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Lived and Living Experience (Consumers') Scholarship Support Program Report

Final Report 2024

This report has been compiled by the Consumer Academic Program team at the Centre for Mental Health Nursing (CentreMHN), Melbourne University

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The Lived and Living Experience (Consumer) Scholarship Support Program is a consumer-led and co-produced project, supported through a partnership with the Lived Experience Branch at the Department of Health and Consumer Academic Program at Centre for Mental Health. The project team includes Vrinda Edan, Cat Van Remmen and Puneet Sansanwal. The project partners would like to thank all the consumer lived experience scholarship recipients as participants in the project for their enthusiasm, energy and for their contribution throughout the duration of the project. We would like to thank our colleagues at the University of Melbourne, Cath Roper, Kath Sellick and Nina Joffe- Kohn for visiting as guest participants at various points of the program. This project was made possible by funding from the Department of Health, Victoria.

Definitions and Abbreviations

ACN: Australian College of Nursing

AOD: Alcohol and Other Drugs

CAP: Consumer Academic Program

CentreMHN: Centre for Mental Health Nursing

Community of Practice: is a method to understanding and learning in workplaces and can be defined as “a network of people who work on similar processes or in similar disciplines, and who come together to develop and share their knowledge in that field for the benefit of both themselves and their organization(s)” (Nazim & Mukherjee, 2016, Pg 115-148)

Connection: “Lived/common experience is used to make connection in the relationship. Connection is the basis on which trust and meaningful, effective learning is possible” (CMHL, 2018, pg. 9)

Consumers: People who identify as having a living or lived experience of mental illness or psychological distress, irrespective of whether they have a formal diagnosis, and who have used mental health services and/or received treatment (Department of Health, 2023).

Consumer Perspective: A perspective acquired through receiving services in the mental health system. It is based on a belief that individual consumers are ‘the experts’ about their own life and carry the wisdom to best articulate their own needs when accorded the time, space and means to do so. It’s an idea that developed out of a collective consciousness and political solidarity that grew from the consumer/survivor movement and provides a way of looking at the world from the point of view of a group that has been marginalised and discriminated against (CMHL, 2018; Our Consumer Place n.d.). Roper et al., (2018) define Consumer perspective as one that “contributes leadership, knowledge, and expertise beyond the context of service improvement”.

Co-design: One component and stage of Co-Production among Co-Planning, Co-Delivery and Co-Evaluation (Roper et al., 2018)

Co-production: “is a way for participants with different expertise to collaboratively work together” (Roper et al., 2018, pg. 1). Co-producing with consumers involves defining the problem designing and delivering the solution and evaluating the outcome together (Roper et al., 2018)

Lived Experience: The direct experience a person has of states of distress commonly labelled as ‘mental illness’. This term also refers to experiences with using mental health services, or not being able to access them (CMHL, 2018).

Lived and Living Experience Workforces (LLEWs): includes consumer workers in designated lived and living experience workforce positions across the mental health, Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) treatment and harm reduction sectors. A consumer worker is someone who declares their lived experience and uses this intentionally in their designated consumer worker position. The broad category of LLEW also includes workers who bring lived experience as family /carer of a consumer of mental health services and who use this experience in designated family/carer worker positions (Department of Health, 2024). In this report, LEW and LLEW are used interchangeably.

IPS: Intentional Peer Support Training to connect and build mutual relationships based on the book *Intentional Peer Support: An Alternative Approach* (Mead, 2014).

Micro Credentialing: “a certification of assessed learning or competency, with a minimum volume of learning of one hour and less than an AQF award qualification, that is additional, alternate, complementary to or a component part of an AQF award qualification” (Department of Education, 2021, pg.3)

Tertiary Education: also known as higher education and “consists of awards spanning Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) levels 5-10, which include: diplomas; advanced diplomas; associate degrees; bachelor degrees (including honours degrees); graduate certificates; graduate diplomas; masters degrees; doctoral degrees; and higher doctoral degree” (TEQSA, 2022)

Executive summary

As part of a suite of projects funded by the Department of Health (VIC) to support LLEW, Consumer Academic Program at CentreMHN was tasked with supporting the consumer LLEW scholarship recipients between the period of March 2023 – June 2024. Deliverables of the project plan included:

- Co-designing with scholarship recipients the support program defining what they need & what supervision + mentoring look like
- Co-producing a pilot program of supports for LLEW staff taking up the LLEW University Scholarship Program.

As a result, the project team at CAP collaborated with the scholarship recipients over 15 months and co-designed the preferred approach and mode of co-creation of the program. The project followed an iterative methodology building on from initial stages of exploration to co-facilitation, co-creation of resources and finally making recommendations to support LLEW taking up tertiary education. The project group co-identified and expanded on suggested resources for a range of priority areas for consumer workers as students such as the need for ongoing connection to others, learning alongside non-LLEW learners, managing time, navigating the tertiary education system, safety and career progression etc. The project group explored each priority area together and co-identified relevant resources and approaches to grow knowledge in each priority area as a group. The iterative methodology resulted in several positives including 1) co-designing a pilot that can apply to the new and future scholarship recipients and 2) identifying barriers and challenges faced by LLEW to access support programs like this while starting out with their education journeys. Lastly, the project group made recommendations for key stakeholders, employing organisations and policymakers in the areas of creating ongoing support for educational activities and opportunities and in the areas of preventing barriers and challenges.

Background

At the start of 2023, the Department of Health (VIC) offered scholarships of up to \$13,000 covering up to 90% of the course fees for university level qualifications to lived and living experience workers (LLEWs) employed in state-funded mental health or Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) services. The scholarship program was implemented to support development of leadership skills among lived and living experience workers in designated roles as part of Lived and Living Experience Workforces (LLEWs) workforce initiatives (Department of Health, 2024). The courses approved under the program for scholarship included university level courses that build management and leadership skills. In the application process, applicants needed to explain the expected impact on leadership skills of the chosen courses such as courses in leadership, education and training, research and evaluation, training and assessment, change management, finance and administration, policy and governance, health services management, project management, family therapy or mad studies (ACN, 2024).

Purpose

The purpose of the support program was to co-produce and pilot a program of supports for Consumer Lived Experience Workers taking up LLEW scholarship opportunities. The Consumer Academic Program (CAP) at the Centre for Mental Health Nursing (CMHN) was contracted by the Department of Health (VIC) specifically to support and mentor the consumer scholarship recipients of the LLEW scholarships until 30th June 2024. As part of the LLEW scholarship support program, CAP were the designated contact for the support needs of scholarship recipients. CAP was tasked to provide scholarly support and to enable a safe space for scholarship recipients to network with one another. Other aims of the program included:

- to encourage LLEW scholarship recipients to engage in the support program and with each other
- to co-design and deliver a study and career development support program with consumer LLEW scholarship recipients
- to consider with recipients of the program ways to demonstrate benefits to encourage more LLEW to undertake tertiary studies
- to encourage collaboration among recipients for greater connection with consumer perspectives and the consumer movement

Participants

Through a competitive application round, a handful of eligible applicants were chosen, having demonstrated their commitment to the lived and living experience workforce. The first group of successful consumer lived and living experience workforce scholarship recipients commenced their study journey in early 2023 and subsequently, another group of successful applicants joined the group of scholarship recipients through a second round at the start of 2024. The recipients who engaged with the program included a diverse consumer workforce, with varied roles, locations (metropolitan/ regional), experience and background. Consumer LEW and roles are described in the upcoming Consumer Discipline Framework Report that will be published in due course by the CAP team. The scholarship recipients were also enrolled in a wide variety of courses, and support for the breadth of eligible courses was a topic of ongoing feedback to the Department, from participants and the project team.

Project team/ co-facilitators

Puneet Sansanwal and Cat Van Remmen facilitated the LLEW scholarship support program and were supervised by Vrinda Edan. Associate Professor Bridget Hamilton provided guidance and support to the project team for drafting this report. Puneet is a Consumer Academic at the Centre for Mental Health Nursing (CentreMHN). He gained experience as a consumer peer support worker and a consumer consultant within Victoria's public mental health system. Cat is a Consumer Academic and Project Manager for LEW projects at the CentreMHN. Cat has many years of experience in peer support and consumer perspective work. Vrinda is the Senior Consumer Academic for Centre MHN and has been working for over 20 years in the consumer field. Bridget is the Director at Centre MHN and leads a multi-disciplinary team of nurse academics and consumer academics.

Overarching project process

The project was conducted in three stages over 15 months. Key elements of each stage were co-produced with LLEW scholarship recipients (termed recipients henceforth in the report and the later stages were shaped by the feedback from the early stages. Feedback was collected via survey, email and collaborative conversations held in hybrid mode. The project team considered collaboration opportunities at every stage including inviting agenda items for meetings, preferences for day(s) of the week/ time of the day suited to recipients and the mode of meetings being hybrid.

Stage 1: Exploration together

The commencement of the support program involved organising the first in-person collaboration workshop for the consumer recipients. All recipients were invited to nominate a day and time most suited to them for a gathering and a meet and greet hosted lunch to get to know one another and the facilitators (termed group henceforth in the report). The inaugural workshop meet and greet event was held on 30th June 2023.

Approach

In the lead up to the inaugural workshop, a pre-event optional survey was sent out to the recipients to assist the facilitators to better understand the requirements and expectations of the recipients as they embarked on their education journey. Survey questions invited responses from the recipients on their views on the primary purpose of the support program, consumer perspective and the learning through education assisting in their work, challenges they foresee and details about their courses. The approach taken by the facilitators for the initial and subsequent workshops was to create a safe space for the recipients to come together and collaborate on matters most important to them such as consumer perspective, connection to consumer community, leadership skills development and support required for studying. The coordination of the subsequent events, workshops, and ways to engage with one another and the facilitators was also co-informed by the group such as suitable frequency to meet, mode of communication, knowledge sharing and collaborating space (in person/ hybrid). Co-producing the pilot scholarship support program and honouring the choice of the recipients was at the forefront during the planning and co-designing the program (Roper et al., 2018).

Workshops

In the group's first workshop, recipients and the facilitators collaborated on the perceived purpose of the program and on how consumer perspective aligns with ongoing education and leadership skills development. Notes were taken during the workshop to further develop and co-design the support program. In the subsequent workshops, discussion notes from previous workshops were utilised to inform the collaboration on the day. A total of four workshops were conducted within 12 months. The first two workshops were conducted alongside the first group of recipients that started in 2023 and the remaining two were conducted including recipients from the new group that started in 2024. Through recipients' feedback and engagement responses, the day of the week in which the workshops were held changed from Fridays to Mondays and a hybrid option (in-person/online) was introduced, after the first two workshops.

Methodology

To best align with the principles of co-production, the group opted for an iterative methodology to co-design the scholarship support program (Roper et al., 2018; Wyder et al., 2020). It was envisioned that the recipients would play an equal role with the facilitators in the co-designing of the support program. This included initial collaboration on the purpose of the program, and then moved on to other topics such as resources, scholarly supports, safety and challenges etc. in subsequent workshops. The scholarship support program evolved and moved with the needs, requests, and input from the recipients.

At the end of the inaugural workshop, several priority areas and themes emerged through discussion among the group, including a requirement for collaboration and support in areas such as career progression, navigating the tertiary education system, etc. The themes are discussed in detail in sections to follow. Each priority area was rated on a level priority scale of 1-3 (1 being immediate and high). During the first workshop, the group discussed and decided on the best ways to approach and plan each of the priority areas. Plan 'A' outlined that the facilitators would research and facilitate resources needed and Plan 'B' was that the group would come together to collaborate on the agreed area. A combination of both facilitators gathering resources and collaboration was agreed upon, for certain priority areas. Image 1 below provides a summary of first workshop, as an example of iterative methodology in action. Resources were then assembled and subsequently shared with the recipients (as per Plan A) and priority areas were added to the agenda for collaboration in the subsequent workshops. Notes from all workshops were shared with the recipients at the conclusion of each workshop, to invite feedback and input from the attendees and from those that were unable to attend.

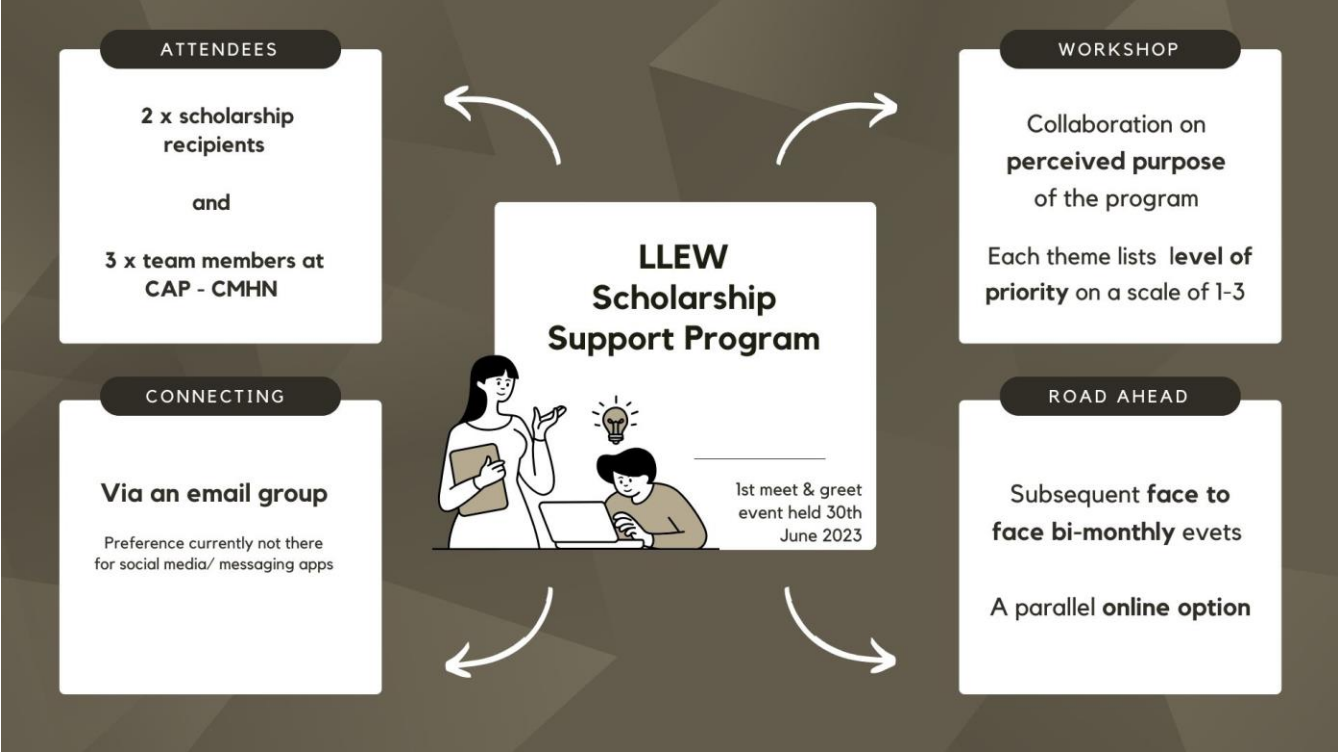


Image 1: summary of the meeting pack shared with the group

Stage 2: Producing supports

Collaboration on each priority area continued throughout the scholarship program, to co-design the best approach to respond to each one, such as the perceived purpose of the program and how consumer perspective aligns with the ongoing education. Two resources were co-developed with recipients: 1) a knowledge-sharing document containing resources and information that facilitators gathered for the group (see appendix 1) and 2) an interactive digital pack of all priority areas, their respective agreed approach (Plan A/B) and level of priority. These resources were subsequently built upon at each workshop. The following sub-sections briefly expand on each priority area and related approaches.

Priority areas

Ongoing connection

The importance of continued connection with other LLEW peers was discussed by the group, in addition to the importance of connecting with other students outside of the scholarship course. The building of a network was highlighted during the collaboration of this priority area. Some examples of networks include the recipient group members, other students who are not part of this group but are studying while working and similar interest-based student groups within universities e.g. student writing or reading groups or research groups, overseas/ Interstate students' groups etc.

Learning alongside non-LLEW Learners

While discussing connection, a subtheme came up related to being in the same learning environment with other learners that are not part of LLEW e.g. clinical or other disciplines. The importance of safety was discussed by the group, specifically about disclosure of lived experience when other fellow learners may not have awareness of concepts of lived experience and consumers. It was discovered that it was more likely that the recipients would be in spaces with other students without this knowledge. The group decided to utilise the strength of co-reflection and share with one another, if and when safe to do so, about experiences related to being confronted with stigma, bullying, stigmatised language, over-representation of biomedical lens for example. It was around this time of the iterative co-designing of the support program that the group agreed on developing a culture of sharing the learnings with others.

Managing Time

Working alongside studying and learning can pose several challenges on an individual level. The group shared ideas with others related to managing time e.g. dedicating set study days in the calendar and marking set days for work, play etc but agreed on the importance of being flexible where required. Facilitators also assembled helpful resources and learning guides for effective time management for students and added them to the resources document.

Career Progression

Recipients highlighted that upskilling and acquiring leadership skills through tertiary studies are important for progressing their career to the LLEW leadership roles. The group highlighted paternalistic attitudes and related learning environments towards LLEW that focus on assisting them in managing distress rather than the actual purpose of facilitating the skill set for leadership. A need for system-wide education for education institutes, workplaces, executive sponsors, and other stakeholders was seen as critical by the group to keep the message and purpose of tertiary education consistent. At the same time, the stakeholder group including education providers and executive sponsors within workplaces was encouraged to develop an understanding of LLEW discipline and the scholarship support program through interacting with the recipients and other LLEW members about what is important to them, what works and what supports may be helpful. The group collaborated on aspirations of developing a consumer LLEW recruitment framework through networking and sharing best practices.

Image 2 below is an example of how each of the priority area was divided into sub-themes, ranked on a scale of priority and the applied approach.

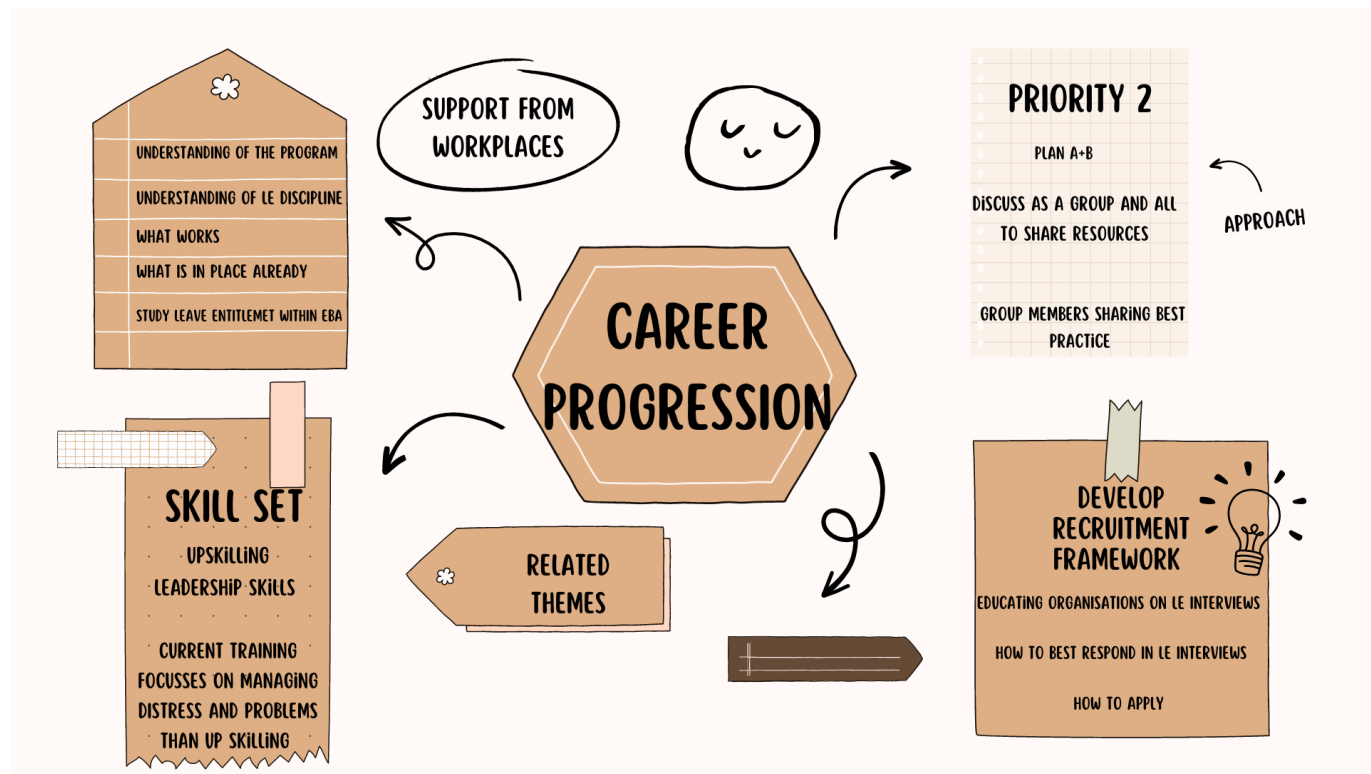


Image 2: example of a priority area/ theme pack

Navigating Tertiary Education system

Universities and educational institutions are vast establishments and navigating the systems, departments and resources to access support can be a challenge especially during the initial phase of the education journey. The sub-section in this priority area included writing, reading supports and importantly the area of requesting reasonable adjustments. Most universities will offer students an opportunity to request reasonable adjustments based on individuals' unique circumstances such as a disability, learning difficulties or other obstacles. However, the processes and systems for requesting adequate resources and support based on individual circumstances can be different for each education provider. An ongoing collaboration and sharing of resources were agreed upon as the best approach to manage this priority area.

Image 3 below demonstrates the recipients' collaboration on this priority area.

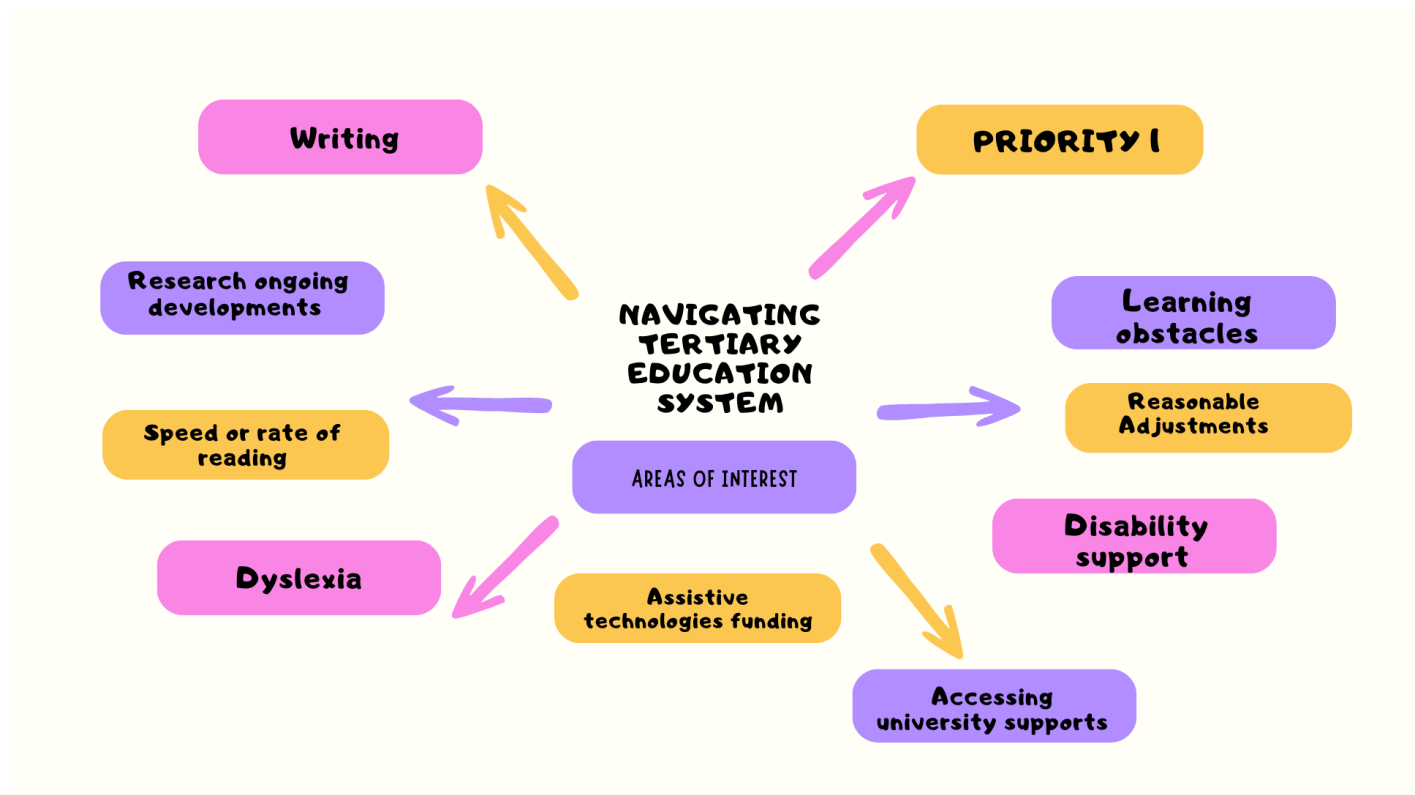


Image 3: Navigating tertiary education system

Safety

Challenges faced by LLEW are well documented in previous research. These include facing discrimination, bullying and systemic barriers in the mental health services system, due to their status as Lived Experience workers. Recipients came together to advocate for one another and discussed several topics such as stigma, safety in disclosure, how diversity is viewed and equity, for example. The group considered the privacy and confidentiality of all attendees and agreed on maintaining the group as a safe space so that the discussion on sensitive topics could occur. Image 4 below is a representation of how the group came to discuss perceived safety while studying as a LLEW.

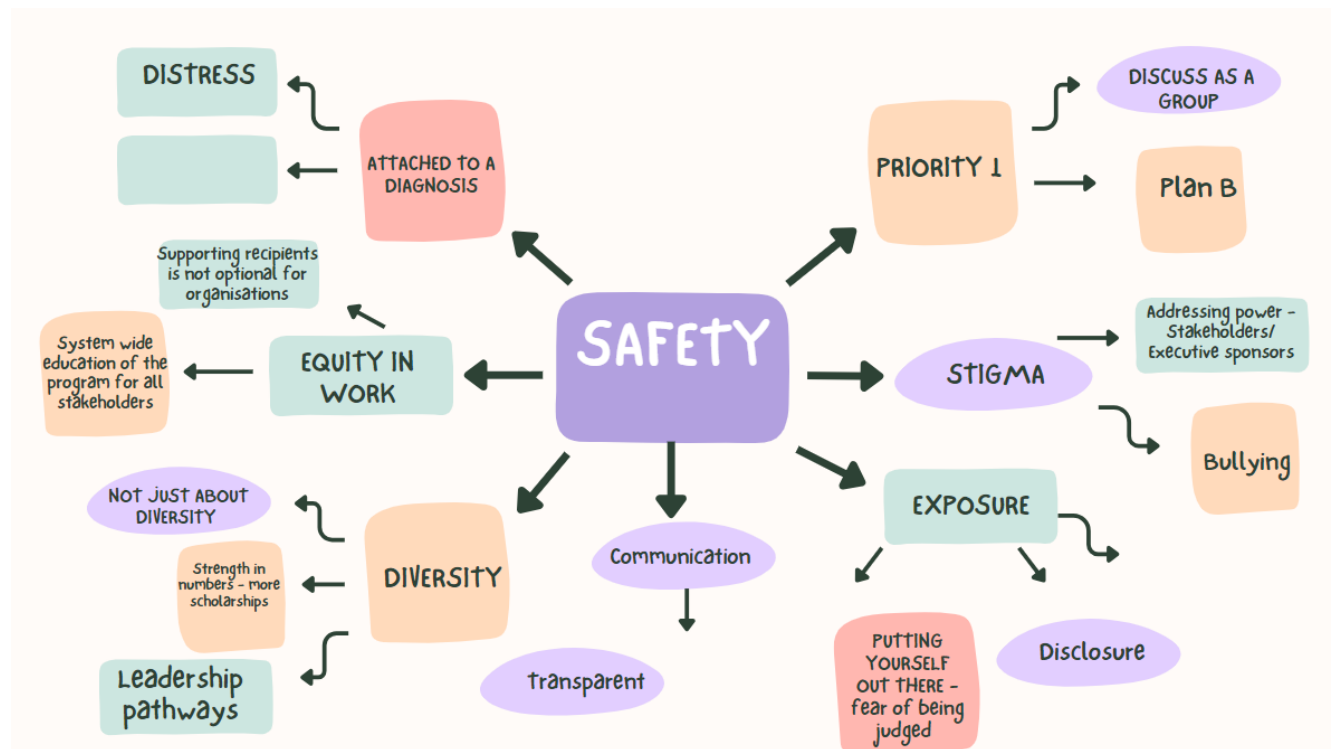


Image 4: Safety priority area

Consumer perspective

Given all recipients in the program were members of consumer LLEW, applying consumer perspective to their work was vital to them. Recipients shared that it is equally important to them that there is alignment of their tertiary studies and education to the consumer perspective. The group discussed that in their experience, learning and development, or skill development content catered to multi-disciplinary teams and lacked awareness of consumer perspective. However, the group agreed that consumer LLEW had recently seen an increase in numbers and the education/ learning and development sector would take time to grow the required knowledge and awareness of the consumer perspective. This is where the group saw an opportunity for the co-creation of education resources and skill development content that is customised and speaks to the sensitivities of consumer LLEW. Other topics that were discussed in this priority area pointed towards the need to establish consumer-led organisations to enable professional development and education, in the absence of the consumer-led Agency (referred to in Recommendation 29 of the RCVMS), to play a central role in skill development for consumer LLEW.

Research

Recipients shared that research could be daunting as it is, let alone while working in designated lived and living experience roles. Therefore, the group collaborated on how to meaningfully conduct research in their study programs, through investing efforts to positively impact the lives of consumers. During workshop #3, the group expressed a need to hear from research experts who apply consumer perspective to their work. As a result, a guest visit was facilitated in the subsequent workshop from senior consumer academics engaged in mental health research. The guest experts collaborated with the recipients and shared knowledge from their experiences. The group benefited from a discussion of projects where consumer workers can draw on their lived experience and advocate systemically, using evidence and evaluation from a consumer perspective. Lived experience led research considers the importance of allies and the group listed ways to engage with allies. Research dissemination, advocacy for output driven implementation, influencing and advocating for elevating consumer perspective and the voice of consumers and self-care were also discussed, during collaboration of this priority area.

Stage 3: Sustainability

The section below discusses the importance and benefits of; 1) the continuation of the consumer LLEW scholarship support program and 2) co-designing the pilot support program, through an iterative process.

Applicability to a new group

Recipients and facilitators welcomed the second group of recipients into a structured, open, and safe space and utilised the developed resources. This demonstrates the strengths of consumer-led and co-design principles and taking time to co-create a space for and by the consumer workers.

Evolving – building on

Through iterative methodology, the group was able to demonstrate that several priority areas were built upon through fresh perspectives, new knowledge and experience,

as the group progressed through subsequent workshops. After each workshop, there were additional inputs and resources to best approach the actions that emerged in each priority area. The benefit of utilising this approach to build on the existing knowledge might offer multifold benefits, in the form of a supported LLEW, more LLEW taking up tertiary studies, new leadership opportunities for LLEW and several scholarly and practice opportunities.

Networking

Recipients who engaged with the group grew their professional network, which is a strength of similar models of community of practice for LLEW. It is envisioned by the group that the recipients feel comfortable and safe to continue to network with one another, beyond the duration of their courses and into their leadership roles in the workforce.

Barriers and Challenges

Whilst the above-mentioned benefits were seen during the duration of the program that contributes to its strength and sustainability, recipients shared benefits and challenges they experienced as a consumer LLEW embarking on their education journey through the scholarship. The group discussed that the starting phase can be challenging, especially when getting back to study, or restarting, or starting fresh while also working. Challenges associated with hybrid models of studies discussed were the use of new technology, isolation and lack of connection with other students. Some recipients shared that the barriers and challenges discussed also resonated with undertones of discrimination faced widely by women in Australia. Recipients also faced administrative barriers, having to engage with different agencies to access their scholarship (through fund administrator) and scholarly support (through CentreMHN). Lastly, the group recognised the barriers preventing recipients from engaging with the support program. In the next section, recommendations from the group offer additional insight into the challenges and barriers the recipients faced.

Recommendations

1. Organisations employing LLEW are required to provide support to LLEW to engage with educational activities.

Recipients discussed the continued need for LLEW leadership capability development, extending well beyond the program. Public mental health services, NGOs and education institutes that employ consumer LLEW are encouraged to support LLEW, throughout their career progression within the mental health sector. Equal and fair opportunities consistent with other disciplines are required, for LLEW to progress a career in leadership roles within organisations. It is also stated in the National Lived Experience (peer) Workforce Guidelines (National guidelines) (2021) that organisations that employ LLEW are recommended to support this specialised workforce to grow and thrive through enabling training and professional development. In addition to undertaking tertiary studies, LLEW should also be encouraged by their employers to explore short courses beyond IPS core training through micro-credentialing as highlighted in the upcoming report on micro-credentialing for LLEW by the CAP team.

Further, for the success of the scholarship support program and for the recipients to utilise related benefits, organisations must foster a supportive environment, flexibility and adjustment to work patterns, so that recipients can engage with the collaborative nature of the program. It is crucial that recipients' engagement with the support program and other related activities (such as professional networking) occurs within their paid work time, and that allowance is duly made for this in their workloads.

2. Organisations employing LLEW are required to provide training and supports to potential allies and stakeholders, to enable uptake of tertiary education opportunities for LLEW

According to the group, to enable career progression, there is an identified need to receive support from allies and key stakeholders such as discipline leads, Human Resources, Learning and Development personnel etc. Allies, executive sponsors and discipline leads are also encouraged to enable equity in professional development for consumer LLEW as demonstrated by Byrne et al., (2016) and through the National Guidelines (2021) in their paper highlighting the important role of the allies such as nurses through close relationships with consumer LLEW for their growth and career development. Organisations and the wider mental health sector are encouraged to support the

development of tertiary level qualification in consumer lived experience to be available in Australia based on the scoping project and soon to be published report by the CAP team.

3. Providers of LLEW scholarships are required to remove administrative barriers to uptake of scholarships

Recipients reported a lack of responsiveness and timely support from the administrative contacts related to the disbursement of the scholarship funds. This recommendation reflects the need to address the current four-way support arrangements of organisations supporting LLEW to study such as: involvement of the Department of Health (VIC) throughout the process from application to eventual evaluation of the program, funds administrator being contracted to administer the scholarship application, decision and funds disbursement and CAP providing support and mentoring for the recipients. It is recommended by the group that administrative aspects of the scholarship funds be brought back centrally to a designated contact such as CAP or LE branch within the Department of Health (VIC) for example so that the recipients have fewer contact points to navigate. Simplifying the administrative component overall after the successful granting of the scholarship is recommended. Access to central contacts with direct contact among the recipients and administrative personnel might enable opportunities to seek clarification related to taxation, process for reimbursement, absence of leave etc might be looked upon favourably by future recipients. Recipients would also like to see greater responsiveness for matters that might be unique to them such as change of course, deferring etc as they reported facing difficulties receiving satisfactory assistance in matters related to the situations mentioned above. Previous scholarly research has highlighted that consumer LLEW staff face persistent barriers within their roles such as stigma and discriminatory attitudes therefore proactively preventing administrative barriers from occurring is recommended (Byrne et al., 2016; 2019; Edan et al., 2021; Leading the Change, 2020).

4. Providers of LLEW scholarships must clarify how scholarship funds can be applied.

It became known that some people received the scholarship funds to support living expenses, (as semi-regular payments directly to them) while others were denied this opportunity. In addition to reducing confusion across the workforce, having consistent and flexible guidelines about the use of the funds would encourage greater interest and usage of this important resource. Transparency and equity in pay rates, frequency, workplace

conditions and training have been recommended in previous research as a commitment towards supportive employment conditions (Edan et al., 2021).

5. Scholarship providers and employers of LLEW must improve supports for people preparing to apply for scholarships.

Over the three years the scholarship program has been in place, adjustments have been made to understanding the needs of the scholarship recipients in relation to what courses will be covered by the scholarship. However, there still exists some confusion and inconsistencies. Being clear about this is important moving forward, for example understanding what a 'Mental Health' course might consist of is important to understand that it is not teaching clinical knowledge. Providing opportunities for potential applicants to meet with other scholarship holders and or other students in relevant courses would be beneficial to guide decision-making. Preparation, clear communication and commitment are values that are received favourably by LLEW to imagine a vision of what may be possible (National Guidelines, 2021).

6. Employers of LLEW must support the development of a Community of practice for Consumer LLEW learners

Amongst the recommendations, the group noted the strengths of opportunities like this scholarship support program, where consumer LLEW members facing similar circumstances can come together, connect and collaborate in a safe space. Enabling a community of practice specific to consumer LLEW members undertaking education, learning or professional development is seen as an opportunity by the group. Another strength that the group recognised was the benefits of co-design and thus recommends that similar opportunities of co-designing are enabled, where consumer LLEW learners can express what is important to them (Leading the Change, 2020; National Guidelines, 2021).

Conclusion

This report outlined the details of the scholarship program implemented to support the development of leadership skills among lived and living experience workers in designated roles, as part of the Lived and Living Experience Workforces (LLEWs) program funded by the Department of Health. Recipients that were selected in the years of 2023 and 2024 joined the support program. CAP within the CentreMHN served as a designated contact for the program. CAP facilitators adopted co-production principles and iterative methodology to co-design the purpose of the program and specific areas the recipients required support with. Several priority areas were co-created for collaboration such as safety, career progression, navigating the tertiary education system etc. The group shared

recommendations applicable to all relevant stakeholders, to utilise the strengths of the program, co-design and community of practice.

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Appendix 1

Resources and articles

Career development and developing leadership skills

We have come across a couple of articles that may be of interest to the group:

- Career pathways for peer workers (UK) -
https://www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Raising%20the%20glass%20ceiling_considering%20a%20career%20pathway%20for%20peer%20support%20workers%20-%20Final%20%281%29.pdf
- LE Leadership and roles (QLD) -
https://www.qmhc.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/qmhc_lived_experience_workforce_role_titles_web.pdf
- Experience of PW in regional AU – See pdf attached (is a paid article that has been downloaded for you).
- Career advancement and mobility among peer workers in USA – second pdf attached with great insights into barriers to career advancement and suggestions.

Time management for working students

Please find links to articles and web pages for helpful tips/strategies. Not all may apply to you as working students:

- <https://summer.harvard.edu/blog/8-time-management-tips-for-students/>

- <https://www.simplilearn.com/tutorials/time-management-tutorial/best-time-management-tips-for-students>
- <https://studyonline.rmit.edu.au/blog/the-importance-of-time-management-for-working-students>
- <https://www.cdu.edu.au/launchpad/student-life/10-time-management-strategies-mature-age-uni-students>
- <https://www.wikihow.life/Manage-Time-As-a-Working-Student>
- <https://students.unimelb.edu.au/academic-skills/resources/learning-online/10-tips-to-manage-time-and-tasks>

Navigating the tertiary education system

Strategies to improve writing

- <https://academicguides.waldenu.edu/writingcenter/undergraduate/top10writingtips>
- <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-collegesuccess-lumen1/chapter/writing-strategies/>
- <https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/studyingeffectively/writing/strategies/index.aspx>
- <https://www.sunyempire.edu/online-writing-support/resources/academic-writing/strategies-for-academic-writing/>
- <https://students.unimelb.edu.au/academic-skills/resources/essay-writing>
- <https://students.unimelb.edu.au/academic-skills/resources/developing-an-academic-writing-style>

Reading

Includes note taking and reading critically

- <https://students.unimelb.edu.au/academic-skills/resources/reading-and-notetaking>

Reading faster: <https://www.mindtools.com/aokg6bn/speed-reading>

<https://ideas.ted.com/a-speed-reader-shares-3-tricks-to-help-anyone-read-faster/>

<https://www.speedreadinglounge.com/how-to-speed-read>

Learning differences

Individual universities will have a support department/ channel to request for study adjustments, which may include extra time allowance, alternative exam arrangements or referral to discuss assistive technologies. Following is an example of how universities support students

<https://students.unimelb.edu.au/academic-skills/resources/studying-effectively/learning-differences>

Disability: Key facts

Of the 7.4% of Australian domestic students with a disability, 78% are undergraduate.

Of the 7.4% of Australian domestic students with a disability, 22% are postgraduate.

An article of interest from UK -

<http://researchonline.ljmu.ac.uk/id/eprint/7913/3/Supporting%20students%20with%20disabilities%20within%20a%20UK%20university%20lecturer%20perspectives.pdf>

Universities support eligible students with a disability under the Disability discrimination Act 1992.

What does the legislation say: <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/students-disability/policy>

Types of support available may vary between universities but might include:

Types of support available

The University may make educational adjustments to studies to help offset any disadvantage students might face without them. Educational adjustments (sometimes referred to as equitable/ reasonable adjustments) are changes to how subjects are taught and assessed.

- Adjustments are made on a case-by-case basis, and may include:
- Alternative exam arrangements (AEAs)
- Assistance from an academic support worker (ASW)
- Equipment loans
- Assistive technology
- Accessible formatting of course reading materials
- Extensions to assignments
- Flexibility in attendance requirements
- Accessible teaching spaces and ergonomic furniture.

In addition, the above might also be available at different universities for ongoing and permanent health conditions (physical/ mental)

Accessibility related contacts at main AU universities - <https://www.open.edu.au/your-studies/support/disability-support>

Neurodiverse Individuals

Types of Difficulties

- Memory
- Problem Solving
- Attention, e.g. ADHD
- Reading, linguistic and verbal comprehension, e.g. dyslexia
- Mathematical comprehension
- Visual comprehension

Reference: <https://www.unimelb.edu.au/accessibility/users/cognitive>

Resources

- Resources compiled by Neurodiversity hub - <https://www.neurodiversityhub.org/resources-for-students>
- Neurodiverse toolkit at LaTrobe university - https://opal.latrobe.edu.au/articles/educational_resource/Neurodiversity_toolkit/13322981
- LE Article - <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00544/full%C2%A0>

What else may be helpful:

Assistive Technologies

- Visual learning software
- Speech, spellchecker, e.g. TextHelp
- Text to voice, e.g. WYNNS

Some resources that may be available free to users:

- <https://www.understood.org/en/articles/free-assistive-technology-tools-on-the-web>
- Text to speech: <https://www.augsburg.edu/class/groves/assistive-technology/everyone/dictation/>
- Study skills: <https://www.augsburg.edu/class/groves/assistive-technology/everyone/study-skills/>
- Reading: <https://www.augsburg.edu/class/groves/assistive-technology/everyone/reading/>
- Writing: <https://www.augsburg.edu/class/groves/assistive-technology/everyone/writing/>
- Others - <https://www.augsburg.edu/class/groves/assistive-technology/everyone/>

Visual Attention, Reading & Dyslexia

- A video from a research project <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ejbJCKlFw58>

Referencing

Universities may have their own rules and regulations however following guide may be of assistance:

<https://students.unimelb.edu.au/academic-skills/resources/referencing>

References and acknowledgements

- University of Melbourne website
- La Trobe University Website
- RMIT university website
- Several other university websites