NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMER ALLIANCE

Ending Coercion, Together: A National Consumer Blueprint to Eliminate Coercive Practices

Coercive Practices Expert Group - Inviting Expressions of Interest

Information for consumers

The National Mental Health Consumer Alliance (the Alliance) invites people with lived experience of mental health challenges who have experienced coercive practices in mental health settings within the last five years to express interest in joining the Coercive Practices Expert Group.

Members will work with the Alliance's project team to develop a National Consumer Blueprint for eliminating coercive practices.

What is the project about?

Ending Coercion, Together is a consumer-led project developing a national Blueprint for eliminating coercive practices in mental health settings.
The Blueprint will be a document that sets out mental health consumers' vision, priorities and proposed solutions for change.

For this project, coercive practices include involuntary treatment such as seclusion and physical, mechanical and chemical restraint.

The Blueprint will bring together:

- lived experience knowledge through national consumer consultation;
- a review of existing research and other evidence; and
- co-creation with the Expert Group.

Co-creation means members work together with the project team to shape the Blueprint's content and direction throughout its development.

The Blueprint will provide a foundation for a future National Action Plan. The next phase would involve working with governments and service providers to agree on actions, responsibilities, timeframes and accountability arrangements.

The project will run until June 2028 and is funded through an Australian Government Disability Representative Organisations (DRO) Program grant.

Who is running the project?

The Alliance leads the project. The Alliance's National Projects Lead, Brahmmi Kumarasamy, and National Research Manager, Dr Anita Lumbus, will work with the Coercive Practices Expert Group to develop the Blueprint. A Steering Committee will provide strategic guidance and oversight. It will include senior staff from state and territory consumer peak organisations, the Australian Association of Peer Workers (AAPW), the Indigenous Australian Lived Experience Centre (IALEC), the National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA), and a clinical representative. The Indigenous Australian Lived Experience Centre (IALEC) is a project partner.

Final approval of all outputs from the project sits with the Alliance CEO.

Who can apply?

We are seeking expressions of interest from people who:

- have lived experience of mental health challenges and/or identify as having psychosocial disability. We understand that different people use different terminology to explain their experiences.
- have experience using, or trying to use, mental health services and supports within the last five years.

- have personally experienced coercive practices in a health setting within the last five years when seeking mental health support.
- can commit to approximately 11 -13 online sessions between December 2026 and June 2028, with some preparation and follow-up activities.
- can participate in online sessions held during business hours, for up to three hours.
- are willing to read and discuss a range of materials, including research papers and evidence summaries.

Participants must be aged 18 years or older and willing to obtain a Working with Children Check (or state or territory equivalent) and a National Police Check (people who have had contact with the criminal justice system will be considered equally alongside all other applicants). The Alliance will reimburse any associated costs.

We welcome people with different experiences, backgrounds and perspectives.

What will the Expert Group do?

You will work with the Alliance's project team to:

- co-create the Blueprint's principles, priorities, proposed solutions and overall structure
- provide consumer expert input into the evidence review
- review and help interpret findings from a consumer perspective
- help shape the national consultation process
- consider emerging and final consultation findings and what they mean for the Blueprint
- review and refine the Blueprint and help develop related consumer facing information

- participate in the project evaluation.

What does participation involve?

- Approximately 11 online co-creation meetings.
- Meetings lasting up to three hours, including breaks.
- Reading or reviewing some materials before or after meetings.
- Providing brief feedback to help improve how the group works and participating in the project evaluation.

You can contribute during meetings, in writing or in other agreed ways. Members will be expected to have their cameras on during group discussions to support connection and participation.

Meetings will be recorded and transcribed for notetaking purposes. Recordings will only be accessed by the project team and will be deleted once the notes have been checked, within 30 days of each meeting.

Before the first meeting, members will receive an accessible information pack explaining the role, meeting arrangements, payment, confidentiality, how contributions will be used and available support.

Will I be paid for my time?

Payment recognises your time and expertise. Members are paid **$95.20 per hour for meetings** in accordance with the Alliance's paid participation policy. Preparation time is not paid.

You will be paid after each meeting directly into your nominated bank account. Members will have to complete a paid participation form after each meeting and either send an invoice with an ABN for each meeting or complete a Statement by a Supplier form provided by the Alliance.

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What are the benefits of participating?

You will contribute your lived expertise to the Blueprint and help shape national work towards eliminating coercive practices in mental health

settings. You will work with other consumers to identify priorities and develop proposed solutions.

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

Discussions about coercive practices may bring up difficult memories or emotions. You can contribute your lived expertise without sharing personal details or describing particular events.

We will work with you to support your participation through the following arrangements:

- Meetings and materials will be accessible and flexible, guided by trauma-informed practice and a commitment to cultural safety.
- A peer support worker will be available during and after meetings.
- You can decline to answer a question, take a break, step away, leave a meeting or withdraw from the group without explaining why.
- You can contribute in different ways, including through discussion or written input.
- Before meetings begin, we will discuss with you what would help you participate and agree on accessibility, cultural safety and support arrangements.
- You can request for a support person to attend meetings with you.
- We will explain available support before you begin, including where to seek further support outside meetings.

Participation is voluntary. Participants may withdraw information they have provided until it has been de-identified and incorporated into combined analysis.

How will consent work?

If you are selected, we will explain what participation involves, how your contributions may be used and the consent and confidentiality arrangements.

Before your first Expert Group session, you will be asked to provide your consent through a consent form and complete an Alliance Volunteer Agreement. The agreement explains the nature of the role, the responsibilities of members and the Alliance, payment and expenses, insurance and the Alliance policies that apply.

You will have an opportunity to review this information and ask questions before deciding whether to join the Expert Group.

How will my information be protected?

The information you provide in your expression of interest will be stored securely and handled in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988.

The Alliance's project team will have access to the expressions of interest. Relevant information from expressions of interest will also be securely provided to designated members of the Steering Committee to review applications and help select participants.

Before you join the group, we will explain confidentiality arrangements and how your contributions will be used.

How will expressions of interest be reviewed?

Selection will consider the participation criteria and seeks a seek a mix of experiences, identities, locations and perspectives within the group. You will not be asked about your specific experiences of coercive practices.

Places are limited, so not everyone who meets the criteria will be selected.

We will let applicants know the outcome within two weeks of the closing date.

How do I apply?

Complete the online expression of interest form. We will begin reviewing applications as they are received, so we encourage you to apply early.

Applications close: 30th November 2026

If you would like to discuss another way to submit your expression of interest, please contact us using the details below.

Questions or concerns?

For questions about the project, the Expert Group, accessibility or the application process, you may contact the project team:

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