



WELCOME!

December
Newsletter 2024

We hope this edition of the MHLEPQ Newsletter finds you contented.

Our newsletter highlights activities the Peak, community and members have been up over October and November!

Here's what you'll find in this edition:

- Farewell from Bec
- MHLEPQ AGM Update
- Holiday Season Resources and Activities
- MHLEPQ Opportunities and Events
- External Lived Experience Engagement Requests
- Special Interest Group Updates
- Engagement 'Over the Year' Recap
- CEO End of Year Letter to our Members

Thank you, from all us at MHLEPQ

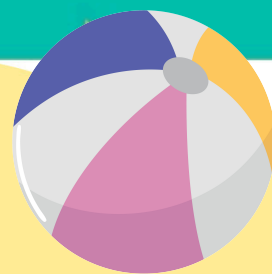
Happy Holidays!



Our office will be closed from December 25th to
January 1st.

Regular office hours returning on Thursday, January
2nd.

Have a Happy Holidays and New Year!



Goodbye and Safe Holidays from Bec



Safe and restful holidays and bye for now!

Can you believe how quickly this year has flown? As I tie up the loose ends of another hectic year, I've paused to reflect on not just this year, but my two and a half years as a staff member of the MHLEPQ. As some of you may be aware, I finish my policy duties with the peak at the end of January 2025. It's difficult for me to write a non-individualised 'bye' and 'hope to see you along the path soon' message, but here goes.

I'm one of those non-small-talky types who prefer deep dives and a genuine heartfelt connection. I have had many of those since July 2022 when I skipped into the role, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed from a four-month work hiatus. Moving countries and jumping into my first identified role began with a restrictive practices project with Queensland Health, the springboard to the LEAG work that produced [Shining a Light](#). This work will always remain prominent in my mind. It was extremely close to home for me and many, and one thing I know as a collector of stories is that I never forget them. Not a single one.

It has been a great pleasure and learning curve to be involved with members and allied folk on the huge work programme that the MHLEPQ have undertaken, all the while 'building the plane' as we flew. My favourite task (if I had to choose one) was building the lived experience evidence base with submissions and statements such as those to the [Qld Supported Housing Inquiry](#), the [Truth and Justice Commission Bill 2024](#) and the [National Suicide Prevention Strategy](#). Collaborating on these works showed me the depth and breadth of the knowledge, talent and wisdom in the membership and community, something I leave forever grateful and better for.

A more difficult task has been developing policy submissions that left little room for member participation. Sometimes due to the extremely short time frames imposed by government, or perhaps the lack of resources available to pour into the work. An example of this was the recent inquiry into the [Making Queensland Safer Bill 2024](#). This is a profoundly impactful piece of legislation designed to deliver on LNPs "Adult Crime, Adult Time" policy to increase punitive criminal justice responses to children as young as ten (10) - a position with no evidence for achieving the desired outcome of 'safer communities'. The Premier introduced the Bill on Thursday 28th November and closed the consultation on December 3rd.

The first and only 90-page report was then tabled by the Committee three days later, on December 6th. I am unsure how (or whether?) public submissions were critically analysed to inform that report, but what I do know is that I had 72 hours to pull together evidence and recommendations from the existing evidence base and community stakeholders to represent a mental health peak perspective! The [submission is available here](#) and I invite you to provide feedback on the document, input that will remain as a public record of organisational advocacy. Contact engagement@mhlepq.org.au with your thoughts.

I will wrap up by leaving you with two pieces of wisdom from te ao Māori (the Māori world) that continuously inspire me. Firstly, “he aha te mea nui o te ao? He tangata he tangata he tangata!”, meaning “what is the most important thing in the world? It is people it is people, it is people!”. And lastly, “ka kite anō au i a koutou” – I will see you again.





Annual General Meeting Nominations

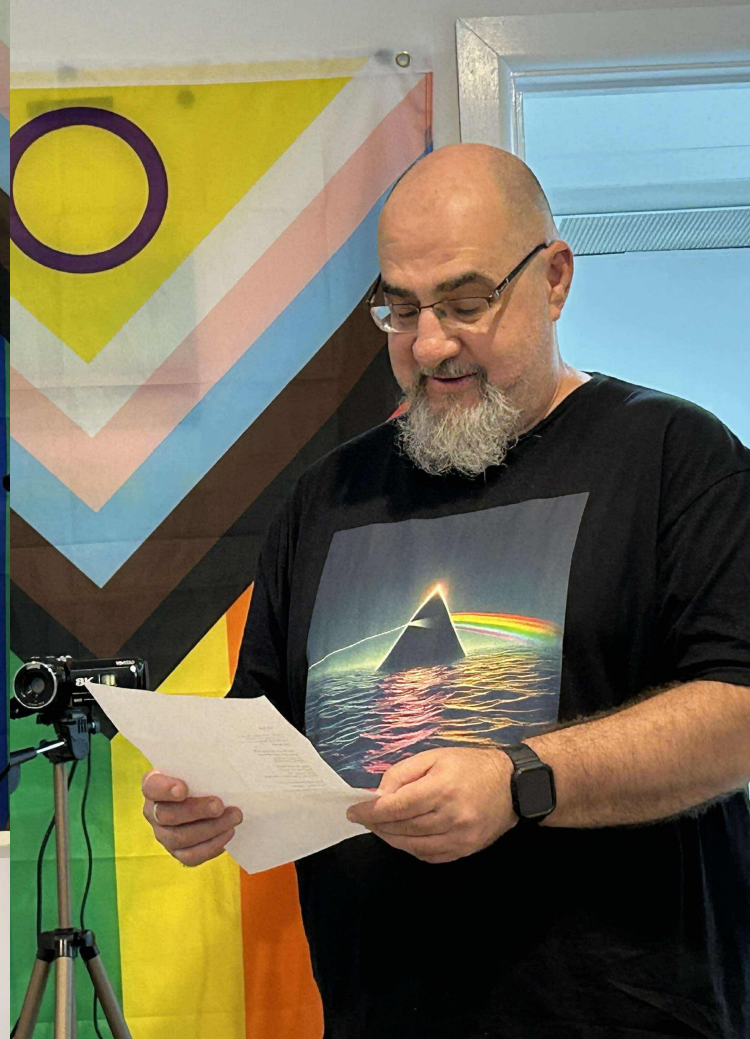
Thanks to the members who turned up in person and online for our 2024 Annual General Meeting this year.

A special thank you to Aunty Deb for her meaningful Welcome to Country and to our member Trevor for sharing his poem, 'Mush', which resonated with us all.

Our AGM wasn't just a meeting; it was an opportunity to reflect on the past year and engage in robust discussions about how we can continue to improve and grow as a Peak. The strength of the discussion and meeting shows the MHLEPQ is a strong and vibrant organisation.

We also congratulate Co-chair William Smith-Stubbs and Director Peter Forday on their re-election as directors of the MHLEPQ.

To all our members who joined us, both in person and online, thank you for your ongoing support. We're excited to start a new chapter together and can't wait to see what 2025 holds!





Holiday Season Resources and Events

Here we have attached and listed some useful resources that are available for support and of free service to the community over the Holiday Season including:

- **Neighbourhood Centres** – Many centres across Queensland are hosting Christmas events, from hampers to carols, lunches, and kids’ activities. [Find your local centre here](#)
- [Resource Manual – For those experiencing financial hardship in Brisbane North](#)
- [Inner Brisbane Free Food Locations & Times](#)
- **Redlands Community Centre** – The Christmas Project – Gifts for children aged 16 and under. Must reside in Redlands/Bay Islands or Wynnum/Manly area. ID required – [More info here](#)
- **The Salvation Army Christmas Meals – 25 December.** Celebrate with a meal, kids’ presents, and activities – [Find your local event here](#)
- [Useful Contacts over the Holiday period 2024 – 2025](#)
- **Logan City Council** – [2024 Logan Holiday Season Support Services and Free Meals](#)



Holiday Season Supports and Activities

We've also included some free activities and support for families and young people over the holidays from 2024 - 2025 here, such as:

- [Christmas in Brisbane - Free and low-cost Festivities Activities](#)
- [Free activities for families, children and young people during the school holidays](#)
- [Where to see the best Christmas Lights](#)
- [What do over the Holiday period with kids](#)
- [Free and Low Cost Activities for Students](#)
- [Free Holiday Activities Brisbane Northside](#)
- [Free Holiday Activities Brisbane Southside](#)
- [Activities for All on the Sunshine Coast](#)
- [Gold Cost Christmas Festivities](#)

Get Involved in Your Peak!

Check out what MHLEPQ is up to
and join in



MHLEPQ Opportunities and Upcoming Events:

- **MHLEPQ Member MeetUp** – January
- MHLEPQ **Peer-to-Peer Study Group**
- **EOI:** Review of Primary Health Network Business Model & Mental Health Flexible Funding Model
- **EOI:** Project Steering Group for Review of MHRT and MHC Processes
- **QLEWN** – Lived Experience Workforce Summit 2025
- **EOI:** Experience with Wolston Park Mental Health Hospital
- **MHLEPQ and ECCQ Culturally and/or Linguistically Diverse** Special Interest Group
- MHLEPQ **Creative Narrative Sharing Project**
- MHLEPQ **LGBTIAQ+** Special Interest Group
- Request to join the [MHLEPQ Members \(only\) Facebook Group](#)

Check out our website for more information or to join one of the [MHLEPQ Projects here](#) or email engagement@mhlepq.org.au



WE'RE HIRING!

Policy
Director
(Brisbane, QLD)

As many members know, our inaugural Policy Director has decided to move on from the MHLEPQ towards new opportunities.

So we're seeking a **new Policy Director** to join our team!

If you have worked in a policy role in an identified position or equivalent, then this role may be for you. We are looking for a person with a track record in policy development from a social justice perspective and skills in co-design / co-production.

If this sounds like the role for you please [apply through the link here](#) or contact **Ashleigh at PureSource** for further information: ashleigh@puresource.com.au



Lived Experience Engagement Requests

Get involved in projects that are happening across QLD

External Lived Experience Engagement Requests:

- **Job Opportunity:** Carer Peer Worker – Older Persons Community Mental Health Ipswich
- **EOI:** The brain, gut, early life stress and anorexia nervosa – UniSC
- **EOI:** NDIA Participant Reference Group for the NDIS
- National Mental Health Consumer Alliance – National Human Rights Survey 2024
- University of Melbourne – Survey – Community attitudes to mental ill-health prevention
- **EOI** – Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Lived Experience Representative
- **EOI** – Seeking People for Research Study to Improve Hospital Food and Nutrition
- **QDN:** Seeking people with disability & family participants – Consultation on Qld Restrictive Practices Bill

Check out our website for more information or to participate in one of the [External Requests here](#) or email

engagement@mhlepq.org.au



**Spotlight on the incredible
advocacy and activism
contributions of Members.**

**Enjoy exploring and witnessing change
in action!**

Updates from our:

- LGBTQIA+ Special Interest Group
 - Creative Narrative Group
- Psychosocial Special Interest Group



More than 20 Members have been part of the LGBTQIAQ+ Special Interest Group, established in July 2024 and engaged in 8 different events or meetings before wrapping up the year.

The group explores intersectional Lived Experiences identifying as part of the LGBTQIAQ+ community/ies and with lived experiences of mental illness and/or suicidality while also providing informal safe for peer support, that undertakes advocacy activities and provides specified systems advice.

The group got out into the community being part of events, including:

- Non – Binary Day community day
- Brisbane Pride Fair
- Logan Loud and Proud
- Being part of ongoing representative on the Queensland Health LGBTQIAQ+ Advisory Committee
- Represented at the Queensland Health Gender Identity Workshop



Together the group produced a whole suite of resources to support their activities, including:

- Posters
- Flyers
- Colouring sheets
- Stickers
- Social media tiles, and other website resources

Huge group efforts and huggee group wins!

Members with personal experience as part of the Queer Community are welcome to join the Group in 2025 and can [express interest through this online form.](#)

Check out all the fun in EI's [Pride Fair Activities Photo Album here!](#)



The Creative Narrative Sharing Project

Collection of a Collective

SHARED LIFE NARRATIVES
EXPRESSED AS UNIQUELY
LIVED

Over 50 Members have put their hand up to participate the **Narrative Group**, that six (6) met times since establishing in May 2024.

The establishment of this the group was off the back off hard work and leadership of a one of our MHLEPQ Member and founded in the knowledge of the deep power that sits within our each of our own personal narratives.

For many of us, there aren't words that could accurately reflect some of our experiences, and with that... a creative is born. Using creativity has become a very 'language of self- reflection and expression.

This initiative was to bring together individual personal narratives and build a collection contributed by Members.

"Each contribution represents the diversity and uniqueness of our life experiences, and lessons that together, make up the collective."

Please enjoy the [TedX talk presented by our Members, Trev, on "Creativity recovery from madness"](#).

Members are welcome to join the Group in 2025 and can [express interest through this online form.](#)



Psychosocial Special Interest Group

Over the course of 2024, **The Psychosocial Special Interest Group** met eight (8) times, holding two focus groups and a survey with members around **Foundational Supports**, and completed the development of our survey and draft to form the [MHLEPQ Member Statement: National Disability Insurance Scheme – ‘Getting the NDIS Back on Track No.1’ Bill 2024.](#)

Key priorities for this year included:

- Defining what we mean when we say ‘psychosocial disability’ or ‘psychosocial support services’
- Identifying and describing what we would want out of a psychosocial support service
- Discussing and responding to the NDIS Review recommendations

Amplifying the perspectives of people with a lived/living experience of psychosocial disability/support needs is essential in the roll out of new service systems in 2025 and beyond!

The Psychosocial SIG is a member-led volunteer reference group that meets once a month to discuss psychosocial disability and psychosocial support systems in Queensland.

If you are interested in becoming a member please reach out to Rahim: RahimM@mhlepq.org.au or 0405 261 788.

Engagement Update



This year has been one of the most rewarding for me professionally and personally, largely due to the projects I've been privileged to work on. The Christmas Card Project, the Access and Equity Project, and the Powering Up Summit have all been significant highlights.

The **Christmas Card Project** holds a special place for me. It was deeply meaningful to collaborate with MHLEPQ members to design cards and share messages of solidarity written by those with lived experience. Distributing over 1,100 cards to inpatient facilities across Queensland was impactful. These simple gestures offered connection and hope to people receiving care and reminded stakeholders of the importance of advocacy. It's a small but effective way to build a sense of community during a time when isolation can feel overwhelming.

The **QCOSS Access and Equity Project** has been a powerful learning experience. We have started to recruit participants and collaborate with QCOSS to address gaps in resources for consumers and carers navigating the Mental Health Review Tribunal and Mental Health Court. The focus on plain language materials and advocacy support feels especially important.

These efforts will make complex systems more accessible, improving outcomes for individuals under involuntary treatment processes. Being part of this project has deepened my understanding of how systemic changes can start with listening to lived experiences.

Working behind the scenes in the upcoming [Powering Up Summit](#) is also another standout for me. So far, we have supported over 10 MHLEPQ members to attend and assessed over 70 bursary applications. This reminds me of the depth of passion in our Lived Experience workforce. The event itself will prioritise relationship building and practical skill-sharing, which are often undervalued in professional settings. I also appreciate the focus on meaningful discussions about workforce challenges and future directions that the summit will address.

These projects reinforced why I value lived experience work. They've shown how collaboration, thoughtful engagement, and a commitment to accessibility can drive change. As the year ends, I feel grateful for the people I've met, the skills I've developed, and the outcomes we've achieved together. I'm looking forward to continuing this work into next year.

Thank you for being part of this journey. If you're curious about any of these projects or want to share your experiences, I'd love to hear from you. Please email me on RahimM@mhlepq.org.au or call me on 0405 261 788.

- Rahim Mohammadi

Check out all out the [Engagement Photo Album](#) made by EI of all the activities they and the members got up to.

Powering Up

Lived Experience Workforce Two-Day Summit

Save the Date
20–21 February 2025



Queensland
Lived Experience
Workforce Network



MHLEPQ are proud to be supporting the **Queensland Lived Experience Workforce Network** for their **Powering Up – Lived Experience Workforce Summit**.

Don't miss out on the amazing workshops, keynote speakers and a chance to network and connect with other Lived Experience Workers.

[Register here to get your tickets!](#)

A Letter from CEO, Jorgen, to the MHLEPQ Members

As 2024 draws to a close, I've taken some time to reflect on the year we have had for MHLEPQ. Over the past 12 months, our membership has grown from 185 to over 500 in just over a year. This growth has been accompanied by new and improved ways to connect with our members, including the establishment of our [LinkedIn page](#), [Facebook page](#), and most importantly, the [members-only Facebook group](#). This group has become a vital forum where members can engage in meaningful discussions and debates. With our members actively participating in the group, demonstrating their commitment to working together towards a better mental health system.

This year, we have also engaged more deeply with our community. From our projects during [Mental Health Week](#) to the inspiring work of our special interest groups, such as the [LGBTQIA+ group](#), which proudly attended numerous Pride events, our efforts to build connections have been stronger than ever.

Throughout 2024, we facilitated contact between members and more than 85 projects seeking lived experience engagement. These included developing an evaluation framework for **Better Care Together**, creating a **Queensland Trauma Strategy**, **reviewing the Chief Psychiatrist Policies**, contributing to the **Digital Transformation Project**, and many more.

We also released two major reports this year. In March, we published a report on [Psychosocial Hazards Experienced by Peer Workers in Queensland](#) in collaboration with **QLEWN**. Based on extensive surveys and interviews with peer workers across the state, this report serves as a cornerstone for the ongoing work to develop a peer workforce strategy in Queensland. Later in the year, we released a report on [Human Rights Experiences](#) of our membership, which highlighted the continued challenges of overcoming discrimination both within and beyond the mental health system in Queensland.

Over the course of the year, we contributed feedback to numerous inquiries and discussion papers on a wide range of topics, including the development of a supported housing strategy, the [review of the Queensland Human Rights Act](#), proposals to give **Nurse Practitioners the Power to Issue Treatment Authorities and Administer Forced Medication**, and submissions to the [Queensland Truth and Justice Inquiry](#).

Engaging with our members has remained a top priority. This year, we sent bi-monthly newsletters to members and stakeholders, hosted quarterly member meetings and regional meetings across Queensland, and shared regular updates on social media. We also trialled a new “member forum” model, focusing on specific topics such as using human rights legislation in advocacy, the functions of the **Independent Patient Rights Advisory Service, the Queensland Human Rights Commission, and the Mental Health Review Tribunal**.

In addition, our members have initiated several special interest groups. We now have active groups focusing on **Psychosocial Disabilities, CALD, LGBTQIA+**, and a **Narrative group** for members exploring ways to share their lived experiences. In 2025, we plan to expand this structure to include groups addressing intersectional issues, such as being both a carer and a consumer or being an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander consumer.

One of our major achievements this year was the establishment of the **National Mental Health Consumer Alliance (NMHCA)**, a national lived experience peak funded by the federal government. MHLEPQ was proud to collaborate with six other state and territory peaks to form this collective voice. We extend our congratulations to Priscilla Brice, appointed as CEO, and Matthew Fagan, the Chair of the **NMHCA**.

Another significant milestone was the **inquiry into abuse at Brisbane's Wolston Park Hospital** prior to 2000. While we welcomed the appointment of Robert Bland to lead the review, we expressed concerns about the limited scope of the Terms of Reference, which exclude events after 2000 and restrict recommendations that could inform current mental health practices. This inquiry is a vital step in recognising and addressing the suffering of consumers and their families.

Additionally, this year saw a **Queensland Health review** into three deaths and two serious injuries at the **Prince Charles Hospital inpatient facility**. It was concerning that it took investigative journalism to prompt the review. While the full report remains undisclosed, MHLEPQ raised concerns about the summary, noting the lack of recommendations addressing human rights considerations and the adequacy of restricted practices.

As we reflect on these accomplishments, it's clear that MHLEPQ has been deeply engaged in advocacy and systems advice to improve mental health care in Queensland.

We look forward to continuing this critical work in 2025 and beyond. Together, we will strive for a more inclusive and effective mental health system for all.





Stay Updated.

**CURRENT ACTIVITIES,
REQUESTS AND EVENTS**

www.mhlepq.org.au



MHLEPQ
MENTAL HEALTH LIVED EXPERIENCE PEAK
QUEENSLAND

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