

Shelter Tasmania

Tasmanian Homelessness and Housing Workforce Symposium

How can we work together as service providers and consumers/clients?

Responses group one:

- Regular meetings with all stakeholders
- Consumers on interview panels
- Training for staff and consumers
- Embedded in all levels of organisation
- Unconditional positive regard for consumers
- Find and mentor the right consumers for the job based on their capabilities and don't put them on a Board if they don't want to be there
- Take note of feedback
- Transparent feedback systems and outcome recording
- Create opportunities for involvement; invite consumers to give meaningful input
- Break down the 'us and them' mentality between consumers and staff to promote changes in the service
- Form a residents steering committee
- Opportunities for implementing change
- Get out in the community and speak to consumers; empathy and listening
- Work with other service providers/attend other service providers meetings

Responses group two:

- Develop some co-design projects
- Recognise the expertise that exists amongst your consumers/clients
- Embed skill development around consumer engagement into academic qualifications
- Don't be scared, OK to learn as you go. Consumers are often sympathetic to your journey
- Write consumer participation into tender requirements (budget and tools)
- Collaboratively working together (honest, transparent)
- Honesty in working together – client information (partner agencies, referral pathways)
- Creativity and flexibility
- Start at the top; Government to engage with consumers on policy development first! i.e. Consumers inform legislation, policy changes
- Opportunity for 'bottom up' solutions to housing and homelessness
- Education – both ways
- Celebrate and reflect on success
- Brainstorm

- Build the capacity of consumers to participate in co-design over time through training, support, coaching etc.
- Shelter Tasmania developing training programs with workers and communities to increase sector capacity
- Involve people who use our services in more sector forums e.g. SHS forums, specialist forums
- Include in service agreements; reporting on demonstrated activities to build consumer engagement (not surveys)
- Collaboration between like service providers
- Improved networking – knowing what’s available
- Realistic expectations of what you ask consumers – don’t assume

Priority Responses:

- Unconditional positive regard for consumers
- Find and mentor the right consumers for the job, based on their capabilities
- Break down the ‘us’ & ‘them’ mentality between consumers and staff to promote changes in services
- Develop some co-design projects
- Recognise the expertise that exists within your consumers/clients
- ‘Top’ of government engage with consumers FIRST! – Policy and legislation
- Involve people who use our services in more sector forums, groups, etc

What does the Homelessness and Housing Workforce need in terms of tools and resources to achieve consumer/client outcomes?

Responses group one:

- Money
- Not fighting over clients/funding
- Secure mental health facility for 718
- Functional computer systems and databases
- Stakeholder involvement
- Eyewitness tours and first hand input
- Consumer input
- A few succinct brochures – not too many
- Guidelines and plans for dealing with client barriers
- Good quality/happy staff – premises, offices, environment
- Better communication between services – collaborative care
- Regularly review
- Keeping skills and training current
- Networking – new services for referral
- Flexibility
- Staff supervision
- TAS PESP – shared database a priority for consumers
- Houses:
 - o Long term
 - o Shelter
 - o Emergency
 - o Transitional
 - o Improved 'ASK' info
 - o Aged care
 - o Youth housing/supported youth
 - o Family accommodations
 - o Family shelters Dads can go to

Responses group two:

- Commitment from Government i.e. \$
- Good data collection methods e.g. well-developed integrated database of ITC support
- Toolkit for consumer engagement 'how to' and training for services
- Develop a consumer engagement strategy
- Ask the people who use our services 'what is the best way'
- Need to create space and time to be able to do the work i.e. commit
- Better use of SHIP – improve functionality, relevant questions, interpretations of questions
- Targeted training
- How do clients want to be consulted

- Independent feedback mechanism not tainted by service interpretation
- Develop a national consumer network
- Consumer involvement in peak bodies
- Resources – funding, time, training, whole of service
- Realistic – variety of housing choices
- Skilled staff
- Whole of Government, Community teamwork approach (Private/NFP's)
- Protocols that are upheld
- Frameworks for Consumer Engagement including tool kit
- Stability for organisation to support workers to deliver quality work.
Management understanding work pressures
- Self-care a priority
- Realistic and achievable caseloads and if not – system advocacy for change
- An entrepreneur/investor who has experienced homelessness
- Develop a consumer representation service run through Shelter Tas that provides regular training, support and capacity building for people who are or want to be consumer reps, and then when housing services want to engage them, there is a consumer workforce with skills ready. Government to fund Shelter for this or private entrepreneur

Priority Responses:

- Stakeholder involvement – eye witness tours and first-hand input
- Tasmanian PESP
- Networking – new/more services to refer to
- Commitment from government – MONEY
- Frameworks for consumer engagement (& include tool kit)

How and when is it best to get consumer/client feedback?

Responses Group One:

- Timing – from start, ongoing, post crisis
- Everyone is different so flexibility in feedback systems is necessary
- Client meetings. Free call for clients to contact
- Survey monkey
- Focus groups or verbal one on one
- Facebook poll
- Feedback via sms after they have left
- Suggestion box/anonymous
- Seek feedback at all times
- Build good rapport and trust
- Beginning, middle, end - piece of string
- Random phone feedback from third party person
- Determining scope of feedback to people
- Through outreach – going to the person
- Going to the places where consumers are – e.g. (no bucks)
- From people that the service doesn't work for.
- Ask the clients how and when it will work for them (focus group)
- Adopt a peer facilitation process (reimbursed)
- Ensure feedback loops are in place – people need to know the outcome
- Be clear on purpose of seeking feedback
- Best time to get feedback is when people want to give it
- Best time is post service
- At annual strategic planning consumers/staff together
- Yesterday
- Consider children
- When anonymous
- Fund a Tassie PESP
- Accept feedback reports of detail back to consumers (you said this we did this)
- Poster outcomes from surveys
- Need various channels and for each to have various ways to respond/report
- Match people and area/role/interest with care to maintain diversity

Responses Group Two:

- When client is settled and rapport has been formed. Issues have been identified and plan has been put in place
- When a client is ready/willing to provide
- Once rapport has been established
- Find a medium appropriate to client groups – age/interest/experience
- When two way trust is formed

- Ask client what they think – if they aren't ok with the service why not – What can we to help/fix it?
- Ensure client is included in the service model – service knows how it is set up and client is aware it will happen
- Continuous process – ongoing for all stages of service delivery
- Technology – text/facebook/email
- Explain why feedback is important and demonstrate that it is valued
- Transparency – where does the information go and why
- Be available – anonymous feedback box – listening carefully

Priority Responses:

- Timing: from start, ongoing, post crisis, client meetings
- Free call for clients to contact
- Everyone is different so flexibility in feedback systems is necessary
- Ask the client how and when, what will work for them (focus group)
- Adopt a peer facilitation process (paid)
- Be clear on purpose of seeking feedback
- Fund a Tasmanian PESP

How can we best support consumers/clients?

Responses Group One:

- Listen and ask
- Agree to a partnership with them
- Increase their understanding of service system (workers to clearly know this info)
- Understand their story and needs
- Ongoing review
- Firstly build trust and validation of relationship
- Remember journey – not just focus on outcomes
- Asking what they want and explore with them for their own choices. Being transparent in what service can be provided
- Practical assistance with mutual agreement
- Resources – material assistance, availability of self – being present
- Availability of housing being a priority for services
- Self-care for workers, service agency, outreach support
- Providing support for duration of need
- Being real/honest to situation with empathy
- Reimbursement/payment for their contribution
- Think creatively
- Create avenues for advocacy
- Train residents in media – change attitudes
- Empathy
- Empowerment
- Ask
- Listening and understanding
- Correct referrals and knowledge of what services are available
- Encourage
- Acceptance of clients wishes

Responses Group Two:

- Meet consumers where they are at in their recovery journey
- Ask client/consumer their priorities – how can I help you?
- Non-judgemental and respectful
- Provide appropriate referrals
- Listen to them
- Being client directed
- Transparency
- Show empathy not sympathy in a non-judgemental and respectful way
- Maintain contact – doing what you say/follow through
- Explain bureaucratic processes in an appropriate manner
- If asking for information, explain why you need it

- Clarify the client/consumer understands
- Making our expectations clear
- Making their rights clear
- Explaining service limitations
- Clarify client expectations/understanding of what supports we can offer
- Promote our role to other providers to encourage appropriate referrals
- Be strength focused
- Collaborative approach
- Strong relationships – worker retention
- Consistency across service delivery
- Encourage and ask for active participation in designing/changing service delivery
- De-brief procedure for consumers and staff
- Adhere to best practice – training is appropriate and up to date
- Utilise individual organisational strength – specialists
- Let consumer/client direct level of information shared and what parts of life involved in
- Defining expectation – clarity of purpose. Clients encouraged to define their expectations
- Focus on clients strengths, not be issues/deficit/bad focused
- Understanding/prioritising client need
- Explain why the behind the scenes of why people are being asked
- Communicate with clients 50/50. Who talks most, who listens? Participation and partnership starts with relationships

Priority Responses:

- Listen and Act
- Ask what they want & explore with them for their own choices
- Be transparent in what the organisation can provide
- Train residents/consumers in media
- ASK
- Non judgemental and respectful
- Show empathy not sympathy