy and justice are benchmarked and reported using quantitative and qualitative methods.
- **Adequate resourcing** – Adequate resourcing for partnership and co-production, including making sense of issues and possible solutions together and commission to allow for (re) design, transformation, and continuous improvement informed by participatory and inclusive methodologies.
- **Evidence-informed improvement** – Mind regularly invests in research and participatory methodologies that directly involve people with lived experience to identify opportunities and pathways towards improvement.
- **Co-produced performance measures** – Appraisals and evaluation of performance is based on measures of success defined and agreed by the people interacting with or being supported by organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs, and services rather than externally determined measures derived without input of people with lived experience.
- **Sustained investment** – Sustained investment in examining, revising and strengthening decision-making structures, processes and the tools that guide them, including participatory and culturally responsive methodologies.
- **Ongoing innovation and improvement** – The framework itself will be tested and modified throughout its implementation to ensure that it is appropriate to the setting and context where it is being adopted and continues to be a piece of work which challenges systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services to better uphold the rights and facilitate the leadership of people with lived experience.

## Roles and responsibilities:

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### People who use services or are involved in decision-making and other activities:

- Access opportunities to provide feedback on and contribute to improve and refine organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services.
- Access capacity-building opportunities to strengthen their contributions within involvement, partnership and leadership activities.



### Support hub:

- Ensure lived experience involvement, expertise and leadership in the development and review of Quality Improvement activities including analysis of quality improvement activity reports and review of the Mind Quality Framework.
- Ensure lived experience contributions in the development, implementation and review of outcome measures and tools.
- Produce accessible service outcome reports that are also made available to service users.
- Create systems that support co-production and innovation through increased collaboration, resource sharing and integration of Support Hub functions across Mind operations, strategy and governance.
- Ensure feedback processes and related resources are accessible for people living with disabilities, those who are non-English speakers and/ or have other literacy and access needs.

### Board:

- Oversee the development of strategic priorities and governance structures that support people with lived experience to access opportunities to have input and provide feedback on, improve and refine organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services.
- Sustained investment in examining, revising and strengthening decision-making structures, processes and the tools that guide them, including participatory and culturally responsive methodologies, aligned with dignity of risk, self-determined safety and agency of people with lived experience and those most impacted.

### Executive:

- Oversee the development of strategic priorities and governance structures that support people with lived experience to access opportunities to have input and provide feedback on, improve and refine organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services.
- Create authorising environments that support innovation.

### Management:

- Ensure operational processes support people with lived experience to access opportunities to have input and provide feedback on, improve and refine organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services.
- Create enabling environments that support innovation.

### Frontline:

- Enable people with lived experience and those most impacted to access opportunities to have input or provide feedback on, improve and refine organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services.
- Contribute to innovation and continuous improvement processes and support people with lived experience who use services or are involved in decision-making and other activities to access opportunities to have input or provide feedback on, improve and refine organisational systems, structures, policies, processes, practices, programs and services.

# Holding lived experience governance at Mind

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The framework offers shared recognition and understanding of, and practice and leadership responsibilities for embedding and enabling lived experience governance at Mind. It offers guidance for all team members so that the lived experience (peer) workforces at Mind don't have to hold it alone anymore. Time, courage, space for reflection, ability to sit in uncertainty and discomfort with capacity for agile responsiveness will be required of team members and groups across the organisation for the vision of the framework to be realised. This includes the Board and Executive who will need to hold the framework and align larger change processes with it.

Considered action is required to set the scope and targets for the structural architecture to be built so that lived experience governance is truly understood and embedded effectively and sustainably at Mind. It will need to be resourced and given proper time for the complexity of thinking and practice shifts to ripple across the workforce and leadership, protecting against defaulting to status quo and snapback constraining of the approach

when things get hard or go 'wrong'. A foundational piece will be to provide great understanding of the core components and responsibilities of people, and to build trust and allyship of those that will champion it and hold necessary expertise.

Prototyping the framework within lived experience (peer) expertise -led services is an important way to build team and organisational culture, capability and capacity for successful implementation. A set review period of the framework and evaluation for services adopting it will assist its evolution and improvement. Ultimately, it is the people who use Mind services and are involved in decision-making and other activities that will identify and speak best to whether Mind delivers on its commitment to be directed and led by the rights, needs, preferences and agency of people with lived experience and responding in more humane, compassionate and connected ways.



*The Lived Experience Governance Framework will give us the guardrails for delivering services in the way people need to receive them. It will be restorative and transformative. ... At its core is hope, humanity, humility and simplicity.*

# About LELAN

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LELAN is the independent peak body in South Australia by, for and with people with lived experience of mental distress, social issues or injustice. Our purpose is to amplify the voice, influence and leadership of people with lived experience to drive systemic change. LELAN has led philanthropic, state and federally funded projects as well as completed commissioned pieces of work.

LELAN's systemic advocacy targets the mental health and social sectors in South Australia, whilst our thought leadership and expertise on lived experience expertise and leadership is borderless.

By centring the experiences, collective insights and solution ideas of people with lived experience in all of our work, as well as being immersed in the lived experience community from grassroots to strategic and governance levels, LELAN demonstrates the principles, practices and change dynamics that the social sector is calling for and desperately needs. Because of our strong and trusted relationships with people in the lived experience community we are able to have deeper conversations about things that matter, drawing our collective experiences

and action together in purposeful ways. LELAN has extensive experience and a proven methodology for leading lived experience-led and/or co-creation initiatives, frequently with a focus on sensitive issues and including groups that bring divergent perspectives to the conversation. The organisation has three external facing strategic pillars:

- Developing the capability and influence of people with lived experience.
- Nurturing organisational and sector capacity for partnering with people with lived experience.
- Impacting system improvement agendas to benefit people with lived experience.

LELAN was founded in 2017 and the organisation received its first funding in 2019. Pivotal pieces of work completed in partnership and/or led by LELAN with the lived experience community and key allies include the groundbreaking *Model of Lived Experience Leadership* that launched in 2021, as well as *The Lived Experience Governance Framework* and *A Toolkit to Authentically Embed Lived Experience Governance* that were released in July 2023 (all available at [www.lelan.org.au/shared-resources](http://www.lelan.org.au/shared-resources)).

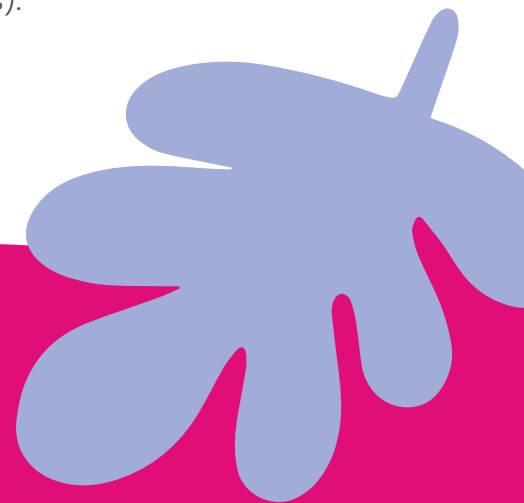
## Acknowledgment

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### Team for this piece of work:

Ellie Hodges, Chief Executive & Founder and Sam Lai, Lived Experience Specialist Projects Worker

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*A trusted provider of community mental health support services to people and their families, friends and carers for more than 45 years.*

## Mind's Acknowledgement of Country and Inclusion

Mind acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work and we pay our respects to Elders past and present. We recognise the intergenerational impact of the history of invasion, dispossession and colonisation and are committed to the recognition, respect, inclusion and wellbeing of Australia's First Peoples.

Mind values the experience and contribution of people from all cultures, genders, sexualities, bodies, abilities, spiritualities, ages and backgrounds. We are committed to inclusion for all our clients, families and carers, employees and volunteers.



### Mind Connect

1300 286 463

### Carer Helpline

1300 554 660

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