Who are We?

We hope to make a difference by sharing accessible research with the community. See our backgrounds and some testimonials below.

We all have significant lived experience which has influenced our lives and work.

Those of us identifying as Lived Experience (personal/consumer) researchers have worked in designated Lived Experience roles for over 40 years, including peer support, education, training, and systemic advocacy positions across various sectors and settings. We are very connected with the wider Lived Experience community. Lived Experience is our discipline or main lens.

Those of us identifying as Researchers with lived experience have another discipline or lens we primarily work from but see our personal lived experience as an important component of who we are and the way we approach research.



Louise Byrne

Lived Experience Researcher (personal/consumer)

ResearchGate

Dr Louise Byrne’s work is informed by her personal experience. Louise is recognised internationally as a thought leader in the area of Lived Experience workforce development. She is a sought after speaker and consultant.

Louise has more than 40 scientific journal publications on this topic and has been awarded several times for outstanding contributions to research and

teaching, held expert/advisory roles with State and National Mental Health Commissions and led policy development at State and National levels, including the National Lived Experience (Peer) Workforce Development Guidelines.

Louise's Fulbright research based at Yale University in the United States has led to ongoing international collaborations and research and an Assistant Professor Adjunct position. Louise has worked in a variety of designated personal Lived Experience roles since 2005, training in Intentional Peer Support, and continues to be informed by these concepts and practices.



Helena Roennfeldt
Lived Experience Researcher (personal/consumer)

ResearchGate

Dr Helena Roennfeldt completed her PhD on lived experiences of mental health crisis and crisis care. Her previous studies include master's degrees in Suicidology, Mental Health, Forensic Mental Health and Social Work. Her

research spans diverse areas including the Lived Experience workforce, arts-based research, and the interface between physical and mental health. Helena has over 21 years' experience working in the mental health sector and is also an eCPR facilitator and personal medicine coach.



Lena Wang
Researcher with Lived Experience

ResearchGate

Professor Lena Wang is an academic and practitioner specialising in the area of organisational psychology. She applies her disciplinary lens to support organisations, leaders and policy makers to develop workforces and workplace cultures towards better understanding and genuine valuing of employee diversity and inclusion. She obtained her PhD in Work Psychology and her other research areas include individual differences, leadership, and employee behaviour and wellbeing. She has worked extensively with governments and industries, and recently contributed to the development of national and state-level guidelines for the development Lived Experience workforce.



Melissa Chapman

Lived Experience Researcher (family/carer)

ResearchGate

Dr Melissa Chapman has PhD in Industrial and Organisational Psychology and works in the higher education sector. She currently uses her knowledge and skills across broad areas, such as: inclusion and diversity, mental health/wellbeing and the changing nature of work. Melissa has worked collaboratively with private, not-for-profit, university and government orgaisations and since 2019 has been contributing significantly to the Lived Experience led evidence base, including working on the Australian ‘National Lived Experience (Peer) Workforce Development Guidelines’, the ‘Queensland Framework for the Development of the Mental Health Lived Experience Workforce’ amongst others.

Jane Ellis

What People Say
"Wow this [Queensland Framework for the development of the mental health Lived Experience workforce] is great!!! Such a fantastic advocacy tool. Cannot express my gratitude enough"

- Jane Ellis, Consumer Consultant at Uniting SA

Click here to see the framework
Emma Blee
What People Say
"Fantastic work [on the Queensland Framework for the development of the mental health Lived Experience workforce] by Louise Byrne. So pleased to have Louise and some of our other researchers providing advice as we develop out mental health strategy at RMIT"

- Emma Blee, Director Health, Safety and Wellbeing at RMIT University

Click here to see the framework
Lisa Ceh
What People Say
"Your program gives so many people an opportunity to shape their future and redefine the parameters they are employed by."

- Lisa Ceh, NightWatch Chaplain at ChaplainWatch

Tanya Blazewikz
What People Say
"The best keynote presentation [at the 2019 TheMHS Conference] I have ever seen is now available for you to watch online! @DrLouisByrne you are my

hero."

- Tanya Blazewikz, Human Rights & Mental Health Activist

Click to our Audio and Visual Resources page to see this talk
Daya Henkel
What People Say
"...thank you for the work that you do around peer work. It is extremely helpful for those of us on the ground to have Australian research to refer to and to forward to management to advocate around support structures."

- Daya Henkel, State-Wide Mental Health Peer Workforce Coordinator at NSW Ministry of Health

Indigo Daya
What People Say
"Powerhouse talk [at the 2020 MHS Conference] by @drlousiebryne on #lived experience engagement in research: why it matters, how to do it well. Coproduction, recognising our expertise and ways of understanding, the need for clinical researchers to give up power and be willing to sit with discomfort."

- Indigo Daya, Human Rights Advisor, and Policy and Communications Manager at VMAIC

Leanne Craze
What People Say
"[The Queensland Framework for the development of the mental health Lived Experience workforce is] A further step in the new era of lived experience being viewed as an asset to be incorporated into all mental health services at

all levels"

- Leanne Craze, Mental health and social policy consultant

Click here to see the framework
John Mendoza
What People Say
"Congrats to @QLD_MHC @DrLouisByrne @LeilaniDarwin @ingoiz @MichyB26 & all involved in the development of this outstanding resource [The Queensland Framework for the development of the mental health Lived Experience workforce]. This just maybe the most important contribution to changing the culture & practices of #mentalhealth services in a generation."

- John Mendoza, Former Director Mental Health & Prison Health Services at Central Adelaide Local Health Network

Click here to see the framework
Daya Henkel Framework
What People Say
"Congratulations to all who worked on this fabulous piece of work [the Queensland Framework for the development of the mental health Lived Experience workforce]! I'd also like to acknowledge the years of research that was undertaken that informed the development of the framework. Congratulations Louise and team"

- Daya Henkel, State-Wide Mental Health Peer Workforce Coordinator at NSW Ministry of Health

Click here to see the framework

Melody Fudge
What People Say
"The lived experience peers have become an integral and invaluable part of our team...In many ways your research, advocacy and training has helped contribute to this success."

- Dr Melody Fudge, Regional Director Open Arms, Veterans & Families Counselling

Alan Rosen
What People Say
"This [The Queensland Framework for the development of the mental health Lived Experience workforce] is a key major framework document which is highly relevant to and instructive for all mhs & health, medicolegal, support & welfare agencies, for all jurisdictions in Australia & elsewhere."

- Alan Rosen, Professorial Fellow, Institute of Mental Health, University of Wollongong

Click here to see the framework
Deb Pratt
What People Say
"It feels like there is a real momentum at the moment and the Framework [the Queensland Framework for the development of the mental health Lived Experience workforce] has made a significant contribution to this"

- Deb Pratt, Program Manager, Policy and Program Delivery Queensland Mental Health Commission

Click here to see the framework

Matthew Halpin

What People Say

" Fantastic to see such an important framework [the Queensland Framework for the development of the mental health Lived Experience workforce] launched. Great work Louise Byrne and Ivan Frkovic QULD Mental Health Commission it's a fantastic framework for development of the Lived Experience Workforce"

- Matthew Halpin, Previously Assistant Director at the National Mental Health Commission

Click here to see the framework

Phillip Benjamin

What People Say

"I just wanted to add my congratulations to you for your wonderful presentation at the [2019 TheMHS Conference] launch of this initiative!"

- Phillip Benjamin, Mental Health Commission, Emergency Psych Assessment

Click here to go to our Audio and Visual Resources page to see the talk

Gitane Williams

What People Say

"Thank you for acknowledging the value of people with lived experiences in the workplace."

- Gitane Williams, CBHI Vocal Wellness Educator

Rita Cronise

What People Say

"Thank you for your dedication to a thoughtful and elegant description of what's happening, what's needed, and how we can collectively as a community bring the value (and values) of peer support more fully into the systems in which they can have a real impact on hope and healing."

- Rita Cronise, Distance Faculty, Rutgers University, Academy of Peer Services

Jessica Wolf

What People Say

"These are very thorough materials developed by Louise Byrne and Australian colleagues, very relevant to our work."

- Jessica Wolf, Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research at Yale University

CLICK HERE TO SEE RESEARCH



Lived Experience Training

Check out our website with courses to embed the research findings and build strong understanding of Lived and Living Experience workforces and practice.

Go to website