



Queensland Mental Health and Drug Advisory Council Meeting

Location – 17 October 2024

COMMUNIQUE

The Queensland Mental Health and Drug Advisory Council (the Council) met in Brisbane on 17 October 2024.

Meeting highlights

Gambling harm minimisation plan

Council heard from Maree Heffernan who presented on the Gambling harm minimisation plan for Queensland 2021-2025. Council members were informed that the current focus area was increasing public education and awareness of gambling-related harm among young people and people in remote areas. It was noted that research into the relationship between AOD use and problem gambling was also part of wider ongoing work.

Council members discussed people experiencing suicidality as another priority group associated with gambling harm.

Wolston Park Hospital review

The Council received an update on work relating to the proposed review of Wolston Park Hospital, including that the work would be undertaken by Queensland Health with Professor Robert Bland leading the review. Council members were advised that the Terms of Reference were available on the Queensland Health website.

Increase in people accessing AOD services

Council members discussed the reported increase in people accessing AOD services in hospital and health services. Council members raised concerns about whether the public health system could adapt to suit consumer needs and discussed whether investment into non-government organisation services was enough to cause notable improvement in the amount of people accessing treatment.

Certificate IV Mental Health Peer Work placement requirements

The Council discussed the 100-hour placement requirement for completing a Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work, which may be preventing people from completing the certificate. It was noted that organisations receive limited support to provide placements, meaning placements available for 100-hours were also limited.

The Commission will investigate avenues to assist people to find placements to complete the certificate.

General update

Other discussions included:

- Council members expressed concern that an abrupt end to the truth-telling process could adversely impact the mental health and social-emotional wellbeing of Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- Proposed focus areas for the Advisory Council in 2025 which included advocating for the continuation of drug checking, further improving harm reduction in prisons, and continuing discussions around the use of seclusion and restraint.
- Increased capacity of people working in the young person LLE AOD space was needed.
- Council members discussed LGBTQIA+ access to mental health and AOD services, noting some work to increase supports available to transgender people had been funded through Better Care Together earlier in the year – including funding agreements with Sisters Inside and Transcend.
- Inclusion of pronouns on the Commission's website – particularly to the information pages for Advisory Council members.

Next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 19 February 2025 (TBC).