

NSW PEER WORKFORCE; NEW ROLES IN ADULT ASSERTIVE COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH TEAMS



Health

Peer workers complement other health professionals with skills and expertise learned from their personal experience of mental illness and recovery.

The peer workforce reduces the stigma associated with mental illness and provides hope to consumers experiencing mental distress by demonstrating to consumers that recovery is possible.

By providing direct peer support to people leaving acute care, this initiative will assist people to transition successfully back into their community. For people leaving acute care, connection to Peer Workers with a personal experience of recovery will help people to successfully navigating the system, reduce stigma and inspire hope.

Early intervention services are an important part of the NSW Governments' Mental Health Reform. This includes increasing recovery oriented and assertive community care, expanding the peer workforce and delivering the right care at the right time.

Funding for Mental Health Reform in 2017/18

Under the NSW Government's response to *Living Well: A Strategic Plan for Mental Health in NSW 2014-2024*, \$1.8M will be invested in the Peer Workforce Initiative to create new Peer Worker roles across NSW from 2017/18.

The Peer Workforce Initiative will deliver assertive, flexible Peer Support to navigate the discharge process from the Hospital back into your community. This program is designed to provide early intervention, support hospital avoidance and reduce hospital readmission rates.

This Initiative aims to:

- Deliver a flexible, tailored support package for up to 6 weeks following an acute mental health admission.
- Reduce re-admission rates for people leaving adult acute mental health care.
- Provide direct face to face follow up for people discharged from an acute mental health inpatient setting within 7 days.
- Provide a link between acute mental health services and the community, including referrals to community managed support services.
- Provide a wrap around, step-up / step-down model of care with Peer Workers located in existing multidisciplinary Adult Community Mental Health services.
- Support will be delivered by experienced, qualified mental health Peer Workers with a personal lived experience of recovery.

To learn more about mental health care reform, visit www.health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth/reform

