

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title:	Carer Peer Support Worker (Older Adults Unit 4)
Business Unit/Department:	Consumer Consultants - Mid West
Division:	Mental Health & Wellbeing Services
Award/Agreement:	Victorian Public Mental Health Services Enterprise Agreement
Classification:	Lived Experience Worker Level 2 – 2.1 to 2.4 (AK39 to AK42)
Reports To:	Lived Experience Manager
Date Prepared/Updated:	6 April 2026

Position Purpose

The Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System (RCVMHS) found there was a substantial gap for older adults needing to access mental health services in Victoria, with an increasing demand and lack of services available, tailored to meet the specialised and diverse needs of people aged 65 years and over. Carer Peer Support aims to provide a meaningful, empathetic and mutual connection that is supportive, safe and accessible, and nurtured by wisdom gained through sharing experiences.

The Carer Peer Support Worker (PSW) provides support to families, carers and supporters of older adults living with mental illness. This position is based on our Older Adult psychiatric inpatient unit at Sunshine Hospital and spans across their admission, discharge planning and time-limited post-discharge support.

The expertise of the PSW is deeply rooted in their own lived/living experience of supporting an older adult with mental health challenges, and engaging with mental health services. This experience may come from being a family member, chosen family (including people under the age of 18), partner or friend. Their lived/living experience informs all aspects of their work, and is practised within the Intentional Peer Support Framework, underpinned by principles of respect, accountability, advocacy, collaboration, connection, mutuality, compassion, diversity, flexibility and curiosity.

As part of an emerging and growing Lived/Living Experience Workforce, peer support workers play a pivotal role in enhancing family/carers engagement and consumer care. Our unique perspective complements the professional knowledge, skills and service delivery of the multidisciplinary teams in which we work closely within.

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Business Unit Overview

The Division of Mental Health and Wellbeing Services spans across multiple Western Health sites and within the local community and services consumers across the lifespan.

The Division has recently been established following a key recommendation from the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System. The Western Health catchment includes the local government municipalities and growth areas of Brimbank, Sunbury, Maribyrnong and Melton.

Our recovery-oriented approach to care is provided by a multidisciplinary workforce comprising skilled clinicians, consumers and carers. These services include hospital based, community and specialist mental health and wellbeing services for adults, older adults, children and adolescents who are experiencing, or are at risk of developing a serious mental illness.

The Division collaborates across a number of Divisions within Western Health and partners with external health services and community services to ensure the provision of Best Care.

The Division aims to innovate and develop services and care options across Western Health to ensure Best Care for the community of Western Melbourne.

Key Accountabilities and Responsibilities

This position requires a clear and readily articulated understanding of the carer lived perspective specifically in relation to older adults.

The role of Family/Carer Peer Support Worker is to utilise the principles of intentional peer support from the carer perspective in order to:

- Intentionally share your lived/living experience of supporting someone (older adult) with mental ill health to connect with families/carers, sharing skills, information and knowledge as appropriate in a way that brings hope and optimism;
- Assist families/carers to identify their support needs and focus on their own wellbeing;
- Make connections that build on strengths and is inclusive of diversity (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as well as those from culturally and LGBTQI+ diverse backgrounds);
- Provide peer support for families/carers of consumers admitted to the Older Adult Unit, predominantly through phone connections, but can be in-person or within groups;
- Provide post discharge support via phone for no longer than a 28-day period unless otherwise negotiated with direct reports;
- Empower families/carers to engage with the service and know that their voice matters;
- Advocate within Western Health for the inclusion of families/carers and their perspective;
- Support families/carers to be knowledgeable and feel confident about their rights and responsibilities and to promote self-advocacy;
- Design, facilitate/co-facilitate family/carers groups and activities to enhance engagement and support;
- Have an understanding of the differing perspectives between families/carers and consumers which may be in opposition and require a collaborative approach to meet respective needs of both users of our service and within our own professional discipline;
- Engage and collaborate with members of our interdisciplinary teams including clinical staff and members of the LEW across the service;
- Support families/carers to access credible information/linkages for both themselves and in order to support the person they are caring for to make well-informed decisions relating to their treatment and recovery;
- Attend clinical meetings such as family meetings, clinical reviews and handovers;
- Document engagement sensitively in the consumer's medical records;
- Record families/carers contacts for organisational statistical data;
- Escalate any concerns to the identified person within the team (i.e. coordinator/manager);
- Engage in discipline specific supervision and ongoing professional development (i.e. co-reflection, organisational training, communities of practice);

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- Participate in building a positive culture and contribute to the increasing awareness and knowledge of the peer support work and Intentional Peer Support model with wider interdisciplinary teams

In addition to the key responsibilities specific to your role, you are required to deliver on the [Key Organisational Accountabilities](#) which are aligned with the Western Health strategic aims.

Key Working Relationships

Internal:

- Lived Experience Manager
- Older Adult Nurse Unit Manager
- Lived Experience Coordinator
- Consumer and Carer Consultants
- Allied Health Team Leaders
- Clinical and non-clinical staff: MHWC
- MHWS Lived Experience Workforce
- Other Consumer and Carer Peer Support Workers

External:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission (MHCC)
- Consumer peak bodies – e.g. TANDEM, SHARC
- The Collaborative
- Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA)
- Legal Aid
- Community Partners

Selection Criteria

Essential

- A personal lived/living experience of caring for and older adult with mental health challenges which have resulted in accessing mental health services, with a willingness to share this lived experience in a peer support capacity;
- Practical knowledge and understanding of issues facing older people living with mental illness including cognitive decline and their families/carers;
- Have a desire to connect and support the journey of other families/carers;
- Ability and resilience to support families/carers experiencing high levels of stress;
- An ability to use skills and knowledge arising from lived experience in an acute setting;
- Well-developed communication and interpersonal skills, including the ability to work collaboratively with families/carers, consumers and staff members;
- Be a role model to other families/carers that inspires and empowers them to take positive steps towards their own wellbeing and the consumer's recovery journey;
- An ability to work independently or within a team;
- Liaise with stakeholders and other members of the multidisciplinary team and advocate regularly for the needs of families/carers;
- An empathic and compassionate approach and ability to understand people are the experts of their own lives;
- Work alongside clinicians as an equal partner in providing support to families/carers;
- Ability to reflect on the impact of demands of the role on yourself and seek out support or advice when needed;

Desirable

- Previous experience in a Family/Carer Peer Support role (preferably within public mental health);
- An understanding of mental health consumer and carer perspectives and peer support principles;
- Computer literacy in Microsoft programs (i.e. Word, Excel and Outlook);
- Formal qualifications with relevance to Peer Support work. These qualifications are not required but would be well regarded and may include a wide range of disciplines. Examples may be:
 - Health and community service subjects
 - Teaching

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- Nursing
- Cert IV in Mental Health (non-clinical)
- Cert IV in Mental Health (Peer Work)
- Community Development
- Intentional Peer Support training
- Experience working within a crisis setting;
- Current driver's licence;
- A second language;
- Understanding of the Victorian Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022 and recommendations from the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System.

Additional Requirements

All employees are required to:

- Obtain a police / criminal history check prior to employment;
- Obtain a working with children check prior to employment;
- Obtain an Immunisation Health Clearance prior to employment;
- Report to management any criminal charges or convictions you receive during the course of your employment;
- Comply with relevant Western Health clinical and administrative policies and guidelines;
- Comply with and accept responsibility for ensuring the implementation of health and safety policies and procedures;
- Fully co-operate with Western Health in any action it considers necessary to maintain a working environment, which is safe, and without risk to health;
- Protect confidential information from unauthorised disclosure and not use, disclose or copy confidential information except for the purpose of and to the extent necessary to perform your employment duties at Western Health;
- Safeguard children and young people in our care, by ensuring that your interactions are positive and safe, and report any suspicions or concerns of abuse by any person internal or external to Western Health;
- Be aware of and comply with relevant legislation: Public Administration Act 2004, Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006, the Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004, the Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (OHS Regulations 2017), Fair Work Act 2009 (as amended), the Privacy Act 1988 and responsibilities under s141 Health Services Act with regard to the sharing of health information, the Family Violence and Child Information Sharing Schemes, Part 5A and 6A Family Violence Protection Act 2008;
- Be aware of and comply with the Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees and other Western Health employment guidelines;

General Information

- Redeployment to other services or sites within Western Health may be required;
- Employment terms and conditions are provided according to relevant award/agreement;
- Western Health is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to providing for its employees a work environment which is free of harassment or discrimination. The organisation promotes diversity and awareness in the workplace;
- Western Health is committed to Gender Equity;
- Western Health provides support to all personnel experiencing family and domestic violence;
- This position description is intended to describe the general nature and level of work that is to be performed by the person appointed to the role. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties and skills required. Western Health reserves the right to modify position descriptions as required. Employees will be consulted when this occurs;
- Western Health is a smoke free environment.

I confirm I have read the Position Description, understand its content and agree to work in accordance with the requirements of the position.

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Employee's Name: _____

Employee's Signature: _____ Date: _____

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