



Ethical Practice Policy

Purpose

This policy sets out the ethical principles and expectations that guide the work of the ACT Mental Health Consumer Network (the Network). It supports the Network to act with integrity, respect, transparency and accountability in all its activities.

Scope

This policy applies to Board members, staff, contractors, volunteers and representatives of the Network. It applies to all aspects of the Network's work, including advocacy, policy engagement, governance, partnerships, communications and organisational operations.

Values and principles

The Network is a consumer led peak systemic advocacy organisation. Ethical practice is central to maintaining trust with mental health consumers, members, partners, funders, government and the broader community.

The Network's ethical practice is guided by the following principles:

- Respect for lived experience and consumer leadership
- Honesty, integrity and accountability
- Fairness, inclusion and non-discrimination
- Transparency in decision-making and advocacy
- Independence and integrity of consumer voice

Consumer leadership and respect

The Network respects and values the lived experience of people with mental health issues. Consumer voices are central to the Network's identity and purpose. Ethical practice requires listening respectfully, avoiding tokenism, and supporting meaningful consumer participation and leadership.

Professional conduct

People representing the Network are expected to act professionally at all times. This includes acting honestly, treating others with respect, communicating appropriately, and avoiding behaviour that could harm individuals, groups or the Network's reputation.

Conflicts of interest

All Board members, staff and volunteers must declare any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest. Conflicts are managed transparently and in accordance with the Network's conflict of interest policy and governance procedures.

Use of information

The Network handles information responsibly and lawfully. Confidential information is respected and protected. Personal stories and lived experience shared with the Network are used ethically, respectfully and only with appropriate consent.

Advocacy integrity

The Network undertakes advocacy in good faith and based on consumer experience, evidence and ethical considerations. The Network represents consumer perspectives accurately and does not mislead, exaggerate or misrepresent the views of consumers or stakeholders.

Relationships and partnerships

The Network works collaboratively with government, services and other organisations while maintaining independence and integrity. Partnerships must align with the Network's purpose and values and must not compromise consumer voice or advocacy positions.

Complaints and concerns

Concerns about unethical behaviour may be raised through the Network's complaints, feedback or grievance processes. Concerns will be taken seriously and addressed in a fair, respectful and timely manner.

Responsibilities

The Board is responsible for oversight of ethical practice and organisational culture. The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for implementing and promoting ethical practice. All people associated with the Network share responsibility for upholding this policy.

Related Documents

- Code of Conduct
- Conflict of Interest Policy and Declaration Form
- Policy and Procedures Manual