



## Information Sharing and Confidentiality Practice Statement

### Purpose

ACT Mental Health Consumer Network (the Network) is the peak body representing people with lived experience of mental health issues (consumers) in the ACT. Our role is systemic advocacy, representation, education and sector leadership.

This statement explains how the Network approaches information sharing, confidentiality and consent in a way that is transparent, ethical and appropriate to our role as a peak body.

### Nature of Information We Collect

The Network does not provide clinical, therapeutic or crisis services. We do not seek or require sensitive personal disclosures of the kind provided to health or mental health practitioners.

Information we receive is generally limited to:

- Contact details for participation and communication
- Lived experience insights shared for advocacy, representation or consultation purposes
- Governance, training, volunteer and engagement-related information

Where personal information is collected, it is limited to what is reasonably necessary for our advocacy and organisational functions.

### Confidentiality and Respectful Use of Information

The Network treats all personal information shared with us respectfully and confidentially, consistent with our Privacy Policy and ethical obligations.

Information shared by consumers, volunteers or stakeholders is:

- Used only for its intended purpose
- Stored securely
- Accessed only by authorised personnel
- De-identified where possible before being used in advocacy or reporting

The Network does not promise absolute or clinical confidentiality and does not operate as a therapeutic service.

### **Consent and Information Sharing**

The Network seeks informed consent before sharing personal information in identifiable form.

Consent may be sought, for example, where:

- A consumer's experience is quoted
- An individual is nominated or endorsed as a representative
- Personal information is required to be shared with partners or funders

Consumers may withdraw or refuse consent, and this will be respected wherever reasonably possible.

### **Limits to Confidentiality**

Consumers are advised that consent for sharing personal information will be sought and respected in all situations unless:

1. it is unreasonable or impracticable to gain consent or consent has been refused; and
2. without information being shared, it is anticipated a person will be at risk of serious harm, abuse or neglect, or pose a risk to their own or public safety.

These limits reflect legal and child safety obligations and do not imply that the Network provides risk assessment or crisis intervention services.

### **Appropriate Response and Boundaries**

If a consumer shares information that is outside the Network's role or capacity, staff and volunteers will:

- Communicate the limits of the Network's role clearly and respectfully
- Encourage the person to seek appropriate support from relevant services
- Avoid assuming a clinical or therapeutic role

## **Staff and Volunteer Responsibilities**

Staff and volunteers are expected to:

- Understand the Network's role and boundaries
- Follow privacy, consent and information handling requirements
- Use information ethically and for agreed purposes only
- Complete induction or orientation that covers information sharing expectations

## **Transparency with Consumers**

The Network is committed to ensuring consumers understand what information we collect, how it is used, when it may be shared, and the limits of confidentiality. This information is provided through consent forms, information materials, induction processes and direct communication.