

Operational Statement: Working Group

DECEMBER 2023

Background

The ACT Child and Youth Mental Health Sector Alliance has established a Working Group to progress work on two key priorities of the Alliance:

1. *Improve children, young people and families' experiences of mental health services*
2. *Improve service and system responses for children and young people with mental health concerns and complex / co-occurring issues*

These two priorities were selected by Alliance members at a Forum on 31 July 2023. At the Forum, there was a preference that one working group be established to progress work on both priorities, noting the potential intersection between these issues and the overlap in membership.

Roles and Functions

The role of the Working Group is to:

- a. Identify, promote and progress tasks, projects and other initiatives that pertain to the key priorities.
- b. Act as a conduit to the broader Alliance for initiatives pertaining to the key priorities, including existing projects and reforms.
- c. Identify opportunities for consultation with the broader Alliance membership, including through but not limited to Alliance forums.
- d. Make recommendations to the broader Alliance regarding the two key priorities.

The Working Group will do this through methods such as (but not limited to):

- a. Developing smaller member sub-groups, where needed, to progress specific tasks through approaches endorsed by the Working Group.
- b. Supporting and ensuring effective and appropriate engagement with consumers, carers, and services, including those that support priority population groups.
- c. Engaging in discussion and collaborative decision-making.
- d. Promoting and maintaining the integrity of any project through:
 - a. Supporting transparent, accountable and ethical processes
 - b. Ensuring activities are informed by the existing evidence-base
 - c. Collaboration and co-design that acknowledges perspective of a range of stakeholders
 - d. Ensuring activities are aligned with the Alliance principles

Membership

Membership of the Working Group is voluntary. Members of the ACT Child and Youth Mental Health Alliance can self-nominate to participate. The Working Group acknowledges the varied expertise within the Alliance and the Working Group. Membership of the Working Group will seek to include a range of perspectives from across the community services sector and government; the mental health sector; and child, youth and family sector.

The Working Group will actively seek to build linkages with the OMHW Youth Reference Group, and other youth/consumer/carer groups where appropriate. Noting that there are a range of services that have limited capacity to participate, the Working Group will seek to actively reach out to stakeholders in the culturally and linguistically diverse, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and LGBTQIA+ sector to ensure these perspectives are included.

Role of Chair

A Chair for the Working Group will be appointed from the membership through a nomination process, for a period of up to 12 months. The Chair will facilitate Working Group meetings, supported by the Secretariat. In the absence of a Chair being appointed, the lead agencies will fulfill this function.

Secretariat

The Alliance lead agencies will provide secretariat support to the Working Group, including the preparation and distribution of meeting papers.

Meeting Frequency and Format

Working Group meetings will be held approximately every 6 weeks. They will be held either online or in-person, depending on the meeting Agenda, determined by the Chair and the Secretariat.

Where necessary the group may choose to make out-of-session determinations and decisions via electronic means such as e-mail.

An Agenda and relevant meeting papers will be distributed to members no less than 3 days prior to the scheduled meeting.

Invitees

The Working Group may invite any person to attend as a guest speaker or observer through the Secretariat.

Reporting

The Working Group will report back to the broader Alliance through means such as the Alliance eBulletin, Community of Practice and Forums. The activities of the Working Group will also be included in the Alliance's reporting to the ACT Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Coordinating Group and to the Executives of the lead agencies.

Information Sharing

The Working Group endeavours to operate based on openness, honesty and transparency. Any information sharing sensitivities should be guided by members of the Working Group engaged in specific tasks or projects.

Meeting Minutes will be shared on the Alliance website, following approval by the Working Group members at the subsequent meeting.

Operational Statement Review

As needed.

Operational Statement Approval

This Operational Statement of the Working Group is approved by members on 5 December 2023.