



Cultural, Lived experience and Identity Knowledge (CLIK) Guide

Building an Intersectional Lived Experience Workforce in the Family Violence and Sexual Assault Sectors



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A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

Terminology about intersectionality, diversity and lived experience is **constantly evolving** and varies between communities, services, and sectors. Below is an overview of some key terms used in this guide, but think of it as a starting point. We encourage you to think deeply within your service and community about the language that is most representative.

Intersectionality is “a theoretical approach that understands the interconnected nature of social categorisations – such as gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, religion, class, socioeconomic status, gender identity, ability or age – which create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage for either an individual or group” (Victorian Government, 2018, p. i). People have numerous identities, experiences and characteristics that are intertwined; therefore, they may hold multiple forms of **cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge**.

Identity describes socially constructed characteristics including but not limited to sex, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, nationality, migration or visa status, religion, age, ability, and socioeconomic status (Victorian Government, 2018).

People with **identity knowledge** identify as **part of** one or more communities that have experienced marginalisation and discrimination. This may include being LGBTIQ⁺, from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community, from a faith community, or having a disability. People hold identity knowledge about their **own** identities.

Cultural knowledge refers to **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people's** unique and distinct forms of knowledge and expertise about their culture, country, and community. We recognise that people from **diverse cultural backgrounds** may hold other forms of cultural knowledge, and that a person's identity and cultural knowledge may overlap.

Lived experience is used in this guide to describe “people who have experienced family violence and/or sexual violence; people with an experience of seeking support from the family violence and/or sexual assault system as a victim survivor; and families, and carers of people directly impacted by family violence via the aforementioned experiences” (FSV, 2022). Lived experience goes beyond the process of sharing your story of adversity. Lived experience workers use this experience to create intentional opportunities for others to engage in the process of navigating and overcoming their adversity. Some services may call this **lived expertise**.

People with **intersectional lived experience** hold one or more forms of **cultural and/or identity knowledge**, alongside their **lived experience** of family violence or sexual assault. They may also hold knowledge from other interrelated forms of lived experience, including homelessness, substance abuse, and mental health issues. People with intersectional lived experience therefore have a unique understanding and expertise related to navigating services as a person who experiences intersecting forms of marginalisation.

In building an intersectional lived experience workforce, it is important to recognise and draw on the knowledge held by existing workers in the sector, who may have cultural, identity and/or lived experience knowledge, but may not be in identified or designated lived experience roles. This is, however, distinct from the **intentional and deliberate** use of a worker's intersectional lived experience, which often occurs in **designated/identified** role (e.g., as a peer worker). This intentional use of experience and knowledge may include a mutual understanding of the experiences of family violence or sexual assault, experiences with the stages of recovery, learned ways to stay safe and manage trauma, and knowledge of navigating challenging and discriminatory systems/services.

By thinking about intersectional lived experience, we move beyond assuming that all people with lived experience share the same experience of accessing/receiving support. For example, a straight, white peer worker may have little shared understanding of the experience for an LGBTIQ+ Aboriginal victim survivor accessing support after sexual assault. It is therefore important to think about how **teams of workers** - including those with cultural, lived experience and/or identity knowledge - can share and integrate their knowledge to better support clients who face intersectional barriers to support.

¹**LGBTIQ+** is an evolving acronym that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning, asexual and many other terms (such as non-binary and pansexual) that people use to describe their experiences of their gender, sexuality, and physiological sex characteristics. (Victorian Government, 2019).

Why build an intersectional lived experience workforce?

Family violence and sexual assault services should be accessible and available to people when they need them. Victim survivors from marginalised backgrounds – including LGBTIQ+ people, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, people with disabilities, and Aboriginal people – face significant barriers to accessing inclusive and non-discriminatory services. Building an inclusive system means enabling people from all backgrounds and experiences to feel safe and supported in accessing the services they need and deserve. For many victim survivors, this means having the choice to work with people who have a shared knowledge of their culture, identity, and/or lived experience. For the sexual assault workforce, the Standards of Practice for Services Against Sexual Violence recognises the need to support diverse lived experience voices and highlights that the “lived experiences of victim-survivors should be at the centre of services” (Association of Services Against Sexual Violence Victoria; NASASV, 2021, p. 70). The Royal Commission into Family Violence (the Royal Commission; State of Victoria, 2016) also emphasised that it is essential to actively build a **diverse lived experience workforce** and that this process should be underpinned by intersectionality.

In its review of the sectors, the Royal Commission recognised that diverse populations are disproportionately affected by family violence, but experience difficulties accessing mainstream services. As a direct result, family violence and sexual assault services have been actively improving their accessibility, representation, and inclusion for people with diverse intersectional backgrounds, including through incorporating people with lived experience in their service planning and workforce recruitment. The commission made a number of recommendations for improving responsiveness and inclusiveness of the sector, and further recommended that “the Victorian Government and agencies that respond to family violence identify and develop safe and constructive ways to ensure that the voices of victims are heard and inform policy development and service delivery” (State of Victoria, 2016).

The Royal Commission recommended careful workforce planning as a critical factor in reforming the sector, which should include pathways to employment for people with cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge. In response to the Royal Commission, mandatory minimum qualifications were introduced for specialist family violence practitioners (Recommendations 209; DFFH, 2021). Recommendation 209 recognised the unique skills and knowledge of people with intersectional lived experience by providing



additional time to meet qualification requirements (see [Addressing Barriers to Employment](#)). Intentionally building an intersectional lived experience workforce therefore helps to address multiple challenges, including:

- responding to existing workforce shortage (especially in regional areas)
- supporting evidence-informed practice by centring diverse voices
- answering calls from diverse communities for services that share their experiences
- creating achievable pathways of hope and recovery (including paid employment) for people with intersectional lived experience.

To address the recommendations of the Royal Commission, the *2020-2023 Family Violence Rolling Action Plan* identified three principles to guide ongoing sector reform:

- lived experience
- intersectionality
- Aboriginal self-determination.

This guide directly addresses the principle of **lived experience**, by outlining a pathway to support a diverse lived experience workforce in family violence and sexual assault sectors. Building a lived experience workforce represents a critical step in recognising and drawing upon the specialist knowledge of people with lived experience, who may have faced barriers to further education and/or employment. Victim-survivors are more likely to be in a socio-economically disadvantaged and, at the same time, family violence and sexual assault puts people at further risk of unemployment and entrenched poverty (Evans, 2005; WHO, 2002). These risks are heightened for victim-survivors who experience overlapping forms of marginalisation (Evans, 2005; Simpson & Helfrich, 2014). As part of a systemic approach, proactively developing and supporting an intersectional lived experience workforce may help to address or mitigate some of the risks of economic precarity among victim-survivors.

Through assertively developing a **diverse** lived experience workforce, services can therefore work towards the reform principle of **intersectionality**. By valuing the cultural and identity knowledge of a diverse range of groups disproportionately affected by family violence and sexual assault, services can sustainably embed intersectional practice in their services through the development of a diverse lived experience workforce. As part of their intersectional practice, services should consider how their workforce can directly reflect the diversity and experiences of their local communities. A common refrain from communities is that they want to work with people that both **look like** and who have **had similar experiences** to them. This is reflected in *Building from Strength*, Victoria's 10-Year Industry Plan for Family Violence Prevention and Response. In it, the authors identify



that strengthening the diversity of the specialist family violence workforce is a key priority, and states as an **immediate action**:

“employment pathways for workers representing diverse intersectional communities, including those with lived experience of family violence...”

[Family Safety Victoria, 2017, p. 76]

Finally, developing a diverse lived experience workforce actively strengthens services, as they become:

- more reflective of the diversity of the community being served
- more aware of, and responsive to, community needs
- a more innovative workforce [HealthWest, 2020].

NOTE. Trauma-informed practice

To ensure safety for staff and clients, services should situate in the principles of **trauma-informed practice** and recognition of the impacts of complex trauma. This includes the recognition that trauma may result in the emergence of interrelated negative health outcomes, particularly for people who have experienced multiple abuse throughout their lifetime [State of Victoria, 2016]. For example, women who experience violence are more likely to experience asthma, heart disease, stroke, cancer, reproductive issues, eating disorders, self-harm and suicide [State of Victoria, 2016]. They also have higher rates of alcohol and other drug use, which may start long after physical abuse has ended [WHO, 2014].

Supporting an intersectional lived experience service therefore needs to be grounded in **trauma-informed practice**. ANROWS [2017] developed a trauma-and-violence-informed framework in collaboration with women who had experienced sexual violence [a summary sheet is available [here](#)]. Central to this framework is:

- relationship building [talk, time, trust and shared language]
- integrated co-ordinated care [clear roles, referrals, policies and champions]
- reflective system [women’s and practitioners’ voices, audits]
- environment and workplace scan [space, time, culture, data systems].



Structure and purpose

This guide has four sections: background, readiness, implementation, and the resource kit. The **background** unpacks why we need an intersectional lived experience workforce in the family violence and sexual assault sectors. Together, the **readiness** and **implementation** sections make up a practical **roadmap** to creating change within services (see page 9). The **resource kit** contains a range of examples and templates that may be modified and used in your service. **Reflections and tasks** are embedded throughout each section. It is recommended that they are completed as you work through the guide or collaboratively with relevant stakeholders.

BACKGROUND

Aim:

To describe the rationale for an intersectional lived experience workforce in the family violence and sexual assault sectors.

Elements:

- Describes the need for, and benefits of, an intersectional lived experience workforce in the family violence and sexual assault sectors
- Outlines lived experience within the context of intersectional practice and workforce mutuality
- Integrates evidence informing this guide.

READINESS

Aim:

To support services to identify their current level of readiness and develop a structured plan for implementation.

Elements:

- Describes the principles of organisational readiness and implementation theory
- Provides a range of tools for documenting existing organisational readiness and planning for change
- Highlights the importance of intersectional voices and power sharing at all stages of implementation.

IMPLEMENTATION

Aim:

To support service leaders to think deeply about the key elements of successful implementation, based on their level of organisational readiness.

Elements:

- Describes processes to assess and harness the existing workforce's lived experience and cultural knowledge.
- Outlines and suggests adaptations for a supported hiring process for designated intersectional lived experience roles.
- Describes key considerations for providing ongoing supervision, support and training for all staff.
- Highlights the process for review and evaluation, including the use of intersectional data collection.

RESOURCE KIT

Aim:

To provide practical and relevant resources to support the service's implementation.

Elements:

- Provides examples of tools/resources from other services
- Provides blank templates for services to modify for their context.

ROADMAP TOWARDS An Intersectional Lived Experience Workforce



READINESS

1 ORGANISATIONAL READINESS AND PLANNING

Review existing processes and systems for building an intersectional lived experience workforce.

Develop a plan for change that centers the voices of people with cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge.



2 HARNESSING EXISTING KNOWLEDGE

Review and assess the cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge among existing staff.

Draw on their cultural knowledge and lived experience as champions, stakeholders, and trainers.

Examine current workforce mutuality at all levels of the service.



3 INTENTIONAL HIRING

Supported and accessible hiring processes.

Assertive employment of new staff with cultural, lived experience, and identity knowledge in secure, stable roles.

Consider goals of diversity and workforce mutuality.



4 ONGOING SUPPORT

Consultations and trainings to build capacity and drive culture change.

Safe and inclusive supervision, including peer and external supervision for people lived cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge.

Supervision and reflexive practice that builds intersectional practice among all staff.

5 REVIEW AND EVALUATION

Intersectional approaches to data collection.

Plan for evaluation from the beginning and draw on findings to guide the 'next steps'.



IMPLEMENTATION

Background

This section provides an overview of the need for an intersectional lived experience workforce in the family violence and sexual assault sectors. As summarised in Figure 1, there is an array of overlapping benefits from deliberately undertaking the development of an intersectional lived experience workforce. This section provides more detail about how building an intersectional lived experience workforce will help the sectors address workforce shortages, help services meet mandatory minimum qualifications requirements, and develop career pathways for people with lived experience. It highlights some of the current evidence for a diverse lived experience workforce, while embedding lived experience within the broader context of intersectional practice.

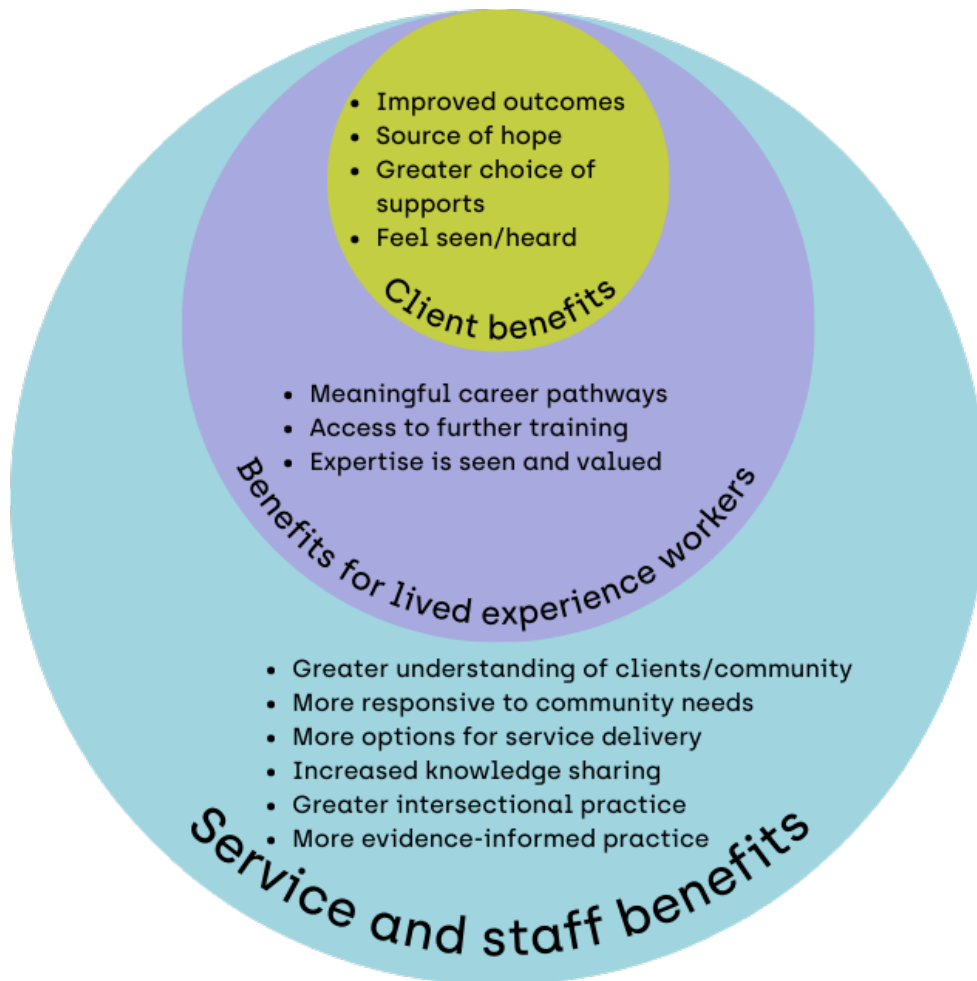


Figure 1: Overlapping benefits of an intersectional lived experience workforce

Addressing workforce shortages

There is currently a shortage of family violence and sexual assault workers, particularly in remote and regional settings across Australia, which contributes to limited options for victim-survivors (Campo & Tayton, 2015). This was reflected in a recent survey of family violence and sexual assault services, where 'staff issues [being short staffed]' was the leading barrier to workers performing their role (identified by 41% of respondents; Family Safety Victoria, 2023). For services, there can be challenges attracting and retaining suitably qualified and experienced staff (particularly in rural and regional areas), and the rapid growth of the sectors has led to a critical shortage of suitably qualified and experienced staff. The Victorian *10 Year Industry Plan for Family Violence Prevention and Response* highlighted the following strategies for strengthening the workforce:

- ensure a diverse specialist family violence workforce to reflect the rich diversity of the Victorian community and provide services and spaces that are culturally safe, appropriate, respectful and accessible for all service users
- strengthen the workforces that prevent and respond to family violence
- workforces need to be equipped to recognise the signs of family violence, to assess risk, and support people to access specialist support, with different roles and responsibilities.

Workforce shortages may be partially addressed by providing supported pathways for people with lived experience to enter the family violence and sexual assault workforce via roles that recognise the value of cultural, identity and lived experience knowledge. Through supporting people from diverse cohorts, particularly those in the local community, services can build workforce capacity while also improving the services' responsiveness and inclusivity.

NOTE. REGIONAL AND REMOTE SERVICES

Smaller proportions of workers in regional and remote services had postgraduate degree qualifications, compared to people in major cities (Cortis et al., 2018).

Compared to major cities, regional and remote services reported lower rates of employment for CALD people. Employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were much higher in remote communities (30.5%), compared to both regional communities (8.8%) and major cities (4.0%).

Drawing on the cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge of the local community may be particularly important pathway to employment in regional and remote services, where there may be fewer applicants that meet the Mandatory Minimum Qualifications.

Addressing barriers to employment

Approximately 14% of workers in the family violence and sexual assault sectors report that their own lived experience was the main motivator for entering the sector (Family Safety Victoria, 2021). Yet victim survivors face significant and intersecting barriers to employment across all sectors. Research has shown that 60% of women lost their job as a direct result of experiencing intimate partner violence (Crowne et al., 2011) and that there are long-term negative effects from this violence on their employment and job stability (Adams et al., 2013). This is especially true for people who experience intersecting forms of discrimination, particularly if they experience **socio-economic disadvantage** (Adams et al., 2013).

“While all social classes experience violence, research consistently suggests that people with the lowest socio-economic status are at greatest risk.”

[WHO, 2002; p. 244]

A structured approach to building an intersectional lived experience workforce is necessary to ensure that people’s experiences of class are acknowledged, appropriate jobs are created, and that candidates feel empowered to apply for to engage in the work. Supportive hiring processes and ongoing training for intersectional lived experience roles can create employment opportunities for people who have previously experienced barriers to paid employment. Making these changes requires a commitment to organisational change, challenging existing power dynamics, and a targeted investment of resources. This guide therefore seeks to equip service leaders with the knowledge and tools to create an authorising environment for this change.

In response to Recommendation 209 of the Royal Commission, the **mandatory minimum qualifications policy** for specialist family violence practitioners was introduced. To recognise their valuable expertise, people who bring “significant cultural knowledge and experience, OR lived experience, AND experience barriers to educational pathways” (DFFH, 2021, p. 4), have 10 years from the date of employment as a specialist family violence practitioner to achieve a minimum qualification of Bachelor of Social Work or equivalent qualification, with support from a qualified and experienced practitioner. Upon review in 2022, employers had identified that they were “growing and upskilling their workforce”, but they “weren’t employing people with lived experience or cultural expertise” (Victorian Government, 2022, p. 1). This guide therefore seeks to support employers to continue growing their workforce in a way that centres those with intersectional lived experience.



Integration of evidence

To date, there has been limited empirical research on lived experience workforces in the family violence and sexual assault sectors. This was reflected in a literature review conducted as part of the [Family Violence Experts by Experience Framework](#), where the authors found that research exploring lived experience in the family violence sector was underdeveloped (Lamb et al., 2020). However, examination of workforce mutuality in the sectors, research emerging from the mental health sector, and local service experiences (e.g., Drummond Street Services' iHeal program) highlight the importance and benefits of building an intersectional lived experience workforce.

NOTE. SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICES

In a recent study on peer support in the UK's sexual assault sector, people working in the sector made a clear distinction between those who are victim-survivors and those who are professionals (Gregory et al., 2022). This is despite a significant and widely acknowledged overlap between these groups. Gregory et al. (2022, p. 19) suggested that recognising this overlap "creates opportunities for investment in people with relevant lived experience in order to capitalize on people's potential, particularly in relation to providing support to fellow victim-survivors".

Participants in the study believed that effective integration of peer workers requires regular access to supportive, **trauma-informed supervision** to help build the capacity of emerging peer workers, particularly in delivering **evidence-based interventions**.

Considering the feminist history and origins of the sexual assault sector, the authors highlighted that supporting lived experience voices in the workforce was a means to address some of the unintended impacts from the 'professionalisation' of the sexual assault sector. Namely, that "**some of the anger, passion, and momentum of the early movement has been lost**" and could be regained through the development of a lived experience workforce (Gregory et al., 2022, p. 19).

Diversity and workforce mutuality

The Royal Commission and *Everybody Matters: Inclusion and Equity Statement* (Victorian Government, 2018) recognised that family violence is less visible and understood for some marginalised communities, and that their experiences were not reflected in existing frameworks. This contributes to these groups being at heightened risk of family violence and may experience barriers to reporting, seeking and/or receiving support. Affected groups include but are not limited to CALD communities; faith communities; LGBTIQ+ communities; people with a disability; people who experience mental illness issues; older people; women in or exiting prison; people working in the sex industry; rural, regional and remote communities; male victims; and young people (12-25 years).



NOTE. 2022 WORKFORCE PULSE SURVEY

In the 2022 Workforce Pulse Survey of the family violence and sexual assault sectors, several indicators of workforce diversity were explored (Family Safety Victoria, 2023). From the sample of 1049 workers (representing 35% of the workforce), the majority (87%) of workers identified as female, while 9% identified as male, and 2% self-describing their gender. Several indicators of workforce diversity were reported:

- 20% were same sex attracted, multigender attracted, or asexual
- 5% were of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Isander origin
- 21% identified as first-generation migrants
- 9% spoke a language other than English at home
- 10% had a long-term health condition or disability.

Note. The report did not include intersectional analyses or data about respondents' lived experience of family violence or sexual assault.

As part of developing a diverse lived experience workforce, services should consider whether their diversity reflects the communities they support. Under the principle of **workforce mutuality**, services seek to build a workforce that reflects the diversity of the community being served. Workforce mutuality describes the "extent to which the diversity of an organisation or a sector's workforce reflects the diversity of the community it services" (HealthWest, 2020, p. 5). This is distinct from diversity, where a highly diverse organisation may not necessarily reflect the diversity of the community being served. As outlined in the Standards for Workforce Mutuality (HealthWest Partnership, 2020), workforce mutuality has been found to lead to:

- better workforces, including greater efficiency, problem solving and innovation
- more adaptive and universally responsive services
- better employment outcomes, including more career opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds.

Developing a lived experience workforce that actively reflects the community accessing the service has compounding benefits for the community in terms of lived experience and cultural knowledge. Victim survivors accessing the service have a chance to work with someone like themselves who has overcome a similar lived experience. Ultimately, it is integral to avoid making assumptions about who a client may want to work with. Instead, centre the client's voice in deciding who they consider a peer and what they want support to look like.

Findings from the mental health sector

While there are widespread benefits to supporting an intentional lived experience workforce, the review identified several **challenges**, including:

- insufficient review and auditing within organisations with an intentional lived experience workforce to ensure consistent service provision (Byrne et al., 2019)
- barriers to equity and working conditions for intentional lived experience workers, due to a lack of an industrial award wage, peak body, or union representation (Byrne et al., 2019)
- difficulty defining and establishing clear lived experience roles, leading to workers' anxiety (Miyamoto & Sono, 2012)
- limited support, workplace tension, and a sense that the intentional lived experience role was not valued by other staff (Miyamoto & Sono, 2012).

Organisational readiness is key for effective integration of a lived experience workforce. Some of the enablers, which also address the barriers outlined above, include:

- defining clear roles for intentional lived experience workers and providing training to staff to strengthen collaboration (Queensland Mental Health Commission Framework, 2019).
- developing networks and supervision for intentional lived experience workers
- providing support and commitment from senior management
- allowing flexibility in the roles to support sustainability and acknowledge the impact of lived experience on work (Queensland Mental Health Commission Framework, 2019).

Finally, the application of **implementation science** will support meaningful and long-term organisational change. Based on the work of Hately-Brown et al. (2019), several considerations are warranted:

- provide ongoing and dynamic training to support self-efficacy
- recruit and train staff for leadership to support engagement at the leadership level.
- develop and use tools to monitor and evaluate the implementation process
- identify and prepare champions to support the cultural change within the organisation
- Each of the above steps should centre and elevate intersectional lived experience voices to ensure implementation is relevant and meaningful.



SERVICE EXAMPLE. IHEAL

iHeal was a recovery-focused service for victim survivors of family violence, with a particular focus on people from diverse communities who may experience barriers when accessing mainstream family violence support. It was developed as part of the Victorian Government's *Therapeutic Demonstrations Projects* to test and trial innovative approaches to support people with a lived experience of family violence.

iHeal had a strong focus on harnessing the lived experience of survivors, through service development, training and employment. Recovery Support Workers (RSWs), who were themselves survivors of family violence from diverse backgrounds, were recruited using supported recruitment processes and provided with specialist on the job training including: sector relevant content concurrent with accredited training (Certificate IV in Community Development), alongside employment-based iHeal training program whilst they were stepped into the provision of individual and peer support group work.

Evaluation data indicates that there have been measurable positive outcomes for iHeal clients which have been driven by an **increased service capacity** to engage those who **do not normally contact Family Violence Services**. These include:

- reductions in psychological distress
- increased community connection
- decreased financial hardship
- improved housing stability
- an increase in hope.

Numerous benefits were also identified at the service level, including:

- Building of greater workforce diversity within family violence services to improve the organisation's understanding and responsiveness to the intersectional experiences of the community. This is consistent with feedback from victim survivors from diverse and marginalised communities who wanted to access services with staff that looked like them and have their own experiences of family violence and recovery
- Providing meaningful career pathways and employment for victim survivors, particularly those representing people of diverse faith, race, sexuality and gender, and abilities
- Achieved service cost and demand efficiencies by allowing specialist practitioners to focus on trauma clinical and therapeutic interventions, alongside the RSW's intersectional understanding family violence.



Embedding lived experience as part of intersectional practice

Building a diverse lived experience workforce is a direct strategy to develop intersectional practice in the family violence and sexual assault sectors. However, it is important that the broader principles of intersectionality are considered when developing the lived experience workforce. Originally coined by [Kimberle' Crenshaw \[1991\]](#), intersectionality was seen as a prism by which the multiple and intersecting identities of gender and race create the overlapping experiences of systematic discrimination, oppression and disadvantage of black women as unique from white women [gender] or black men [race]. Intersectionality describes how forms of systematic and structural discrimination interact in multiple and complex ways. It also provides a framework to understand the complex power dynamics and relationships between marginalised people and communities, and the systems and structures that uphold these forms of discrimination.

Each person's experience of family violence or sexual assault is unique and they may face a range of barriers when seeking support. Services must be able to recognise an individual's intersectional experience and address the overlapping effects of discriminatory structures and systems. In doing so, we can ensure that all Victorians have access to appropriate and supportive care when they need it. Using an intersectional approach allows for family violence and sexual assault services to understand how differences in power impact across more than one social characteristic and environment [FSV, 2020]. Intersectionality requires family violence and sexual assault services to understand and effectively respond to the complex and unique experiences of diverse groups. Finally, it helps to ensure that the service system is "inclusive, safe, responsive and accountable for all [DSV, 2020, p. 5]."

Intersectionality is also central to improving inclusion and equity in the sector. As such, it is at the heart of FSV's [2020] *Inclusion and equity statement*. Through an intersectional lens, services can recognise that people have numerous layers which may be characterised by complex and interconnected social characteristics. These characteristics are dynamic properties of the individual and their social environment, which contribute to experiences of power and inequality.

Applied to practice, intersectionality promotes an understanding of people as shaped by their social locations (i.e., position in society based on their social characteristics) and that their experiences are impacted by social systems and power structures which shape a person's experience of privilege and oppression. Figure 2 demonstrates how social status and identity (e.g., ethnicity, gender identity), forms of discrimination and oppression (e.g., colonisation, sexism), and social systems and structures (e.g., education, welfare) intersect and contribute to a person's experience of privilege and/or oppression.



Figure 2: Intersectionality

Building an intersectional lived experience workforce involves an holistic approach at multiple levels (see Figure 3). This means creating a **top down** authorising environment within services that supports intersectional lived experience voices, facilitates culture change, and challenges unequal power dynamics. At the same time, the service is shaped by **bottom up** action from workers, clients and the community. This bottom up process includes elevating the voices of, and feedback from, clients, community members, and those with lived experience. These processes sit within the **broader context** of the policy and systems in the family violence and sexual assault sectors, which can support or present as barriers to intersectional lived experience voices.

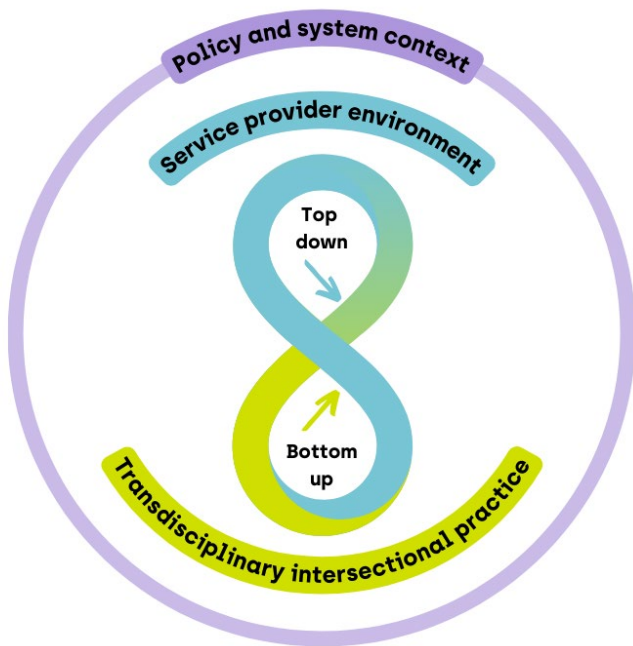


Figure 3: Policy and system context

To begin thinking about how intersectionality is put into practice, below is a summary of the **seven elements of intersectional practice** within services (Figure 4). It highlights the need to think about intersectionality across all levels of the service – including at the service level and practice/practitioner level. At the centre of the model is **Recognising intersecting oppression** because this underpins all other elements.



Figure 4: Seven elements of intersectional practice.

1 ORGANISATIONAL READINESS AND PLANNING

Review existing processes and systems for building an intersectional lived experience workforce.

Develop a plan for change that centers the voices of people with cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge.



Organisational readiness

This section provides a range of tools and strategies to assist organisations to properly consider, plan, resource and support the implementation of the model. This section has three key elements:

- Organisational readiness checklist [simplified and comprehensive]
- Planning tool for centring intersectional voices
- Program logic.

It is recommended that you review each of the tools and select those that will fit with your service's current needs and available resources. At a minimum, services should complete the **simplified organisational readiness checklist and planning tool** for centring intersectional voices.

NOTE. SHARING POWER

Power is the ability to influence an outcome. It can be used positively and negatively. Goodwill (2020) describes five forms of power in the [Power Literacy Field Guide](#) as:

1. **Privilege:** Power received from being in a social group (e.g., white, male, cisgender) at the expense of other groups (e.g., racialized, female, trans or gender diverse).
2. **Access power:** the ability to influence who is included in, or excluded from, a process.
3. **Goal power:** the ability to initiate a process and influence its purpose.
4. **Role power:** the ability to influence the roles that stakeholders take (e.g., as a designer, participant, trainer).
5. **Rule power:** the ability to influence the way that stakeholders work together (e.g., deciding what is 'normal' or allowed).

Power is often the elephant in the room for organisational readiness and implementation. Being aware of who holds each of the five forms of power is **especially important** for building an intersectional lived experience workforce, as we are seeking to centre and elevate marginalised voices and those who continue to be gatekept from positions of power.

Power-sharing from leaders is therefore essential to avoid the risk of **tokenism**. Organisational readiness hinges on having intersectional lived experience voices centred and that their perspectives are listened to and meaningfully acted upon.

Organisational readiness and implementation science

Findings from other sectors, particularly the Mental Health and Alcohol and other Drugs sectors, have found that organisational readiness and good staff preparation for peer and lived experience workforce integration is central to their success (Western Association for Mental Health, 2014; Health Workforce Australia, 2014).

Implementation refers to the process whereby organisations adopt and embed an innovation in practice. This can be through:

- identifying need for culture change
- creating an authorising environment
- identifying champions to lead change
- staff capacity building
- providing ongoing support
- providing mechanisms for feedback.

Organisational readiness refers to the preparation that is required prior to successful implementation. Scaccia et al. (2015), for example state that "readiness refers to the extent to which an organisation is both willing and able to implement a particular innovation". They developed a simple heuristic that is consistent with findings from the literature about factors that support the translation of implementation science into practical resources for change:

$$R=MC^2$$

This refers to **readiness (R)** being the combination of an organisation's **motivation (M)** to adopt an innovation, their general organisational **capacities (C)**, and innovation-specific **capacities (C)**.

When applied to building an intersectional lived experience workforce, this can be operationalised by:

- organisations reflecting on and exploring their rationale for engaging an intersectional lived experience workforce
- how the model fits with their organisation's and staff beliefs and values
- whether there are external pressures motivating the change (for example, government policies or funding requirements)
- what support may be needed to work through any challenges to motivation.



General capacity refers to factors that are needed to support any innovation, whereas **innovation specific capacity** refers to the particular innovation in this process (i.e., building an intersectional lived experience workforce). Examples of general capacity include:

- having sufficient resources
- effective leadership
- the organisational culture (including staff openness or resistance to change)
- appropriate infrastructure and processes to support the implementation of an intersectional lived experience workforce.
- It may be useful for organisations to reflect on their previous experience of adopting change, what supported or hindered that process, and where energies might need to be focused to address any challenges in this area.

Innovation specific capacity involves the delivery of training about the intersectional lived experience workforce, which should involve staff at all levels, including managers, supervisors, people with cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge, and the broader staff. This will cover the particular skills and knowledge required to successfully implement the program and execute the function of their roles. Training alone is unlikely to lead to successful implementation, but when coupled with a comprehensive organisational readiness and implementation support, the program is more likely to be well and sustainably embedded within the organisation. In building an intersectional lived experience workforce, it is important to:

- Centre and embed the **voices of people with cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge** throughout the process to enable it to adequately address their identified needs
- Embed **trauma-informed** and **recovery-based** principles at all stages, including as part of planning, recruitment, supervision, and support
- Regularly assess who holds **power** and actively engage in **power-sharing**.



Organisational Readiness Checklist

As part of the checklist, services will examine six key areas of organisational readiness:

- **Service and staff's values:** How does an intersectional lived experience workforce fit with your service values, mission and strategic objectives?
- **Organisational policies and systems:** What existing policies and systems relate to lived experience, diversity, and intersectional practice?
- **Training and capacity building:** What training and supervision is currently available in relation to intersectional practice and/or lived experience?
- **Leadership:** How do leaders provide an authorising environment and promote the value of incorporating intersectional lived experience workers?
- **Stakeholder engagement:** How will diverse stakeholders (e.g., existing staff, people with intersectional lived experience, community groups) be involved?
- **Review and support:** What systems are in place to evaluate and review outcomes related to intersectional and lived experience workforce?

On the next page is a **simplified version** of the organisational readiness checklist. It is intended to be a useful first step for service leaders, relevant stakeholders and intersectional lived experience champions to explore existing processes and identify what changes will be needed for organisational readiness.

TASK. ORGANISATIONAL READINESS CHECKLIST

1. Use the blank checklist to start identifying your service's level of organisational readiness.
2. Review the people involved in the process. Is there diversity from across the service (e.g., peer workers, practitioners, executives)? How will power-sharing occur across the five forms of power?

A **comprehensive version** of the organisational readiness checklist is available in [Resource 1](#). It is **highly recommended** that this is used to steer your process and that it is guided by people with cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge. The comprehensive version is designed to be a living document that is completed prior to implementation, then reviewed periodically to track the implementation process, and to identify and prioritise areas requiring further resourcing. In the comprehensive version, if an item has not yet been implemented, it is recommended that you identify:

- relevant **actions** to address this gap,
- **who** is responsible for these actions, and
- **when** it will be reviewed.



ORGANISATIONAL AREA	EXISTING What currently exists in relation to intersectionality and lived experience?	DESIRED How could this look different in the a. short term b. long term?	DIVERSE VOICES Who needs to be involved to create the desired change?
1. Values and principles How an intersectional lived experience workforce fits with your service's values.			
2. Organisational policies The policies and systems related to lived experience and intersectional practice.			
3. Capacity building Training, support and supervision in relation to lived experience and intersectional practice.			
4. Leadership Attitudes and the authorising environment among those with power to drive change.			
5. Stakeholder engagement Engagement with relevant community groups, staff, and clients about intersectional lived experience.			
6. Review and support Systems of evaluation and continual improvement.			



Elevating intersectional voices throughout the process

It is important to embed and elevate the voices of people with cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge at each stage of the change process. Tokenistic representation, where their voices are only partially included or are not acted on, can lead to consultative burnout and undermine the outcomes. Services should identify **when and how** intersectional lived experience voices will drive the process. Consider who holds power across the stages, and how you can ensure **power-sharing**. Drawing on the principles of co-production, this can be considered at four stages:

1. **Needs.** What are the needs being identified by people with cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge? How can you balance different forms of evidence?
2. **Plan.** How are intersectional lived experience voices involved in the planning process and do they have genuine input on how the process is rolled out?
3. **Implement.** How are intersectional lived experience voices actively included as part of the implementation? This can include co-developing and co-facilitating trainings, and program implementation.
4. **Review.** How do people with cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge provide feedback and have a say about the next steps that need to be made.

An example of this process is represented in Figure 5 on the next page.

TASK. CENTERING INTERSECTIONAL LIVED EXPERIENCE VOICES

1. If you completed the simplified organisational readiness checklist, review the Diverse Voices column. Who else might you need to include?

Using the blank co-production template in [Resource 2](#):

2. Identify **relevant activities** for your organisation at each stage of the co-production process.
3. Describe ways you can centre intersectional lived experience perspectives at **each stage** of the process.
4. Identify who holds each of **the five forms of power** at each stage. How can **power-sharing** be supported to avoid tokenism?

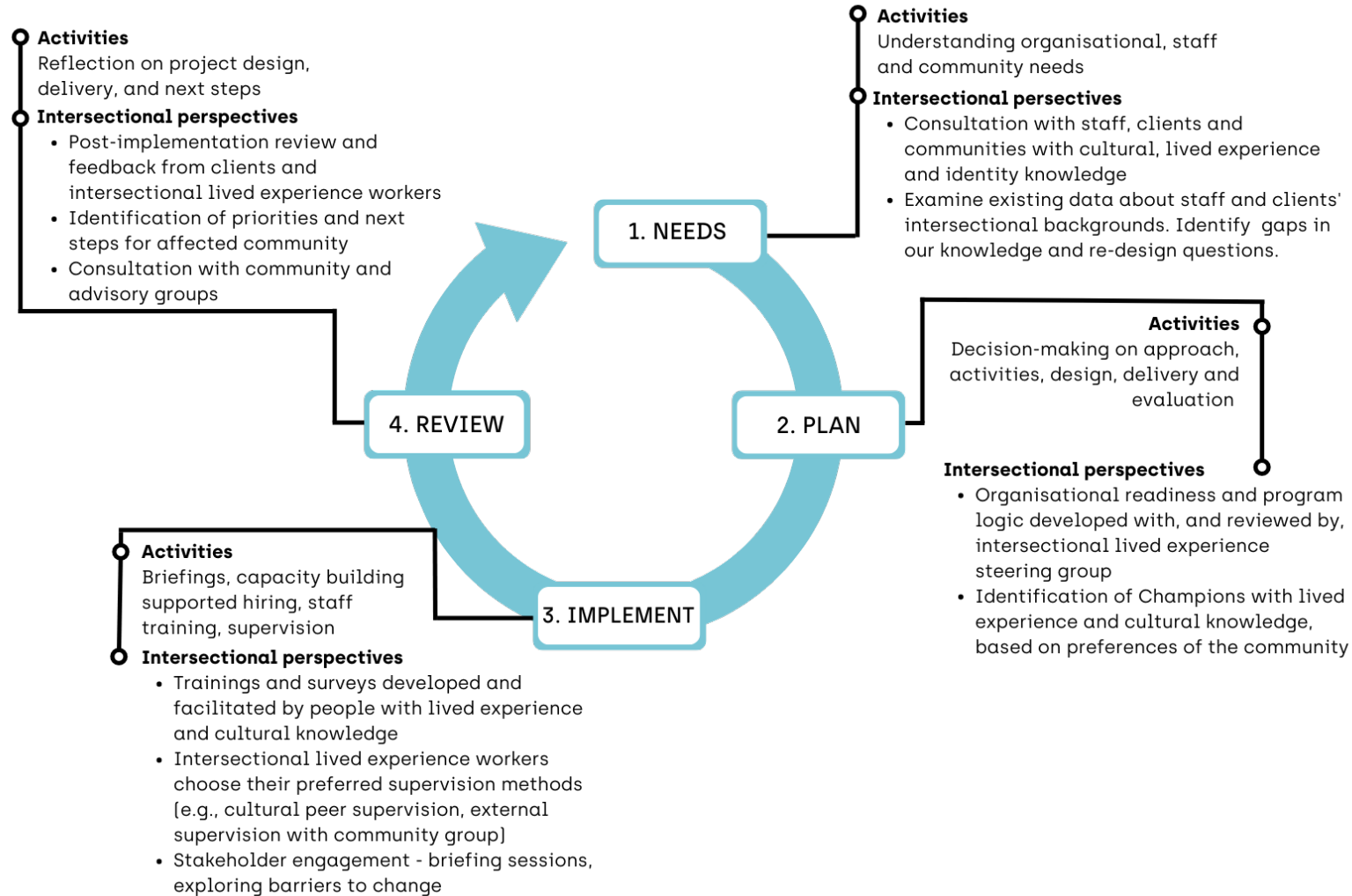


Figure 5: Centering intersectional lived experience voices throughout the process.



Program Logic

A **program logic** is a schematic representation that describes how a program will work. A program describes a set of activities that are managed together to achieve a specific outcome. A program logic can be used to guide your overall process for building an intersectional lived experience workforce, but it is also useful to break down any smaller programs that may be included in this broader aim (e.g., developing a new hiring process, updating your Diversity and Inclusion policy). Elements of a program logic include:

- **Aim** (what the program will achieve)
- **Theory of change** (how or why the program will work)
- **Inputs** (what resources you have)
- **Activities** (what you will have done after implementation)
- **Outputs** (what is different because of the activities)
- **Outcomes** (immediate and short-term measures of impact)

[Resource 3](#) contains an example Program Logic from the iHeal program, while [Resource 4](#) includes a blank version.



2 HARNESSING EXISTING KNOWLEDGE

Review and assess the cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge among existing staff.

Draw on their cultural knowledge and lived experience as champions, stakeholders, and trainers.

Examine current workforce mutuality at all levels of the service.



3 INTENTIONAL HIRING

Accessible and supported hiring processes.

Assertive employment of new staff with lived experience and from intersectional backgrounds in secure, stable roles.

Consider goals of diversity and workforce mutuality.



4 ONGOING SUPPORT

Safe and inclusive supervision, including peer and external supervision for people lived cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge.

Briefings and trainings to build capacity and drive culture change.

Supervision and reflexive practice that builds intersectional practice among all staff.



5 REVIEW AND EVALUATION

Intersectional approaches to data collection.

Plan for evaluation from the beginning and draw on findings to guide the 'next steps'.

Implementation

This section summarises four key areas to support implementation of an intersectional lived experience workforce:

- Harnessing the knowledge and experience of existing staff
- Supported training processes
- Ongoing support and capacity building
- Review and evaluation.



2 HARNESSING EXISTING KNOWLEDGE

Review and assess the cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge among existing staff.

Draw on their cultural knowledge and lived experience as champions, stakeholders, and trainers.

Examine current workforce mutuality at all levels of the service.

Harnessing the knowledge and experience of existing staff

For all organisations, it is important to acknowledge and draw on the cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge in the existing workforce. It is widely acknowledged that workers in the family violence and sexual assault sectors have high rates of lived experience, but they may not be working in designated/identified lived experience roles and their lived experience is not recognised as a capability in their current role. For some workers with lived experience, they may not feel comfortable disclosing or discussing their lived experience for any number of reasons. Similarly, some people with cultural and identity knowledge, may not wish to have this be a core part of their practice. Services should aim to foster a culture where these choices are respected, and workers know that intersectional lived experience will be valued.

As well as in designated/identified lived experience roles, there are a range of avenues for practitioners to draw on intersectional lived experience knowledge, including:

- as champions
- through steering/advisory groups
- through de-identified feedback
- by facilitating training on specific forms of cultural, identity and/or lived experience knowledge
- through Communities of Practice and peer supervision
- as part of a transdisciplinary team, sharing from their cultural, identity and/or lived experience knowledge.



Elevating diverse voices as champions

Champions are individuals within the organisation who play an important role in driving and facilitating the change process. They may volunteer or be appointed and are generally selected because they have a passion or enthusiasm for the proposed change and are well respected by their peers. They are not necessarily in formal leadership roles, but it can be useful to have champions across a range of levels within the organisation as they can:

- understand practice and advocate for change
- facilitate communication
- get others on board
- support colleagues in working through the change process.

NOTE. ELEVATING VOICES

Elevating the voices of people with cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge as champions can be an effective way to ensure they are heard. It is essential that they are **adequately resourced, supported, and compensated** for their knowledge and skills.

Existing hierarchies, discrimination, and power structures in the sector are a barrier to people with cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge being in leadership roles within services. Resourcing and supporting the central role of intersectional lived experience workers in the change process, including as champions, is an essential means to address inequitable hierarchies of power.

REFLECTION. HARNESSING EXISTING KNOWLEDGE

1. What ways do you already support workers to draw on and use their cultural, lived experience, and identity knowledge?
2. What do workers identify as the barriers to applying their cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge in their roles?
3. What existing systems/processes can be adapted, to provide more opportunities (e.g., co-facilitating trainings, inviting staff to advisory groups, creating space to share on intersectional knowledge in case meetings)?



Mapping the cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge of the existing clients and workforce

The following factors should be considered when considering how to effectively draw on the cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge of the existing workforce. To get an accurate representation, this requires exploring these questions with a diverse range of workers, as their perspectives and experiences may be different from service leaders and executives.

- What information (e.g., from workplace surveys) is known about the cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge of your existing staff? What information is needed and how can it be gathered safely and respectfully?
- How do you cultivate a culture of safety and respect for existing staff with cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge? How can you ensure staff are able to make informed choices about what they feel comfortable sharing and how this information will be used? How do the staff describe their experience of the workplace culture?
- What supervision (including peer supervision) is available for existing staff, and how is a culture of valuing and elevating cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge fostered?
- What knowledge, experience and skills are present in the existing workforce that could be drawn on to support intersectional practice? Are there individuals who could co-facilitate training, capacity building and/or supervision?

NOTE. THINKING CRITICALLY ABOUT WORKPLACE DIVERSITY

Services may find that there is a high level of lived experience in their workforce; however, this does imply that the workforce reflects the backgrounds of the service users. It may be necessary to gather more information about the cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge in the existing staff as well as the clients and communities you support. Furthermore, it is important to maintain an intersectional perspective of cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge. Consider whether workers reflect the diversity of clients in terms of their intersecting experiences of culture, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, class and disability.

There are steps that can be taken to understand the intersectional lived experience of your workforce, and how it aligns with the communities being supported. The following table summarises different ways of mapping your current workforce mutuality, from least to most resource intensive.



Method and purpose	Examples and considerations
<p>Method: Review existing workforce surveys.</p> <p>Purpose: To understand workforce demographics.</p>	<p><i>2019-20 Survey Findings Report - Specialist Family Violence Response Workforce</i> [Family Safety, 2021]</p> <p><i>Family violence and sexual assault workforce pulse survey</i> [Victorian Government, 2022]</p>
<p>Method: Review existing service user surveys.</p> <p>Purpose: To understand demographic of the sector's service-users.</p>	<p><i>Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story</i> [AIHW, 2019]</p> <p>Example findings: Vulnerable groups at elevated risk of family violence and/or sexual assault include: young women, older Australians, people with disabilities, people from CALD backgrounds, LGBTIQ+ people, people in rural and remote Australia, socio-economically disadvantaged people, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.</p> <p><i>Sexual Violence – Victimisation: Statistics about sexual assault and childhood sexual abuse, including characteristics of victim-survivors, victimisation rates, and police reporting</i> [ABS, 2021]</p> <p>Example findings: Sexual assault prevalence rates were higher for younger women, women in financial hardship, and women living with disability.</p>
<p>Method: Review existing staff and client data (e.g., surveys, intake data).</p> <p>Purpose: To understand demographics of your staff and clients, with minimal participant burden.</p>	<p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How you will use this data, including how you disclose this process to staff/clients. • What gaps do you identify in the existing data that needs to be addressed (e.g., lack of information about LGBTIQ+ identity). • How old is the data and is it relevant to existing staff/clients? • How you will analyse the data to ensure intersectional experiences are captured (e.g., identify if there are people with multiple intersecting identities).
<p>Method: Conduct a survey of staff and/or clients.</p> <p>Purpose: To understand the intersecting demographics of your staff and clients.</p>	<p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When collecting and reporting multiple forms of disaggregated demographic data, it may become identifiable. How will this be managed and/or addressed? • Questions may be challenging and could cause distress. How will you ensure there is safe and confidential support? Ensure purpose of survey is clear and reasonable. • How will you analyse the data to ensure intersectional experiences are captured?



3 INTENTIONAL HIRING

Accessible and supported hiring processes.

Assertive employment of new staff with lived experience and from intersectional backgrounds in secure, stable roles.

Consider goals of diversity and workforce mutuality.

Supported and intentional hiring processes for designated roles

While there may be cultural, identity and lived experience knowledge in the existing workforce, it is important to use intentional and proactive hiring practices for people who may have experienced barriers to education, qualifications and work. Workforce mutuality should be considered, prioritising diversity in the workforce to reflect the supported community. If you have conducted a staff and client census/survey, you can draw on this information to identify gaps in existing staff and particular forms of intersectional lived experience that would be valuable. It is important to report these findings back to the workforce, be transparent about why it is important to build workforce mutuality, and communicate how any gaps will be addressed.

REFLECTION. WHAT IS A PEER?

Thinking about your service context, what comes to mind when you hear the term 'Peer Worker'?

It may refer to someone with a lived experience as a victim-survivor. However, depending on a worker and client's intersectional identities, they may have little shared experience outside of being a victim-survivor. Further, their experience as a victim-survivor may be very different because of their other intersecting experiences and identities. For example, a transgender young person from a low socioeconomic and culturally diverse background may find that they have little in common with their white cisgender peer worker. The client may have faced additional intersecting barriers to accessing and receiving support.

For some people, being considered a peer may have more to do with other aspects of their identity, including their shared cultural and identity knowledge. While one worker is unlikely to share all the same identities and experiences with a client, having a team with diverse cultures, identities and experiences will mean that there is a collective knowledge and capacity to relate to the communities you support. It will also empower the client to identify what aspects of a peer worker (i.e., cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge) are most important for them at this point in time.



In this section, roles that are for a specific group will be referred to as a **designated role** (e.g., designated LGBTIQ+ peer worker role, designated Aboriginal Recovery Support Worker role). While '**designated**' may not be included in the worker's role title, it may be used during the hiring process to indicate that this is a role that requires specific cultural, lived experience and/or identity knowledge. This role type may also be referred to as an '**identified role**'. As part of your service, you may decide which term is most appropriate for you. It is also important to consider what forms of cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge are most important for your service and meeting the needs of your clients.

Positions and titles

Across a range of sectors, there have been many different terms used for designated roles that require cultural, lived experience or identity knowledge. As outlined at the beginning of the guide, the terminology we use is important and may be specific to your service and community (e.g., lived **experience** and/or **expertise**). Some examples include:

- **Lived Experience Worker / Lived Expertise Worker / Recovery Support Worker / Peer Practitioner / Peer Support Worker** – Direct support role with intentional use of lived experience of family violence or sexual assault
- **Senior Lived Experience Worker / Lived Experience Coordinator** – Direct support and supervision, mentoring, leadership
- **Aboriginal Lived Expertise Worker/ CALD Recovery Support Worker / LGBTIQ+ Peer Worker** – Direct support with intentional use of lived experience **and** cultural or identity knowledge
- **Lived Experience Researcher / Lived Expertise Project Officer** – Research, teaching, policy development
- **Lived Experience Manager / Director of Lived Expertise** – Executive roles
- **Lived Experience Advisor / Survivor Advocate** – Direct advocacy, public speaking, capacity building, lobbying.

REFLECTION. WHAT IS IN A NAME?

It is important to consider what specific title your service will use when hiring workers with lived experience and/or cultural knowledge. Depending on the role, they may not be expected to disclose their own lived experience, therefore terms like 'peer worker' or 'lived experience worker' may not be appropriate.

The role titles above also highlight the diversity in the types of roles, including client-facing, managerial, and advocacy roles. It is useful to think holistically about the range of intersectional lived experience roles that could strengthen your service and address your specific gaps and needs.

Thinking about your service context, and how you might implement intersectional lived experience roles, what job title might best describe the role?



CASE EXAMPLE. IHEAL

In the iHeal program, **Recovery Support Workers** were an emergent career workforce, who used their cultural, identity and lived experience knowledge to engage clients and families in recovery from family violence, while also undergoing professional training through formal education and on-the-job experience. The title **Recovery Support Worker** reflected the recovery-focused nature of the role and was used because it did not disclose that the worker had a lived experience, and gave workers the choice regarding if, when, and how they chose to discuss their own lived experience with clients. The title also emphasised that workers used the recovery-oriented practice framework ([see here](#) for more details about the framework's use in the mental health sector).

Position descriptions

A clear position description is a crucial step in role clarity. Victim-survivors, particularly those from marginalised backgrounds, have highlighted that they often feel under-qualified and confused by relevant position descriptions in the sector. Services should prioritise making the position description **open and welcoming**. Some considerations include:

- What experience or knowledge is required (e.g., lived experience, cultural knowledge, and/or identity knowledge)
- What flexibility is available (e.g., flexible hours, location, recognition of challenges for parents)
- What ongoing support is available (e.g., trauma-informed supervision)
- What the role includes (e.g., "drawing on, and intentionally using what you learned from your recovery journey to help others who have experienced sexual assault.")
- Pathways to qualification, if required (e.g., "You do not need a degree to apply. You will be supported to work towards a relevant qualification as part of the role.")
- Accessible options to discuss the role further (e.g., phone, email, in-person).

A sample Position Description for a designated Lived Experience role is provided in [Resource 5.1](#).

The *National Lived Experience Workforce Development Guidelines: Lived Experience Roles* ([Byrne et al., 2021](#)) is a useful resource for further examples of potential role descriptions from the mental health sector.

REFLECTION. POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

When writing position descriptions for a designated intersectional and/or lived experience role, consider:

1. How is this differentiated from a non-designated role? Is it clear who can apply?
2. Who are you seeking to apply? Is there a particular type of cultural, lived experience or identity knowledge that is essential (e.g., LGBTIQ+, disability, CALD community)?
3. Are the mandatory minimum qualification requirements clearly articulated? Is there a summary of how applicants will be supported if they do meet the requirements?
4. Is there flexibility in the role (e.g., part-time, flexible hours)?

Supported hiring process

An inclusive hiring process is underpinned by a recognition that some applicants may not have been through a formal interview process in the past. It is important to make this a supported hiring process that is accessible and inviting. Having a lived experience/peer navigator on staff to guide applicants through the process can help signpost that it is an inclusive place to work and provide practical support to applicants. A potential map for this process, adapted from the iHeal program, is summarised in Figure 6.

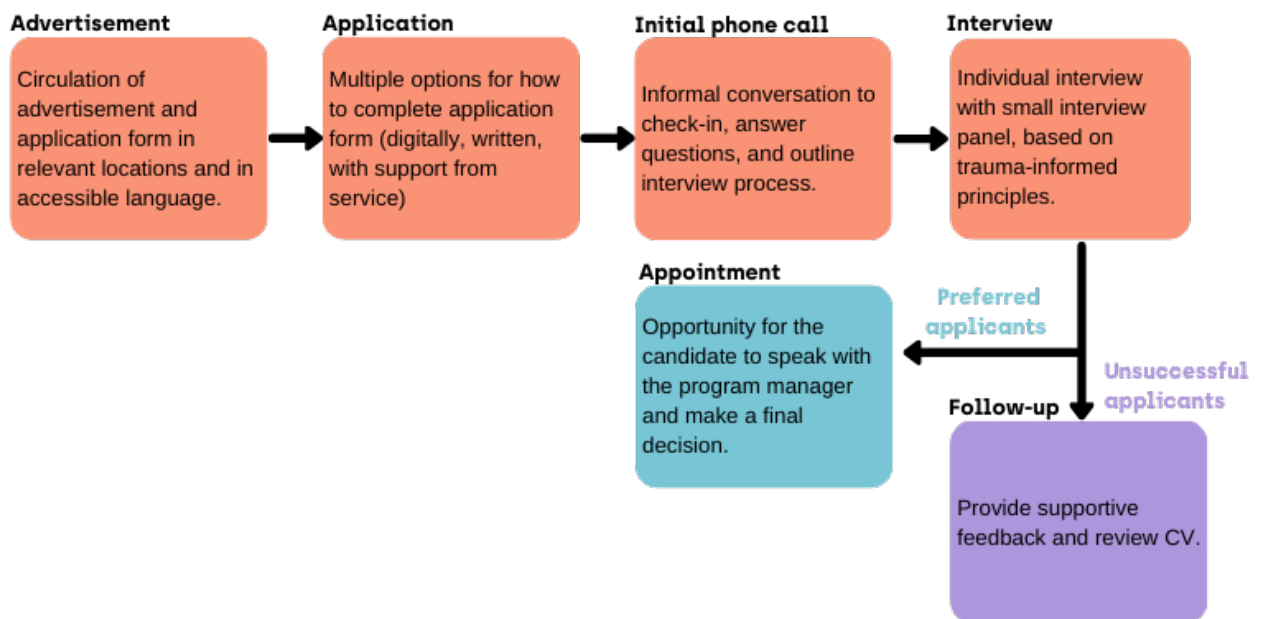


Figure 6: Supported hiring process for lived experience roles (iHeal).



The supported hiring process may look different for your service. We will now explore potential **adaptations and examples** for each stage of the hiring process to ensure it is inclusive and accessible.

Advertisement

A sample text-based advertisement is accessible in [Resource 5.2](#), which may be modified for your service. A sample graphic advertisement [e.g., for use on social media] is available in [Resource 5.3](#).

Purpose of adaptations: Advertising for designated lived experience positions should be proactive and welcoming.

Potential adaptations:

- Intentional advertising with desired groups
 - Engaging current or past clients
 - Existing staff changing to a new designated lived experience role
 - Sharing roles with community and cultural groups.
- Language should be used to encourage potential candidates to reach out – e.g., “Not sure if you meet the criteria, but interested in working with us? Call us to chat about it.”
- Use culturally appropriate images and language, depending on the role and your service’s context.

Application form

A sample application form is available in [Resource 5.4](#).

Purpose of adaptations: To articulate who can apply and reduce barriers to applying.

Potential adaptations:

- In the selection criteria, clearly articulate if lived experience is necessary and if specific forms of cultural or identity knowledge are expected.
- Make the application form readily available for applicants alongside the advertisement.
- Notify participants that this application form can be available in:
 - A paper form,
 - converted to a pdf form that can be completed online and returned by email,
 - submitted as a web-based form, and/or
 - can be completed with help from a staff member.



Initial phone call

Purpose of adaptations: To help applicant feel supported and prepared.

Potential adaptations:

- Have a phone conversation during the week prior to interview.
 - Provide an opportunity to ask questions prior to the interview.
 - Outline the hiring process to the applicant.
- Supply the interview questions prior to the interview.
- During this pre-interview conversation, it will also be useful to let applicants know that the interview will involve talking about how they might draw on their lived experience. Talking about these sensitive topics (i.e., lived experience of family violence or sexual assault) can be challenging and distressing, therefore they may wish to debrief after the interview with one of the panel members or a friend.

Interview

Sample interview questions/template are available in [Resource 5.5](#).

Purpose of adaptations: To ensure the applicant feels confident, affirmed and valued.

Potential adaptations:

- The number of members on the interview panel should be kept to a minimum but should include a Line Manager. Consider who else could be involved, for example:
 - Peer navigator or client advocate
 - A staff member with lived experience
 - A translator, as required
- The interview should be conducted using trauma-informed practice principles, allowing participants to highlight their strengths and expertise as a victim survivor who has navigated the process of seeking and receiving support.
- Consider how you will sensitively assess where participants are on their recovery journey and their capacity to draw on their story safely and beneficially if they are applying for a client-facing role.
- The interview process/questions should also recognise the applicant's intersectional experience and ensure that this does not disadvantage them in the process. Applicants should be given opportunities to share about their relevant cultural and identity knowledge and how this may be a strength or asset in this role.
- Interviewers should explicitly communicate that lived experience and different forms of cultural and identity knowledges are genuinely valued and respected by the organisation and its staff. Clearly articulate how these things are valued and supported (e.g., in team meetings, peer supervision, secondary consultations).



NOTE. POWER AND PRIVILEGE

Consider the impact of **power** and **privilege** across the hiring process, but particularly during the interview. Formal interview processes have been used to intentionally, and unintentionally, gatekeep employment for marginalised groups. **How will you actively seek to address power imbalances as part of this process?** Consider how you will support power-sharing and promote a sense of control and agency for applicants. This may include:

- Choice of location and set-up of space
- Consideration of social dynamics (e.g., use of formal titles, use of eye contact)
- Diversity of interviewers
- Interviewers acknowledge own gaps in knowledge/experience (e.g., they have practice experience but lack lived experience, identity knowledge).

Follow-up

Purpose of adaptations: To ensure the experience is valuable for applicants, regardless of whether they are successful.

Potential adaptations:

Unsuccessful applicants:

- Give feedback and review their CV and interview skills
- Sensitively discuss what steps can be taken for them to be successful in the future
- Be particularly aware of potential power dynamics where a non-lived experience worker is giving feedback to a lived experience applicant.

Preferred applicants:

- Provide an opportunity to clarify role expectations, prior to accepting role
- Discuss mandatory minimum qualification requirements and discuss a plan to meet them.

4 ONGOING SUPPORT



Consultations and trainings to build capacity and drive culture change.

Safe and inclusive supervision, including peer and external supervision for people lived cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge.

Supervision and reflexive practice that builds intersectional practice among all staff.

Ongoing support

From the beginning, all staff should feel that they are actively informed and involved in the process of building an intersectional lived experience workforce within the service. This involves providing information at the organisational readiness stage as well as ongoing support and capacity building. This can include:

- **Staff consultation** about the purpose and process of building an intersectional lived experience workforce, including discussion about benefits and concerns.
- Ongoing staff **training and capacity building** (e.g., on intersectionality, supervision, power-sharing, collaborative practice, and use of lived experience).
- **Supervision and support** that is responsive to specific staff needs (e.g., culturally safe supervision, lived experience supervision, peer supervision).

Building and maintaining an intersectional lived experience workforce may require a culture change within the service. This process involves re-evaluating and elevating different forms of knowledge, which may challenge existing power structures. Staff, including service leaders and executives, may be uncomfortable about discussing power, yet power-sharing is an integral part of the process. The process of examining power should be grounded in a discussion about the history of the service and sector, with staff encouraged to explore how it came to be this way and to imagine how power-sharing could look in the future. It can therefore be useful to unpack:

- the **different forms** of power (as outlined in the [Organisational Readiness](#) section)
- how power is **currently** used and by whom
- what would happen if there were a **change in power-sharing**.



Staff consultations

Staff should be consulted about why and how intersectional practice and a diverse lived experience workforce is important in the family violence and sexual assault sectors. There should be genuine **two-way knowledge sharing** during consultations about the purpose, process, benefits and concerns. Staff should feel actively involved and view themselves as agents for change. Data may need to be collected before and after consultations to evaluate changes in staff attitudes and appetite for change.

Audience: all staff, including practitioners, administrative and other staff. Managers and service leaders should also attend with the additional purpose to create an authorising environment for this change initiative.

Learning intention: To build organisational readiness by educating all staff about the process of building an intersectional lived experience workforce, and provide opportunities for them to discuss this process, including exploring potential barriers and enablers to implementation.

Potential learning outcomes: Based on this briefing, participants will:

- Understand the importance of cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge within the service and sector
- Understand how different knowledges (including cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge) are valued and integrated through evidence-informed practice
- Feel confident about their role as part of building an intersectional lived experience workforce
- Recognise how intersectional lived experience roles fit with the service's values, systems and the existing processes (including as part of transdisciplinary teams).

Potential activities

To address the above learning outcomes, you may participants may complete:

- Complete reflective activity about the service's values, and group discussion about how lived experience and an intersectional model fits with these values
- Unpack how changes will be integrated into the existing systems and teams
- Identify potential barriers to change and brainstorm ways to support the success of an intersectional lived experience workforce
- Invite practitioners with cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge to join relevant Communities of Practice and contribute their experience/knowledge
- Invite identified champions to take up a leadership role.

NOTE. KEEPING STAFF INFORMED

As well as the consultations, keep staff informed and up to date about your progress in developing an intersectional lived experience workforce. This may include:

- Regular consultations over the course of implementation (e.g., every quarter)
- Email updates about progress and key milestones (e.g., creating a Community of Practice)
- Updates at staff meetings.

Training and education

Change can be an incremental process, but it will be most effective when there is buy-in from staff across the service. As such, training and education should include all members of the workplace and be guided by those with cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge.

Valuing a diversity of knowledge and experience

Briefings and training can help to clarify that it is important to elevate cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge so that it is integrated with, and valued alongside, other forms of knowledge (e.g., quantitative research evidence, discipline knowledge from practitioner's degrees). It may provide a space for staff to discuss **how** we respectfully balance and integrate different types of knowledge as part of **evidence-informed practice** within the service and sector (see Figure 7).

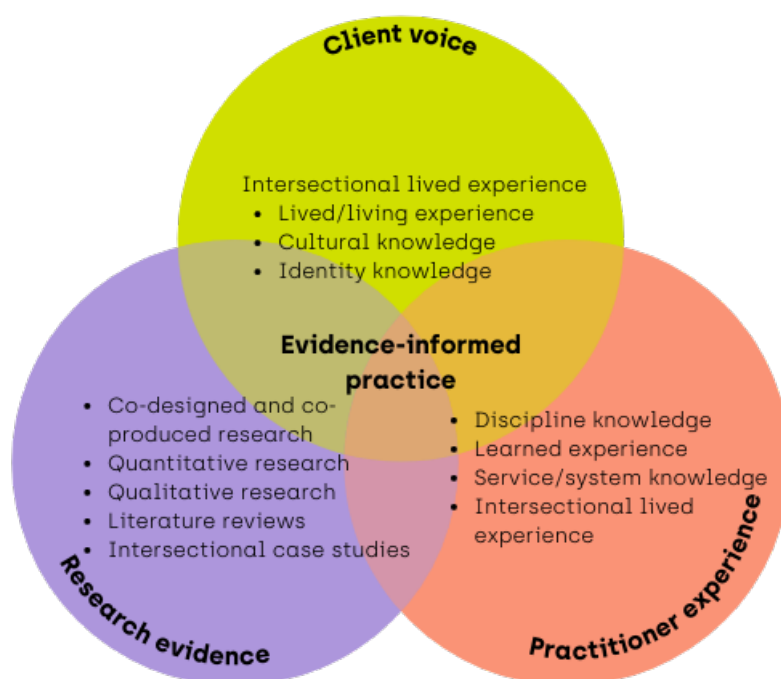


Figure 7: Evidence-informed practice model

For some staff, there may be concern or discomfort that building an intersectional lived experience workforce overrides other forms of research and knowledge. Training and education about power, marginalisation and privilege can help all staff examine their own



attitudes, biases and beliefs to ensure that diverse forms of knowledge are genuinely valued and elevated. At the same time, it may be necessary to explore what systems and processes the service will use to ensure all voices are heard (e.g., during case reviews, transdisciplinary meetings).

NOTE. DIFFERENT FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE

Another way to unpack and explore different forms of knowledge is in terms of **content** versus **context experts**, as outlined by [Attygate \[2017\]](#):

- **Content experts:** professionals, staff, services and leaders with **formal power** and have **knowledge, tools and resources** to address the issue.
- **Context experts:** people with **lived experience** of a situation and **experientially** know about the issue.

Drawing on cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge

Depending on your service, you may have capacity to facilitate in-house training and capacity building. You may need to consider whether it is necessary to engage **external training providers** to facilitate training, including local community and advocacy groups that hold cultural, lived experience, and identity knowledge.

To further support ongoing empowerment in the learning experience, workers with cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge can be involved in the development and/or delivery of training. In-line with the evidence-informed practice principles, their intersectional knowledge should be elevated and integrated with practitioner experience and research evidence to guide the trainings. It is important to enable meaningful contributions of this intersectional and lived experience knowledge/expertise that is not simply tokenistic.

Prior to trainings, they may:

- identify learning objectives
- develop case studies
- work collaboratively with external providers
- identify reflective questions/activities that draw on their specialised knowledge.



During the training, people with cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge may facilitate elements of the training. If an external training provider is engaged, this process should be discussed prior to the training. Here, it is essential that trainings are trauma-informed and create a space where staff value and respectfully learn from facilitators' intersectional lived experience. It is the responsibility of all staff, but particularly service leaders, to create an environment during the training that recognises and respects these intersectional lived experience voices. Some people with intersectional lived experience may not facilitate the training, but the training should be a space where they can feel safe to share their knowledge if they choose.

NOTE. TRAUMA-INFORMED TRAINING PRINCIPLES

Training and consultations delivered on any aspect of intersectional lived experience should draw on trauma-informed principles. These include:

- Creating a **safe environment**, including preparing participants for what to expect and describing what they can do if they need a break
- Reflecting on power and privilege
- Proactively create a sense of **safety** for participants during training
- Use a **collaborative** process to elevate cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge from participants
- Ensure there is adequate **follow-up**, which may include debriefing and aftercare.

Supervision

The Department of Families Fairness and Housing (DFFH, 2023) have published three information sheets about supervision and its Best Practice Supervision Guidelines will be published in late 2023. The information sheets are available [here](#) and cover:

- supervision definitions
- supervision functions
- reflective supervision.

Supervision for workers with intersectional lived experience

For lived experience workers who are emergent practitioners and are likely to be new to the family violence or sexual assault sectors, supervision plays an integral role in developing their practice skills, maintaining the worker's and client's safety, and supporting workers to debrief about risks and concerns. For those working towards mandatory minimum



qualifications, supervision also provides an opportunity to monitor their progress and identify additional supports.

Given that lived experience workers may have experienced similar intersectional disadvantage, discrimination, and trauma to the clients they are supporting, there is potential for parallel processes, vicarious trauma or triggering to occur during sessions. Therefore, it is important to provide opportunities during supervision to safely reflect on and integrate lived experience with a skilled supervisor in a **trauma-informed** way.

Lived experience workers should receive regular supervision that will provide further opportunities for integrating learning, reflection, and accountability. This will include prompts for discussion that will follow up learning experiences, including:

- What did you learn?
- How does it apply in your practice?
- What lived experience knowledge does this relate to?
- How can I support your integration?
- What can I as a supervisor learn from your experience?

Supervision to most of us is about oversight of our performance by a person with more experience or power. For some, it has been a wonderful process of mentoring and support. For many, it has not been a positive experience. Some people may have felt judged, overly evaluated, and misunderstood.

[Co-reflection](#) (Mead, 2015) may be a particularly useful supervision process for workers with cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge. As outlined by Shery Mead, co-reflection is

“about us creating expertise together through a process of ‘learn, practice, reflection’. It is designed to model the peer support relationship so that we are practicing the principles at all levels of our relationships.”

Shery Mead (2015, p. 2)

REFLECTION. TRAINING FOR SUPERVISORS

Reflect on the capacity of staff who currently **provide supervision**.

1. Do they currently have the scope to provide supervision around cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge? What further training might they need?
2. Are they adequately trained and supported to provide trauma-informed supervision with lived experience workers?
3. Are there other staff with cultural, lived experience and/or identity knowledge who could be trained to provide supervision (including peer supervision)?
4. If your service does not have scope, what external supervisors or services could help provide appropriate supervision for intersectional lived experience staff?

Intersectional supervision for all staff

Supervision for all workers, including those with cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge, should:

- be culturally safe
- provide space for reflexive practice, to examine biases, and reflect in relation to their own experiences
- provide opportunities to apply an intersectional lens to clinical practice
- address questions or concerns about the use of cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge.

An intersectional approach to supervision can help to ensure that the above factors are addressed. Research suggests that:

- Supervisors should include “strategies that respond to power differentials, privilege, and broad forms of society-based oppression” as part of their routine supervision [Tarshis and Baird, 2021, p. 19].
- Supervisors and supervisees can work together to identify how power and privilege affect clients’ lives, including in client-worker relationship [Greene & Flasch, 2019].

Further considerations about integrating intersectionality into supervision is described by [Greene and Flasch \[2019\]](#). Drawing on the seven elements of intersectional practice may also guide supervisors and supervisees in maintain their intersectional focus (see [Figure 4](#)).

Seven eyes model

One way to support an intersectional approach to supervision is through using an adapted version of the **seven-eyed model of supervision** [Hawkins & Shohet, 2006]. This model is represented by ‘eyes’ where the intersectional lens may be applied, as shown in Figure 8 below:

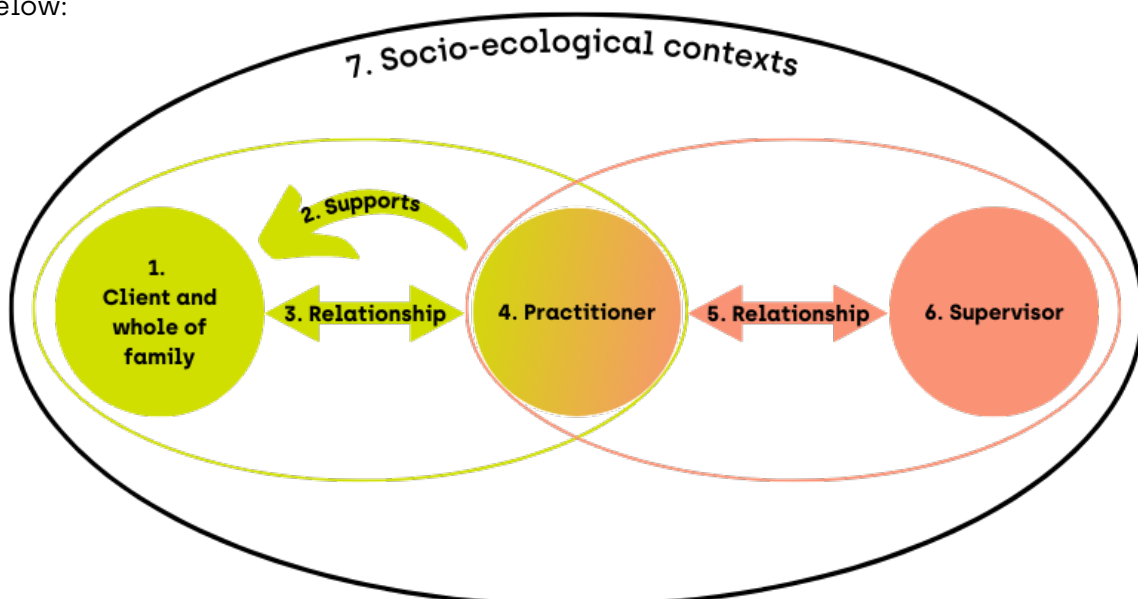


Figure 8: Seven eyes model of supervision (adapted)



Below are prompts to support practitioners and supervisors to focus their intersectional lens on each of the seven eyes during supervision sessions. It is important for both the practitioner and supervisor to be engage in reflexive practice and think about their own social position, privileges, and relative experiences to each other and the client.

PROMPTS. Seven eyes model of supervision

Prompts to consider as part of the adapted seven eyes model of supervision:

1. Client and family:

- a. Consider the intersecting identities and experiences of the client and family members.
- b. Where might these identities and experiences be similar or different?
- c. What power imbalances might exist within the family?
- d. What is their focus and priority?

2. Supports:

- a. What strategies and supports have you provided?
- b. How do these fit with the client's focus?
- c. Do these supports consider the intersectional identities and socio-ecological context?

3. Client-practitioner relationship:

- a. Identify and acknowledge sources of power imbalances.
- b. How do you build an alliance and maintain boundaries?

4. Practitioner:

- a. Reflect on your overlapping identities, power, privilege.
- b. What assumptions, privilege, and biases do you hold?
- c. What lived experience, cultural knowledge or identity knowledge do you hold?

5. Practitioner-supervisor relationship:

- a. Identify and acknowledge sources of power imbalances.
- b. How do you build an alliance and maintain boundaries?

6. Supervisor:

- a. Reflect on supervisor's overlapping identities, power, privilege.
- b. Supervisor reflects on privilege, assumptions and biases they hold.
- c. What lived experience, cultural knowledge or identity knowledge does the supervisor bring?

7. Socio-ecological contexts:

- a. Consider the socio-ecological context of the client, practitioner, and supervisor.
- b. What similarities and differences exist in terms of risks and protective factors?
- c. What intersecting systems/structures might impact the family, which you have not prioritised?



Culturally safe supervision and peer support

Where supervision is being provided to staff from diverse backgrounds, they may feel most safe and comfortable engaging in supervision with a supervisor from their community. While supervision usually occurs with a senior practitioner or manager with significant clinical experience, **peer supervision or communities of practice** among practitioners with related cultural knowledge (e.g., Aboriginal practitioners) may be a useful adjunct for reflexive practice and to support cultural safety among diverse staff.

TASK. CULTURALLY SAFE SUPERVISION

Considerations that may be needed as part of facilitating culturally safe supervision:

1. Are there existing supervisors who can provide culturally safe supervision? Do these supervisors have relevant cultural knowledge to support your diverse workforce?

Potential Actions:

- Collate a list of existing supervisors and their relevant cultural knowledge.
- Identify gaps in cultural knowledge for existing supervisors.
- Identify and support appropriate staff with cultural knowledge to provide peer supervision.
- Support training/education for existing supervisors in culturally safe and intersectional approaches to supervision.

2. What connections exist or could be made with other organisations (including local cultural groups) to facilitate culturally safe supervision?

Potential Actions:

- Talk with staff to explore existing connections in their community who may be able to provide culturally safe external supervision.
- Where there are gaps in cultural knowledge among your supervisors, develop connections with organisations that can provide culturally safe external supervision for diverse staff.

3. How could peer supervision and communities of practice be facilitated to safely support reflexive practice among workers from diverse communities?

Potential Actions:

- Facilitate peer supervision among staff with shared cultural knowledge as an adjunct to supervision with a senior practitioner.
- Develop a community of practice and/or opportunities for group supervision among people with shared cultural knowledge in your organisation.

4. Where new approaches to supervision (e.g., peer supervision, group supervision, co-reflection, mentoring, external supervision) are used, how will this be reflected in your existing policies and procedures?



5 REVIEW AND EVALUATION

Intersectional approaches to data collection.

Plan for evaluation from the beginning and draw on findings to guide the 'next steps'.

Review and evaluation

Evaluation measures should be considered from the early stages of the project. This can be done as part of the [Program Logic \[Section 2\]](#). What is learned from your evaluation will inform the ongoing implementation and further development of the process. The evaluation seeks to understand whether:

- the implementation of this process is effective,
- who it is effective for, and
- to drive further improvements.

Review and evaluation should be done at **multiple levels and at multiple timepoints**.

Review and evaluation process should consider the voices of:

1. **Clients** via ongoing opportunities to provide informal and formal feedback about their experience with the service. Feedback methods should be accessible and may include: written questionnaires, pre- and post-program Likert scales, individual interviews, and/or peer group interviews.
2. **Designated workers with cultural, lived experience and identity knowledge** via ongoing opportunities to provide informal and formal feedback about their experience with the program. This may include written questionnaires, individual interviews, and/or group feedback sessions.
3. **Other staff**, including practitioners, managers and executive staff. This may include written questionnaires, individual interviews, and/or focus groups.

REFLECTION. REVIEW AND EVALUATION

Thinking about the relevant stakeholders in your service,

1. What are you trying to find out through your evaluation (see Program Logic)?
2. Who do you need to collect evaluation data from (e.g., clients, lived experience workers, executive staff)?
3. How have you included the voices of people with lived experience and cultural knowledge in designing the evaluation process?



Potential types of data

Within the service, considerations should be made about the most appropriate data collection methods to use and types of data to collect. These may include:

- **Client records and intake data** (e.g., to understand client demographics and intersectional identities)
- **Census or survey** (e.g., to understand client or staff demographics and intersectional identities). May be used with clients or all staff
- **Pre-, post- and follow-up questionnaires** (e.g., to evaluate change in knowledge, confidence and attitudes). May be used with clients, lived experience workers, other staff. May be qualitative and/or quantitative
- **Interviews and feedback sessions**. May be used with clients, lived experience workers, other staff (see [Resource 8](#) for example questions)
- **Culture-specific methodologies** (e.g., yarning circles; Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010).

Different forms of data will require different skill sets to collect and analyse. This includes the specific skills for culturally safe data collection methods, where relevant cultural groups and people with cultural knowledge may need to be engaged. To capture rich and meaningful data, a **mixed methods** approach is beneficial – where both qualitative (e.g., descriptive) and quantitative (i.e., numerical) data is collected and interpreted together. These different forms of data can support and supplement each other, providing a comprehensive picture about the issue.

REFLECTION. TYPES OF DATA

Thinking about the aims and groups involved in your evaluation process,

1. What forms of data collection are most appropriate and most feasible?
2. How will the principles of co-production be incorporated into the data collection, where feasible or appropriate?
3. How will you integrate your findings with other forms of evidence, including:
 - a. External research evidence (e.g., systematic reviews, reports, studies)
 - b. Other internally collected data (e.g., quantitative and qualitative data)
 - c. Stakeholder knowledge (including intersectional lived experience voices)
 - d. Subject matter experts (e.g., senior practitioners or researchers)



Intersectional Data Collection Methods

Successful review and evaluation relies on effective data collection methods. Data collection should consider the *Victorian Family Violence Data Collection Framework* (Victorian Government, 2021), which is a guideline for the collection data related to family violence in Victorian agencies and service providers. This framework outlines standards for how to ask questions in an accurate and respectful way. It also summarises current limitations to data collection in the sector and strategies to improve evaluation.

Without an intersectional approach, data collection and analysis typically considers an individual's backgrounds/demographics as discrete constructs (e.g., disability, gender, ethnicity, age). However, each person's identity is complex and individuals should not be categorised by only one aspect of their identity. When collecting or examining data, services should recognise that each of the aspects of a person's identity may be associated with different forms of oppression or discrimination, and the intersections between these aspects can mean that the individual is at a compounded risk of harm.

The following principles should be considered to support an intersectional data collection approach:

- Collect **disaggregated data** for clients and staff (i.e., data broken down into sub-categories and groups, including based on culture, lived experience and identity).
 - **Action:** In surveys and questionnaires, give diverse choices and/or option of open responses to demographic questions (e.g., gender, sexuality, ethnicity, faith).
- **Probe** and analyse disaggregated data for priority intersectional groups (e.g., CALD LGBTQI+ clients).
 - **Actions:** Cross-tabulation of quantitative data based on intersectional groups (Note. This will be dependent on number of responses). Analyse and group qualitative responses based on intersectional identities (e.g., subthemes about the experience of CALD lived experience workers).
- Consider the **unique experiences** of oppression and discrimination based on overlapping aspects of a person's identity.
 - **Action:** Design questions and probe responses using an intersectional lens. Avoid making assumptions that a person's experience is related to only one aspect of their identity (e.g., ethnicity), without considering or asking about other factors.
- Consider what information needs to be **shared or discussed** before the participation completes the evaluation task.
 - **Action:** Include an Introduction about the purpose of the evaluation and why it is considered important to ask questions about peoples' demographics, experiences, and identities. Provide relevant definitions (e.g., intersectionality) and, where possible, provide avenues for participants to ask follow-up questions.



Processes should be described for participants if they become distressed or need support/aftercare as part of completing any evaluation process.

- When analysing disaggregated quantitative data, consider the impact of using **smaller sample size** on data analysis and confidentiality.
 - **Actions:** Where there is only a small sample, avoid drawing broad conclusions about the population. Ensure that confidentiality is maintained when reporting disaggregated data. Before publishing or releasing findings, determine if the individual could be reasonably identified based on what is being reported.
- Use a **mixed methods approach** integrating quantitative and qualitative data.
 - **Actions:** Collect demographic data before or alongside qualitative interviews. When exploring participants' experience with the program, use quantitative measures (e.g., using a Likert scale indicating their perceived knowledge) and qualitative measures (e.g., description of how their knowledge or practice changed).
- If using **group-based evaluation** processes (e.g., focus groups, group interviews, Delphi group), consider who is present in the group and whether it allows for open discussions about intersectional identities.
 - **Actions:** When conducting identity-specific focus groups (e.g., for LGBTIQ+ lived experience workers), have a member of the community co-facilitate the group. Consult with the community about the most appropriate way to conduct the evaluation process (e.g., focus group vs yarning circle).

REFLECTION. INTERSECTIONAL EVALUATION

Based on the recommendations and actions above:

1. What actions can you take during the data collection and evaluation process to ensure accurate and meaningful intersectional data is captured?
 - a. Before completing evaluation tasks (e.g., introduction/explanation about the task)
 - b. Design of questions
 - c. Data analysis methods.
2. How will you ensure that data collection and evaluation is safe and respectful for participants?

Key evaluation questions

[Resource 8](#) contains example questions that may be asked as part of the evaluation process. The example questions are designed for service leaders and champions. They should also be adapted based on the audience (e.g., managers, practitioners, lived experience staff) and your specific outcomes (e.g., in the program logic).



Resource kit

This section contains a range of templates and examples, which may be adapted to support your organisational readiness and implementation process. Resources were informed by experiences with the iHeal project, findings from the literature, and implementation science. This resource kit is organised according to the readiness and implementation sections.

Readiness resources

Readiness resources include:

1. Comprehensive Organisational Readiness Checklist
2. Blank Planning tool for elevating intersectional voices
3. Example Program Logic (iHeal)
4. Blank Program Logic templates

Implementation resources

Implementation resources include:

1. Hiring process for designated positions
2. Example Core Competencies (iHeal)
3. Sample evaluation questions.



Resource 1. Comprehensive Organisational Readiness Checklist

1. Values of the service and its staff:	Implementation status				
Initiatives are more likely to be successfully implemented if they fit with the core values of the organisations and staff.	Complete: yes/no	Current process	Future actions and changes (short-term and long-term)	Champion/s (who is leading this)	Date for review
a. How does cultural, lived experience, and identity knowledge fit with your service's values, mission and strategic objectives?					
b. How will you engage your existing staff around their values and beliefs in relation to intersectional lived experience?					
c. How do you recognise and address power imbalances and engage in power-sharing?					



2. Organisational policies and systems:

Implementation status

In order to be embedded sustainably within an organisation, the new program needs to be reflected in core organisational systems and processes.

a. Does the organisation have **lived experience policies and procedures, and are they effectively implemented?**

b. Do **other relevant policies** (e.g., recruitment) need to be updated to reflect the inclusion of lived experience workforce?

c. Does the organisation have **diversity, inclusion and/or intersectionality** policies and procedures?

d. Does the organisation have clear processes in place for how their lived experience workforce will **work alongside other staff and programs?**

e. Have **supervision processes** been adapted to suit the unique needs and experiences of an intersectional lived experience workers?

Complete: yes/no

Current process

Future actions and changes (short-term and long-term)

Champion/s (who is leading this)

Date for review



3. Training and Capacity Building	Implementation status				
	Complete: yes/no	Current process	Future actions and changes (short-term and long-term)	Champion/s (who is leading this)	Date for review
Training and capacity building is an opportunity to upskill and support existing and new staff so that practice is collaborative and effective.					
a. Has the service resourced trainings to understand the role of intersectionality and diversity in the service?					
b. Has the service resourced training to understand the roles, purpose, and integration of intersectional lived experience workers .					
c. Have staff had opportunities to work collaboratively to co-develop and knowledge share with lived experience workers?					
d. Will supervisors receive training and support in supervising an intersectional lived experience workforce?					
e. How will intersectional lived experience workers receive training and support in their ongoing professional development (including to address Mandatory Minimum Qualifications)?					



4. Leadership Leadership occurs across all levels of a service, but requires genuine awareness of who holds power and influence to create change.	Implementation status				
	Complete: yes/no	Current process	Future actions and changes (short-term and long-term)	Champion/s (who is leading this)	Date for review
a. Will service leaders at all levels be involved in implementing the program?					
b. Do leaders provide an authorising environment (e.g., setting a positive, constructive tone and promoting the value of incorporating lived experience workers)?					
c. Do leaders appropriately use their power to challenge barriers to change, including by engaging in power-sharing with stakeholders.					



5. Stakeholder engagement

Implementation status

Involving and centring the voices of stakeholders with cultural, identity and lived experience knowledge is critical to addressing the key needs.	Complete: yes/no	Current process	Future actions and changes (short-term and long-term)	Champion/s (who is leading this)	Date for review
a. Have staff with cultural, lived experience, and identity knowledge been consulted and invited to contribute their expertise?					
b. Have all staff been briefed about the purpose of, and their role in, building an intersectional lived experience workforce?					
c. Have relevant community groups, people with lived experience and/or clients been engaged as stakeholders or as part of an advisory group?					
d. How is power shared so that involvement of stakeholders is genuine and effective, rather than tokenistic?					



6. Review and support

Implementation status

Keeping implementation on the agenda and staff engagement high is key to the success of supporting your intersectional lived experience workforce.

a. Do you have a plan for **evaluating and reviewing** program **outcomes**?

b. Have you established an **intersectionality and diversity working group** that will meet regularly, and include representatives at all levels of the organisations?

c. Have you established a **lived experience working group** that will meet regularly, and include representatives at all levels of the organisations?

d. Have regular forums and processes for **all staff** to provide **feedback** and raise concerns or positive experiences of the program been established?

e. Is there a process in place for regular consultation and **feedback** with the **lived experience workforce**?

Complete: yes/no

Current process

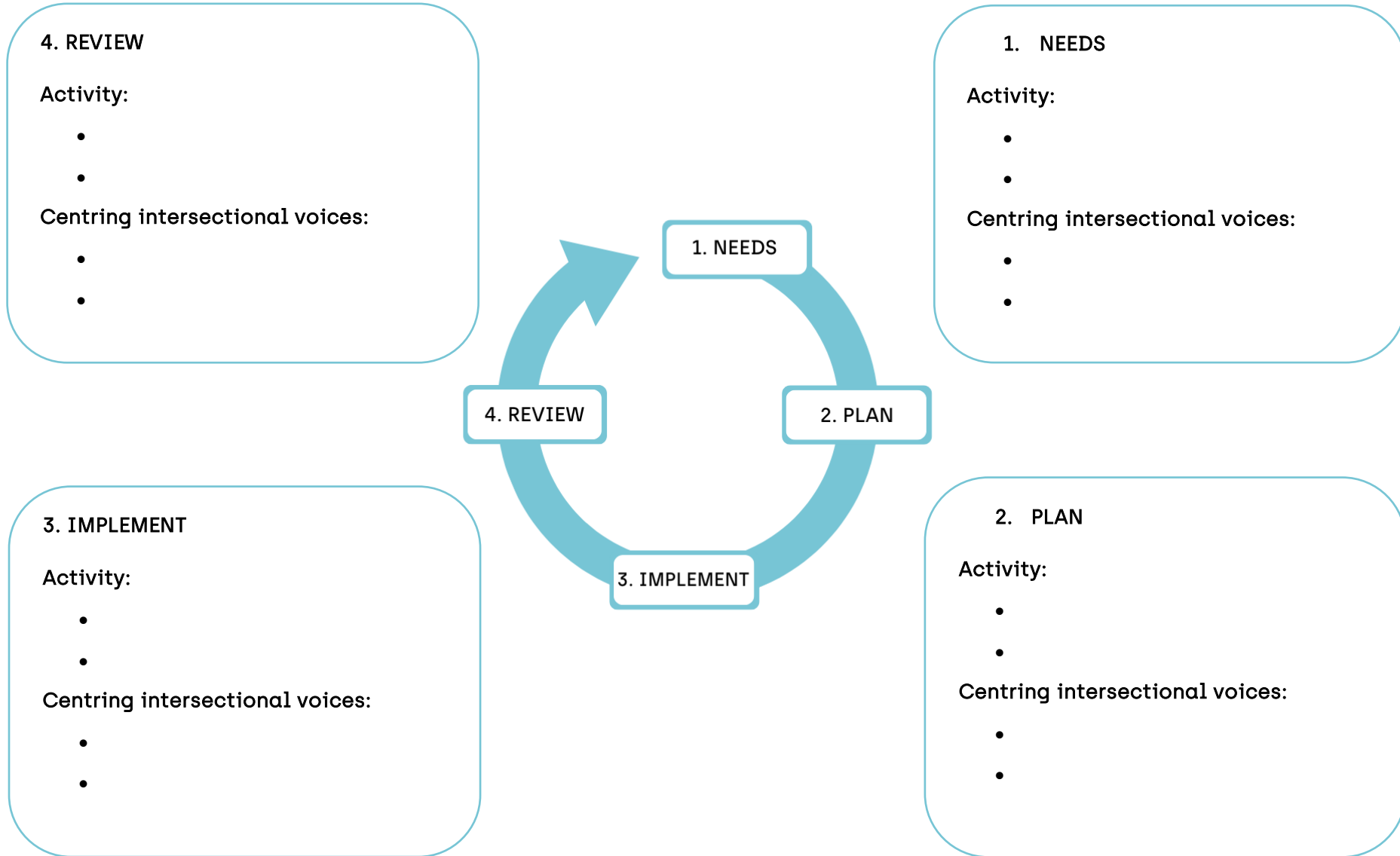
Future actions and changes (short-term and long-term)

Champion/s (who is leading this)

Date for review

	Complete: yes/no	Current process	Future actions and changes (short-term and long-term)	Champion/s (who is leading this)	Date for review
a. Do you have a plan for evaluating and reviewing program outcomes ?					
b. Have you established an intersectionality and diversity working group that will meet regularly, and include representatives at all levels of the organisations?					
c. Have you established a lived experience working group that will meet regularly, and include representatives at all levels of the organisations?					
d. Have regular forums and processes for all staff to provide feedback and raise concerns or positive experiences of the program been established?					
e. Is there a process in place for regular consultation and feedback with the lived experience workforce ?					

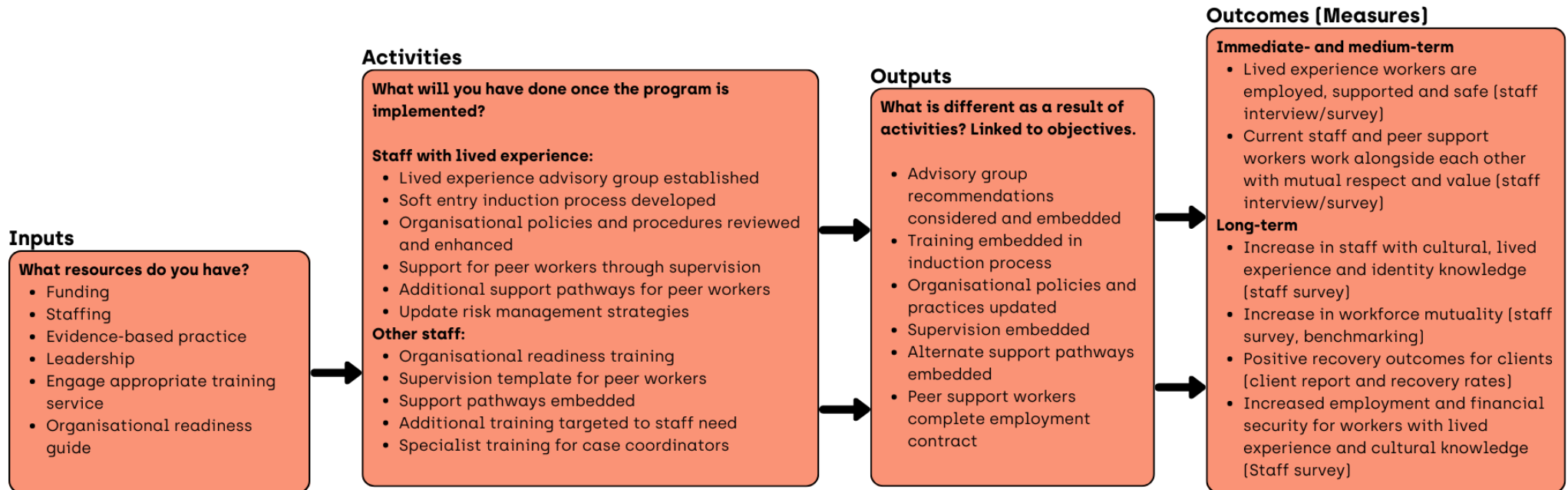
Resource 2. Blank Planning tool for centring intersectional voices



Resource 3. Example Program Logic (from iHeal)

Aim

To provide clients with the opportunity to receive effective and sustainable support from lived experience workers with relevant cultural or identity knowledge.



Theory of change

Ideas about how or why the program (building an intersectional lived experience workforce) will work

If those experiencing family violence or sexual assault are provided with the social support of someone who has gone through a similar experience, this will foster hope and aspirations for the future, as well as motivation to keep pursuing their goals.

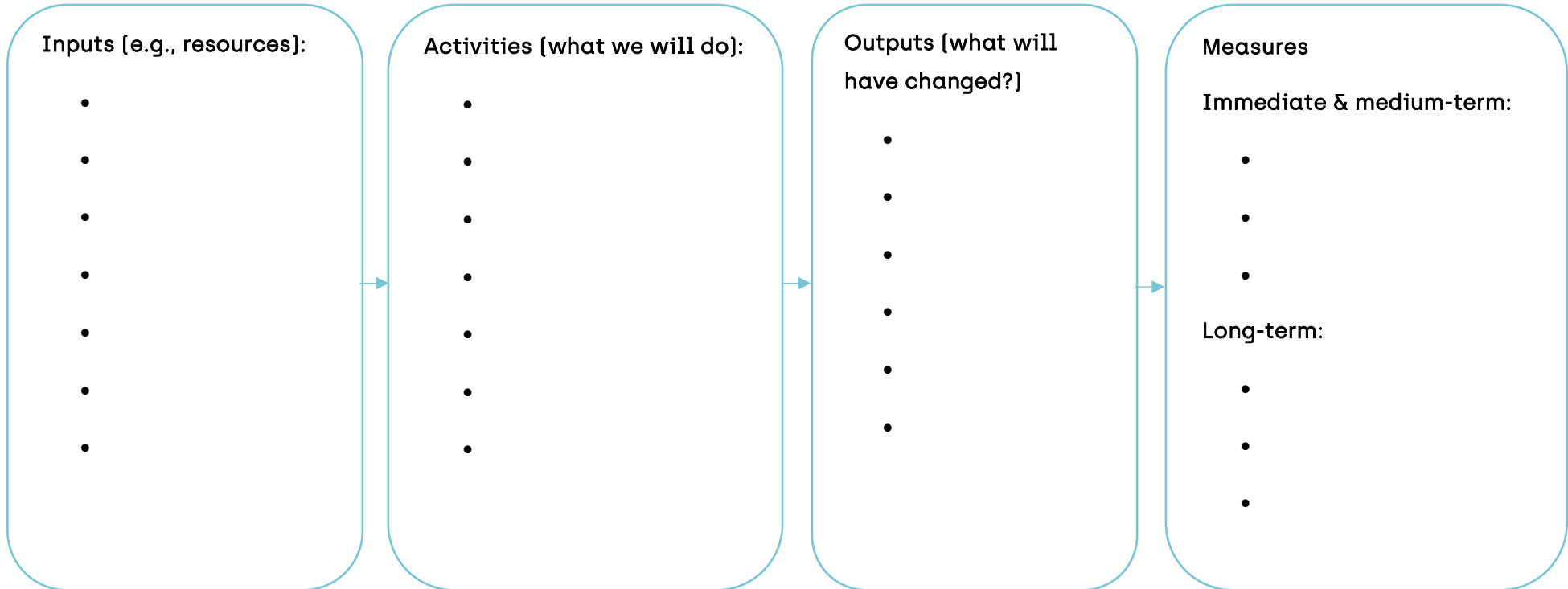
Having this relationship alongside counselling and group programs will support self-determination skills, leading to better outcomes for survivors, as they will be able to:

- support their own recovery
- better support their children
- find help when needed.



Resource 4. Blank Program Logic

Aim (what the program will achieve):



Theory of change (why the program will work):

-
-

Resource 5. Hiring process for designated positions

Resource 5.1 Sample Position Descriptions

The position description below is adapted from FVREE and iHeal. Some sample content is provided but should be adapted to your service and the specific role.

Lived Experience Worker – Family Violence/Sexual Assault (designated role)

Key Details

Location:	Remuneration:
Employment type: Ongoing, full time or part time (0.5-1.0 FTE) options available	Classification: SCHADS Award level
Reports to:	Direct reports:

What is offered

We are a welcoming, supportive and inclusive team, driven by a shared vision of a community free from violence where everyone is safe. This means that:

- We walk the talk on inclusion: bring your whole self to work and draw on your unique knowledge and experience
- We believe in lifelong learning and support our people to engage in professional development
- We embrace flexibility and hybrid working - whilst we believe some time together in person is critical, we know balancing life and work is important
- We have great benefits like paid parental leave, cultural leave and wellbeing programs.



About the position:

A Recovery Support Worker is someone with a **lived experience of family violence or sexual assault** who would like to help others currently seeking support. They will bring to the role a personal understanding of the impacts of family violence or sexual assault, understanding about the recovery process, and experience navigating services and systems. Successful applicants will be at a point in their recovery journey where they can use their wisdom and expertise from their experiences in a way that is safe and supportive for themselves and their clients.

Applicants are **strongly encouraged** to apply if they are from one or more groups that we assertively work with and who are particularly vulnerable to family violence or sexual assault (including LGBTIQ+ people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with disabilities, and culturally and linguistically diverse people). People from one or more of these communities are encouraged to draw on their cultural knowledge about their identity/experience as part of their work.

We apply an **intersectional** lens to all our work. Our approach is trauma informed, strengths based, and person centred. Alongside practical support, you will work with Victim Survivors to hold hope, validate experience, and build empowerment and self-belief in their recovery journey.

You will work in a multi-disciplinary team with peers from the service and other agencies to provide an integrated service including initial screening and risk assessment, short term assistance and financial support and connect clients to a range of other services. You will be able to draw on a range of supports, including your team leader to develop your specialist family violence practice.

Note. This is a designated lived experience role. This means that applicants will have had direct lived experience of family violence or sexual assault. Applicants will be at a point in their journey as a victim-survivor where they can **safely and intentionally** draw on their experience to support others.



Key Responsibilities		
<p>Service delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share expertise and knowledge with clients to support their recovery, using your own recovery journey in a safe and appropriate way • Work alongside clients in an inclusive and culturally safe way • Help clients to build safe family environments and relationships • Help clients to set goals • Assist with housing, income, education, and employment needs • Assist in building social and community supports and connections • Provide risk screening in collaboration with victim survivors, their children, pets and animals, using the Multi Agency Risk Assessment and Management framework (MARAM) <p>Training, development and support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in ongoing group and on the job training • Participate in trauma-informed and reflective supervision (individual and group supervision) • Work towards Mandatory Minimum Qualifications (Bachelor of Social Work or equivalent within 10 years, with support from the service) <p>Program delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative duties, including managing client information • Contribute to the design and delivery of support services for victim survivors • Assist with research and evaluation activities 		
Key Skills and Competencies		
Skills and knowledge	Technical/Functional	Experience Profile (incl Qualifications)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative, flexible and solution focused • Proactive work practices • Strong communication skills • Strong interpersonal skills • Cultural awareness competencies • Safe and appropriate use of recovery journey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work independently and as part of a team • Basic information technology skills • A current Working with Children Check, or the ability to secure one • A current Australian driver's license or competency with public transport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lived experience and understanding of the impact of Family Violence or Sexual Assault on health and wellbeing (Essential) • Significant cultural knowledge • A strong personal/professional support network that promotes resilience • Involved and actively participating in the local community
Position Dimensions		Supervisor
0.5-1.0 FTE [flexible work arrangements are available]		Lived Experience Program Manager



Other important information:

A probation period of 6 months applies. You will need to get some safety screening checks before starting in the role. We recognise that some people who have experienced family violence or sexual assault may also have lived experiences with the justice system. This is not necessarily a barrier to employment, and we encourage you to reach out to us if you would like to have a conversation about anything that may come up in the police checks.

As part of this role, you will have:

- A national criminal history (police) check renewed every 3 years.
- An international criminal history certificate (if you've lived overseas for 12 months or more in the last 10 years)
- A Working with Children Check (renewed every 5 years)
- If you choose a hybrid working option, you'll need to have a private space to work in, while ensuring confidentiality.



Resource 5.2 Sample Text Advertisement

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SUPPORT PEOPLE WHO ARE EXPERIENCING FAMILY VIOLENCE?

Can you use your **own experience and recovery journey** as a victim survivor of family violence to provide other people with hope and support?

We are looking for people with lived experience of family violence who are also a member of one of the following groups:

- Are you Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?
- Do you identify as any of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, gender diverse, intersex or queer [LGBTIQ+]?
- Are you from a culturally and linguistically diverse background?
- Are you a person living with a disability?

Then [organisation name] would love to hear from you. We are excited to launch our Lived Experience program. It has been specially designed for, and delivered by, victim survivors of family violence. We are looking for people with lived experience of family violence to be trained and supported to provide case work, group peer support, and recovery education programs to clients who have experienced or are experiencing family violence.

To succeed in the role, you will have:

- Lived experience and understanding of the impact of family violence on wellbeing and health.
- Personal experience of your own recovery journey and navigating the system
- A strong personal/professional support network
- English (verbal and written) to engage in training and support
- Involvement in the local community

To apply for a position as a Lived Experience Worker please complete the following application form. If you want some help applying for the position, please call or email [contact person and details] and we will be happy to support you.

Not sure if you are the right person or meet the requirements? We would still love to hear from you and chat about the role. Reach out by giving [Name] a call on [phone] or email them on [email address].



Resource 5.3 Sample Graphic advertisement

Are you a victim-survivor of sexual assault?

DRAW ON YOUR EXPERIENCE TO HELP OTHERS ON THEIR RECOVERY JOURNEY

[Name of service] is looking for people with a lived experience of sexual assault who can use their knowledge in a safe, intentional and empowering way with people currently navigating the sexual assault system.

In particular, we are looking for people from one or more of these communities:

- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Gender diverse, Intersex or Queer (LGBTIQ+)
- Culturally and Linguistically diverse
- Disabled or living with a disability.



You will be trained and supported to provide case work, group peer support, and recovery education programs to clients who have experienced sexual assault.

Want to know more and apply?

Read the Position Description below.

Not sure if you're the right person?

Get in touch with [Name]:

[phone number] [email]



Resource 5.4 Application form

To apply for a position as a Lived Experience Worker, please complete this application form. If you want some help applying for the position, please call or email [Contact Person and Details] and we will be happy to support you.

Lived Experience Worker Application Form	
Name:	
Pronouns:	
Phone number:	
Email:	
Address:	
Please confirm that you:	
1. Have a lived experience and understanding of the impact of family violence/sexual assault.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
2. Have experience of your own recovery journey.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
3. Are not currently living in a situation where you are experiencing family violence, impacting on your role.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Tick the following that apply:	
a. Identify as any of LGBTIQ+	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
b. Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
c. Are from a Culturally or Linguistically Diverse (CALD) background	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
d. Are living with a disability	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Please answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences.	
Why do you want to support people who are or who have experienced family violence/sexual assault?	
What experience and skills will you bring to supporting people who are experiencing or have experienced family violence/sexual assault?	
Have you done any training that is relevant to supporting people who are experiencing or have experienced family violence/sexual assault?	
Please tell us anything else that you'd like us to know about why you'd be a great Lived Experience Worker.	
Please attach any other relevant information, such as your resume (if you have one), and return your Application Form by the [Date] to [Contact Person].	



Resource 5.5 Sample Interview Questions

Questions and applicant responses	
1. What life skills or training have you gained which has prepared you to work as part of the recovery team?	
2. [Organisation name] embraces diversity and has a strong history of providing services that are available and suitable to our diverse communities. How has your background and experience prepared you to be effective in an environment that holds this value?	
3. As you may be aware, this is a new role being introduced to [Organisation name]. With a new program, there could be changes that arise along the way which may result in you having to adapt in your role. Could you provide an example of a time where you needed to adapt to a change?	
4. What do you think some of the considerations are in bringing your lived experience into your role? Deciding if, when and how to share this?	
5. Accessing support when you are experiencing family violence can be very challenging and there can be additional barriers when you are someone who is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, identifies as LGBTIQ, is from a CALD background or is a living with a disability. What have you learned from your own experience about what can be helpful or make it harder for people accessing support?	
6. Tell us how you take care of your own well-being and what supports you have in place? What concerns do you have that this position could impact on your own self-care? What supports would you need from your team and Manager?	
7. You may be asked to lead recovery-oriented groups for participants. You would be provided with training before these begin.	
a. Have you led groups before?	



b. What may be challenging for you in running groups?
8. Please give your best example of working cooperatively as a team member (including a friend, colleague, community member) to accomplish an important goal.
a. What was the goal or objective?
b. To what extent did you interact with others on this project?
9. Share an example of a role you held in the past where you had to learn and use new skills. How did you go about it? [Note. A role does not necessarily need to be work-related, could be a focus on family, friends or as a member of the community.]

Resource 6. Sample evaluation questions

Note. Feedback should be directly provided from the groups being impacted. For example, when addressing questions about clients, feedback from clients may be provided through individual feedback, surveys, steering committees or focus groups. Consider whose perspective is being given, whose voice is being elevated, and who has not 'had a say'.

1. APPROPRIATENESS: To what extent are intersectional and lived experience services provided to clients appropriate?
a. To what extent did clients and staff feel safe and supported?
b. To what extent did clients and staff have a sense of autonomy or self-determination?
c. To what extent did clients and staff feel that the program content was inclusive and culturally appropriate?
d. To what extent did clients and staff feel that there was an informed and coordinated workforce.
2. EFFECTIVENESS: To what extent were the intersectional and lived experience services effective?
a. Which client groups were reached by the program?
b. How satisfied were clients with the program activities?
c. To what extent have the program outcomes been achieved overall?
d. Which clients, or groups of clients have experienced change, and what was the nature and extent of the change(s)?
e. In what ways did the use of an intentional lived experience staff enhance the service and outcomes?
f. In what ways has the program transformed or changed existing approaches, systems and processes?
3. DEVELOPMENT: What steps are needed to further build an intersectional and lived experience workforce that is appropriate and effective?
a. What gaps exist in the service in terms of developing or supporting an intersectional and lived experience workforce?
b. What else is needed to better build or support an intersectional lived experience workforce?



Further readings and resources

Below are a range of resources that can help in the development of your lived experience workforce.

Everybody Matters (Victorian Government, 2018)

Family Safety Victoria developed the Statement in response to the Royal Commission into Family Violence in partnership with sector stakeholders and people with lived experience. It includes a call for everybody in the family violence system to act as champions for diversity, challenge the current system, and strive for change that delivers choice for all.

[Everybody matters – Inclusion and equity statement](#)

Evidence by Experience framework (Lamb et al., 2020)

This framework supports specialist family violence services to proactively engage survivor advocates. It includes guidelines and resources to assist services to work collaboratively with survivor advocates to influence policy, service planning and practice.

[Family Violence Experts by Experience Framework](#)

Family violence, sexual assault and child wellbeing best practice supervision (DFFH, 2023)

DFFH provides information about the use of individual, group and peer supervision. It also outlines policy development and supervision training. Three information sheets are available (supervision definitions, supervision functions and reflective supervision) and best practice guidelines will be published in late 2023.

[Best practice supervision](#)

Mandatory Minimum Qualifications – Recommendation 209 (DFFH, 2019)

Brief report summarising the Mandatory Minimum Qualifications – Recommendation 209 from the Royal Commission.

[Mandatory Minimum Qualifications – Recommendation 209](#)



Power Literacy Field Guide [Goodwill, 2020]

A guide focused on developing awareness of, sensitivity to, and understanding of the impact of power and systemic oppression in design processes.

[Power Literacy Field Guide](#)

Standards of Practice Manual for Services against Sexual Violence

The Standards of Practice Manual for Services Against Sexual Violence (3rd edition) was prepared by the national association of services against sexual violence (NASASV) for the Department of Social Services. It involved a review of international standards, guidelines and research and presents a set of standards for practice competence in the workforce for responding to people impacted by sexual violence.

[NASASV National Standards of Practice Manual for Services against Family Violence \[3rd edition\]](#)

The Context Experts [Attygate, 2017]

Outlines the difference between content and context experts, as an accessible way to consider and elevate different forms of knowledge. Includes prompts and questions for supporting authentic engagement around this discussion.

[The Context Experts](#)

Victorian Family Violence Data Collection Framework – Victorian Government [2019]

A guideline for the collection of family violence related data by Victorian government departments, agencies and service providers. It includes specific recommendations in relation to intersectionality (p. 107) and some specific vulnerable groups (e.g., LGBTIQ+ people, p. 51; CALD groups, p. 87).

[Victorian family violence data collection framework](#)

The WEAVERS Project

The WEAVERS are a group of advocates who have experienced family violence and/or sexual violence. They draw on their knowledge and expertise to weave lived experience into research and training at the University of Melbourne.

[The WEAVERS project – Website](#)



[How to address power imbalances when working with survivor advocates – Video](#)

Workforce Mutuality Toolkit – HealthWest Partnership (2020)

The toolkit includes three documents, which provide guidance for achieving workforce mutuality:

1. Standards for workforce mutuality
2. Examples of good practice
3. Self-assessment tool

[Workforce Mutuality Toolkit - Website](#)



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