

WFMH – Peer Work & Lived Experience Section:

Objectives:

- To increase the number of peer/lived experience workers who are members of WFMH
- To increase the awareness of peer work & value of utilising lived experience among WFMH members & leadership
- To explore options to include a lived experience stream or day to WFMH annual conference
- To increase exposure of peer work/lived experience on WFMH website
- To strengthen and unite the voices of peer work
- To look at feasibility of producing a bi-monthly or quarterly peer work/lived experience newsletter (or supplement to general WFMH newsletter).

Proposal:

1. To offer a new “Peer Network” (or “Peer Work & Lived Experience”) membership category to individuals who are on a reduced income (due to mental health issues) or who are in designated peer work/lived experience roles.
Recommend this be similar to Student rate (Currently \$US10 per annum) – with option to charge slightly more (for example \$5) if elect to receive publications by post rather than electronically, if necessary, to cover costs. (Alternatively, could be promoted as a discount if you elect to receive all communications electronically).
2. Having a designated “Peer Network” (or “Peer Work & Lived Experience”) Section”, led by a WFMH Vice-President, should help to emphasise the value of lived experience and raise the profile of this important area. Include updates in any regular or annual reports produced.
3. Program committee for 2019 Conference (Buenos Aires) to explore option of adding a Peer Work & Lived Experience stream or part day to conference program. This could help to open up the event to a whole new demographic thereby increasing registrations, as well as providing opportunities for greater collaboration between peer workers and other professions.
4. To have a designated section on WFMH website for “Peer Work & Lived Experience Resources” – acting as a kind of international clearing house for key national and state organisations worldwide. There could be an online form where organisations could apply to be listed (possibly requiring at least one applicant from that organisation to be a current member of WFMH) with key organisations initially approached requesting permission to list them to help create momentum.
5. To produce a quarterly (or bi-monthly) newsletter (could be ‘electronic only’ if costs prohibitive) listing new organisations or resources that have recently been added to the website, reminding people of current listings (subject to numbers) and highlighting examples of world-wide best practice in peer work and lived experience organisations.

6. To have a specific “Peer Network” (or “Peer Work & Lived Experience”) Services page on Facebook and Twitter. This would have in the title of the page “WFMH Peer Network” (WFMHPN). I was also thinking about using a name I have established here in Australia and call it “WFMH Mountains of Hope Peer Network” (WFMHMoHPN).
7. To establish a small working group of WFMH members (overseen by Vice President responsible for Peer Work & Lived Experience Section) to oversee and advise on content of newsletter and website listings. This could also be a good way to promote the Federation among key international peer leaders.
8. Additionally, and/or to paragraph 7, establish a “Peer Network” (or “Peer Work & Lived Experience”) Committee led by me. This committee could be sought through an expression of interest across the world. This way I could delegate some of the work to these committee members.
9. Explore possibility of starting WFMH awards recognising international best practice and new innovations in peer work and lived experience advocacy.

Resources:

- Access to WFMH website to set up new Section page & upload content as appropriate.
- Adding new Membership category to website (with permission from WFMH leadership for this to occur).
- Small working group (or steering committee) of international peer work/lived experience advisors to oversee production of regular newsletter & posts on website, and to provide advice around listing of appropriate organisations, under guidance of VP.
- Ability to print & distribute newsletter to members – with option to include this as a section of a more comprehensive newsletter that goes to all members, or to limit to an online publication if printing/postage costs prohibitive.
- Clear guidelines around who can and can’t be listed on website & possible categories for listing these (e.g. for-profit vs non-profit, requirement to be registered in own country vs small community groups, option for brief listings for smaller organisations and more comprehensive listings for orgs that act as national clearing houses for their own country etc...)
- Inclusion of Peer Work/Lived Experience Representatives on 2019 conference program committee
- Appointment of a VP as Section lead for Peer Work & Lived Experience
- Consider sponsors to help establish annual awards program (although primarily recognition & a certificate rather than high monetary value).

Possible update for current website:

There is a growing recognition around the world of the importance of including people with lived experience of mental illness in all aspects of mental health care, treatment, education, training and leadership. Whilst people who experience emotional and psychological distress and access mental health services are often called different things in different countries

(service-users, consumers, clients, survivors and so on) we all stand by the mantra of “Nothing about us without us.”

The World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH) is keen to expand its role in supporting the sharing of resources and information for people who are employed as mental health peer workers, consumer consultants and lived experience representatives, as well as to organisations who are engaging in “co-production” with people with lived experience. This also includes people who use their lived experience of caring for family or friends with mental health issues as Carer Consultants or Carer Peer Workers.

Stay tuned for some exciting new updates on how you (and your organisation) can become more involved.

General

Consider calling those of us that lead the sections as Directors. For example: Director of WFMH Peer Network, Michael Burge OAM.

Michael Burge OAM

Vice President (Oceania Region)

World Federation for Mental Health