EXPERT REFERENCE GROUP ON MENTAL HEALTH REFORM

GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS AND

TERMS OF REFERENCE

16 April 2013
Expert Reference Group – Terms of Reference

Background

On 7 December 2012 COAG released the Roadmap for National Mental Health Reform 2012-22 (the Roadmap), agreed to provide a joint response to the National Mental Health Commission’s (the Commission) inaugural Report Card on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention (the Report Card) that would include national indicators and targets for mental health reform and established the Working Group on National Mental Health Reform (the Working Group) to be supported by an Expert Reference Group (ERG).

The Working Group is a national high level, interjurisdictional, cross portfolio body to ensure that mental health reform remains a priority across governments.

Role of the Expert Reference Group

The ERG reports to and supports the Working Group. The role of the ERG is to provide independent advice to the Working Group on matters referred to it. Importantly the ERG has been established to provide advice to governments that reflects a broader community perspective, especially the views of those with lived experience of mental health issues, their families and other supporters.

Terms of Reference

The key task of the ERG is to provide advice to the Working Group on a set of ambitious and achievable national, whole of life, outcome based indicators and targets for mental health that will be understood by the community and drive systemic change. A starting point for this work is the preliminary indicators and targets in the Roadmap. It is not the ERG’s role to undertake a technical assessment of the feasibility and costs of implementing and reporting against the proposed indicators and targets. This assessment will be undertaken by the Working Group on receipt of advice from the ERG.

In making recommendations on national, whole of life, outcome based indicators and targets for mental health, the ERG should consider:

- the range of needs of all Australians with mental health issues and their family and supporters - from having a home to employment, education and health supports, to social connections – and how this range should be reflected in national indicators;
- the range of relevant Australian and comparative international mental health performance indicators and targets, and relevant indicators from other sectors and what indicators will be most influential in achieving systemic change to improve people’s lives;
- if the performance against the indicator should be static, increasing or decreasing;
- listing in order of priority indicators for development that currently do not have sufficiently robust or regular data available; and
- the availability of relevant indicators that may be disaggregated by Indigenous status.

The Working Group must report to COAG on national indicators and targets by the end of 2013. The ERG’s advice to the Working Group must be provided to in a timeframe that enables the Working Group to meet this deadline.
The ERG may also be requested to provide advice to the Working Group on other matters as required to assist the Working Group in meeting the Working Group’s terms of reference. Where additional advice is sought of the ERG by the Working Group, the resources required to undertake this work, and the timing of this work, will be negotiated.

Consultation and Engagement

In undertaking its work, the ERG will ensure that appropriate consultation and engagement is undertaken, including with people with lived experience of mental health issues, their families and other supporters, the Commonwealth and state and territory governments and jurisdictions’ mental health commissions, providers of services and supports across the range of sectors, and researchers/academia.

Relationships

The ERG’s primary relationship will be with the Working Group. The ERG reports to and supports the Working Group.

It is expected that the ERG will work closely with the mental health sector and other sectors to progress its work and may draw on established relationships and expertise, including these already harnessed by the Commission.

Membership

The ERG’s membership will comprise:

- the Chair (from the Commission);
- one nominated representative from each jurisdiction, which could include a representative from a mental health commission, peak body or advisory group, or consumers/carers; and
- a representative with lived experience of a mental health issue and a family/carer representative agreed by the Co-Chairs of the Working Group.

The Chair of the ERG, in consultation with the Co-Chairs of the Working Group, will have capacity to use or co-opt additional expertise, including technical expertise, onto the ERG to ensure community diversity is reflected in its advice and to enable the ERG to address the Terms of Reference.

Secretariat

The Commission will provide Secretariat support to the ERG.

Remuneration and reimbursement of expenses

Members, unless representing a government agency, will be offered payment according to the Commission’s Paid Participation Policy or equivalent Remuneration Tribunal determination.