



## Consumer and carer lived experience to be centred by new Academy of Lived Experience

The National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum (NMHCCF) welcomes the recently announced \$10 million Australian Government investment into a national research translation centre to implement mental health care in the primary care and community settings (ALIVE).

ALIVE aims to improve mental health outcomes in Australia by embedding the expertise of people with lived experience of mental ill-health and carers into research co-design. It is committed to providing opportunities for collaboration between universities, communities, governments, and industries to ensure that the voices of lived experience will shape better mental health outcomes. One objective is to support the establishment of an Academy of Lived-Experience to foster research career pathways and lived-experience led research.

It will further include the voices of leaders and communities from priority populations such as First Nations and culturally and linguistically diverse people, people with low socioeconomic status, people living with severe mental illness, and ex-prisoner populations.

“Although we’ve seen over \$70 billion invested in mental health services and reforms over the last thirty years, long-term health outcomes continue to be devastating for many consumers. Life expectancies, for example, can be reduced by up to 25 years,” says the NMHCCF Representative.

“We believe that centring the voices of consumers and carers in research will help to redress this inequality.

“The NMHCCF knows the value of the voices of those with lived experience when shaping research and policy agendas. Those with lived experience are uniquely placed to provide insights into systemic issues within the mental health system, and into both prevention and recovery strategies.

“We are delighted that people with lived experience will play a central role in ALIVE, and are being recognised for the expertise they hold.

“There is a need to embed strong lived experience expertise at all levels of mental health research and reform, including the independent governance committee, to ensure lived experience drives the work from the very start.”

*The National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum (NMHCCF) is a combined national voice for mental health consumers and carers. We listen, learn, influence and advocate in matters of mental health reform. Find out more at <https://nmhccf.org.au/>*

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