NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMER ALLIANCE

Human Rights Survey

Human Rights. Real Lives. Real Experiences.

Participant Information Sheet

The National Mental Health Consumer Alliance (the Alliance) invites mental health consumers, people with lived experience of mental health challenges, and/or people who identify as having a psychosocial disability to complete the 2026 Human Rights Survey.

We understand that people use different terms to describe their personal lived experience. For the purposes of this survey, we use the term mental health consumer broadly, while recognising that not everyone identifies with this term. This may include people with lived experience of mental health challenges, people with psychosocial disability, survivors, ex-psych patients, psychiatric survivors, mad people, or another term that feels right to you. If this survey speaks to your experience, please consider taking part.

What is this survey about?

This annual national Human Rights survey is looking at how well mental health consumers had their human rights met in 2026. This is the third time the Alliance has run the survey.

We would like to understand whether you feel your rights as a mental health consumer have been respected in your interactions with various services and/or settings. Your experiences may have been in the mental health system, but also in justice, health, housing, income support, or other social sectors.

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We want to hear about how human rights-based approaches have respected, protected, and promoted people's dignity, choice, safety and autonomy, as well as times when people's rights have been breached.

Who is running the survey?

The National Mental Health Consumer Alliance is conducting the survey.

The Alliance will work with the lived experience research group ACACIA at the Australian National University to analyse the data collected from this survey. The ACACIA research group is made up entirely of people with lived experience and was created to investigate issues that are important to mental health consumers and carers in the ACT. The group also works with service providers and policy makers to drive change that improves mental health care.

What does participation involve?

There are around 60 questions, most of which are Yes/No questions. The survey will take around 15–20 minutes to complete and must be completed in one sitting.

You can stop completing the survey at any time before you submit it – your answers will not be included.

Do I have to take part?

No. Taking part in this survey is voluntary. It is your choice whether you take part or not.

If you choose to submit the survey, this means you consent to the Alliance and ACACIA using your de-identified responses for the purposes described in this information sheet.

Can I withdraw my responses?

You can stop completing the survey at any time before you submit it. Because the survey is de-identified and you are not required to provide your name or address, the Alliance will not be able to identify or remove your responses after they have been submitted.

What are the benefits of participating?

Your experiences matter. By completing the survey, you can help build a national picture of what is happening for people across mental health, health, justice, housing, income support and other systems.

The survey helps the Alliance with our national advocacy work by identifying where human rights are being respected and where they are being breached. The more people who take part, the harder it is for governments, services and decision-makers to ignore what consumers are saying.

What are the possible risks of participating, and what support is available?

Some questions may bring up difficult memories or feelings, particularly if you have had experiences where your human rights were not respected.

If you need support, please consider contacting:

- Lifeline Australia: 13 11 14
- Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636
- Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800
- 13YARN: 13 92 76
- QLife: 1800 184 527

How will my information be protected?

The survey is conducted through SurveyMonkey. You are not required to share your name or address and IPN.

Only de-identified data is stored by the Alliance, with identifying details such as VPN addresses removed. Only this de-identified data will be shared with ACACIA for analysis.

How will the survey information be used?

The data collected from this survey will be analysed by ACACIA and the Alliance. The findings may be used in Alliance reports, advocacy, submissions, presentations, public communications and future de-identified research projects.

De-identified quotes or examples may be used to help explain what mental health consumers are experiencing. No names or identifying details will be included.

Why take part?

Your voice can help push for systems that better respect, protect and promote the human rights of people with lived experience of mental health challenges. Your responses can help show where services and systems are upholding people's dignity, choice, safety and autonomy, and where change is still urgently needed.

Human rights and mental health

Australia does not have a National Human Rights Act. However, all levels of Australian governments — federal, state, territory and local — have obligations under the international human rights conventions Australia has signed. This includes the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

The UNCRPD seeks to promote, protect and ensure that all people with disabilities can enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms, while also fostering respect for their inherent dignity. Its principles include respect for dignity, non-discrimination, full and effective participation, respect for difference and equality of opportunity.

Australia is also a signatory to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT). OPCAT highlights the prevention of mistreatment of people in all places of detention, including locked mental health wards.

Questions or concerns?

For questions about the survey, please contact Jen Nixon, Policy Lead, at policy@nmhca.org.au.

Thank you for taking the time to consider completing this valuable survey.