



20 November 2025

Gen Whitlam  
Director, Lived Experience  
MHJHADS  
Canberra Health Services  
[genevieve.whitlam@act.gov.au](mailto:genevieve.whitlam@act.gov.au)

Dear Gen

### **Review of CHS: Peer Pathways Operational Procedures**

This letter has been prepared by the ACT Mental Health Consumer Network (the Network) in response to the invitation from Canberra Health Services (CHS). It incorporates written and verbal feedback received from consumers in relation to the CHS: Peer Pathways Operational Procedures (the Procedures). The Network welcomes the invitation to provide feedback on the Procedures.

Consumers broadly approved of the Procedures and positively noted aspects such as the clear guidance provided about peer work in Attachment 3. They nonetheless highlighted the following issues for consideration and review:

1. In Section 4 (p. 5), consumers approved of the attention given to the principle of culturally safe practices for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island (ATSI) people. However, they expressed concern about the lack of detail about peer workers' education and training in culturally safe practices. They compared, for example, the clear and specific training expectations outlined for home visitation in Section 8 (p. 8) to the more ambiguous approaches described in Section 4. This led consumers to ask if CHS has specific education resources and training standards for culturally safe practice for ATSI people? If so, they recommended that these be included in Section 4. If not, they recommended that CHS undertake the development of such resources and standards.

2. In Section 5 (pp. 5-6), consumers approved of the initiative to recruit peer workers from and with connections to the communities being served by the program. However, they stated that the section is too brief, overly aspirational and does not provide enough insight into how different communities will be engaged and supported by the program. Consumers recommended adding more specific guidance about education and training of peer workers for different communities.
3. In Section 6 (p. 6), the title of subsection 1 'Ad-hoc Peer Support – no clinician-initiated referral required', lacks clarity and should be rephrased. Consumers recommended a title that describes that the 'in-reaching' component of the Procedures is to be provided within Adult Inpatient Mental Health Service settings.
4. In Section 10 (p. 10), it is important for the Procedures to specify that peer workers should inform participants about their rights to access their medical records and the steps they need to take in order to request and receive copies of their information.
5. Consumers expressed concern that there is no guidance in the Procedures about safe and expected communication methods between peer workers and participants. For example, there is no statement that prohibits peer workers from contacting participants using personal communication devices or vice versa. Consumers recommended including a section that outlines appropriate communication methods between peer workers and participants and also including this guidance in Attachment 3.

If you have any questions or require further clarification regarding this feedback, please do not hesitate to contact us on (02) 6230 5796 or [executive@actmhcn.org.au](mailto:executive@actmhcn.org.au).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Procedures.

Yours sincerely



Dalane Drexler  
Chief Executive Officer