

TOMORROWS WORKFORCE

*Peer Workforce in Alcohol & other Drugs
(AOD)*



Self Help Addiction Resource Centre

Self Help Addiction Resource Centre Inc.

Outline

- SHARC and Peer Projects
- What is a Peer Worker?
- The Evidence Base for Peer Work and Key Operating Documents
- Peer Workforce Development and a thriving Peer Workforce
- Implementing a Peer Workforce – Key domains
- Organisational Readiness
- Preparation and Planning
- Framework for sustainability
- SHARC Peer Worker Model
- Q & A

SHARC

SHARC provides opportunities for individuals, families and communities affected by addiction and related problems to recover and achieve meaningful, satisfying and contributing lives.

SHARC's programs and services include:

- Residential Peer Programs
- SHARC Family Programs: Family Drug Help and Family Gambling Help
- Peer Projects
- Association of Participating Service Users



Peer Projects

- Peer Workforce Development and Support
- SHARC Peer Worker Model
- Peer Workers in AOD
- Peer Workers in Justice
- Peer Projects Community

What is a peer worker?

A professional hired for their qualifications who may also have a lived experience of alcohol and drug use?

A person with lived experience of alcohol and drug use working at organisational and policy levels, providing advice and support to services?

A senior client within a treatment program who provides guidance and support to newer members of that service?

A Peer Worker....

A person who uses his or her lived experience of alcohol and other drugs, plus skills learned in formal training, to deliver services in support of others.

What do they do?

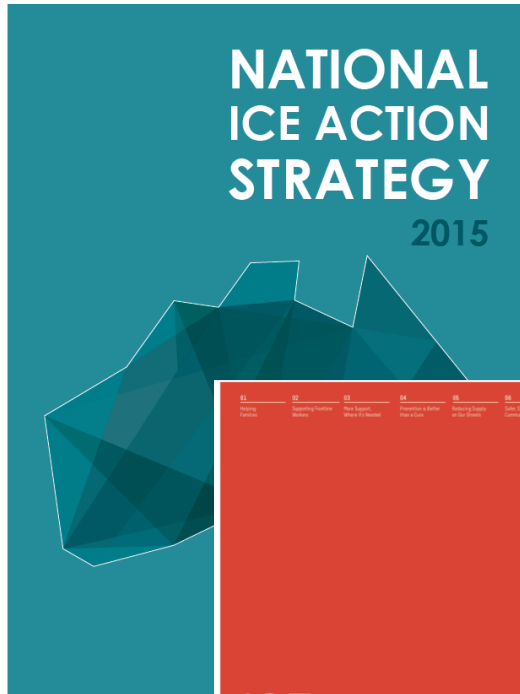
Peer workers offer support to others who have shared experiences by:

- Facilitating authentic connections
- Sharing their personal experiences in a way that inspires hope
- Offering help and support as an equal, within a defined role
- Developing positive relationships that demonstrate the power and possibility of change

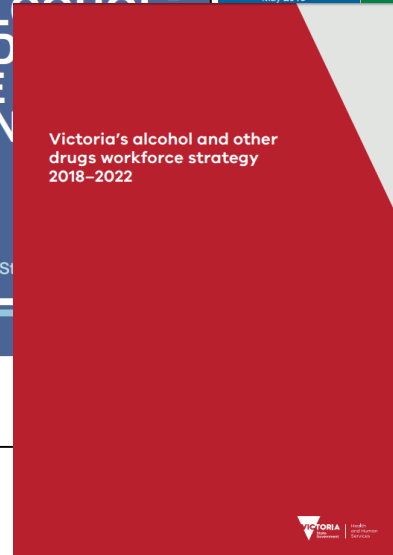
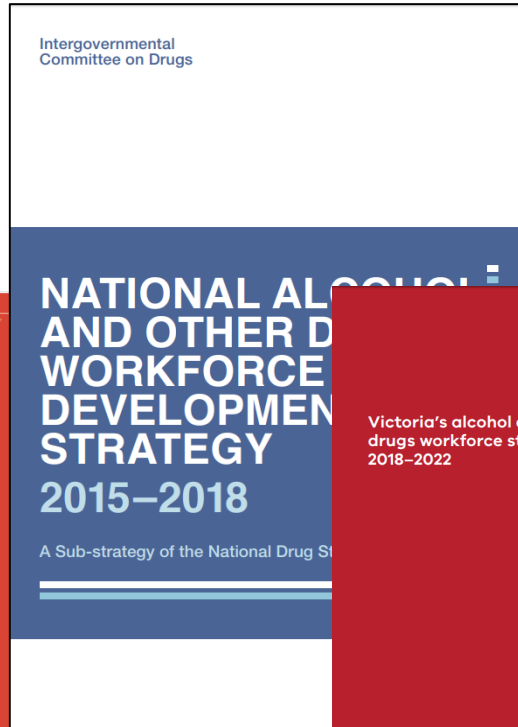
The evidence base

- The evidence base for peer work is strong in the Mental Health sector and useful parallels can be drawn. (see Gagne, C. A., White, W., & Anthony, W. A. (2007). Recovery: A common vision for the fields of mental health and addictions. *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*, 32(10), 32-37.)
- New Zealand studies have evidence for AOD Peer Work. They have found it effective, good value for money a valuable component of AOD service delivery that contributes positively to people's recovery. (See King J, Panther G. (2014). Peer Support Themes. Report prepared for AOD Collaborative Group. Auckland: Julian King & Associates Limited – a member of the Kinnect Group.)
- Peer work benefits the people who use the service, the peer worker and the organisation.

Key Operating Documents



Council of

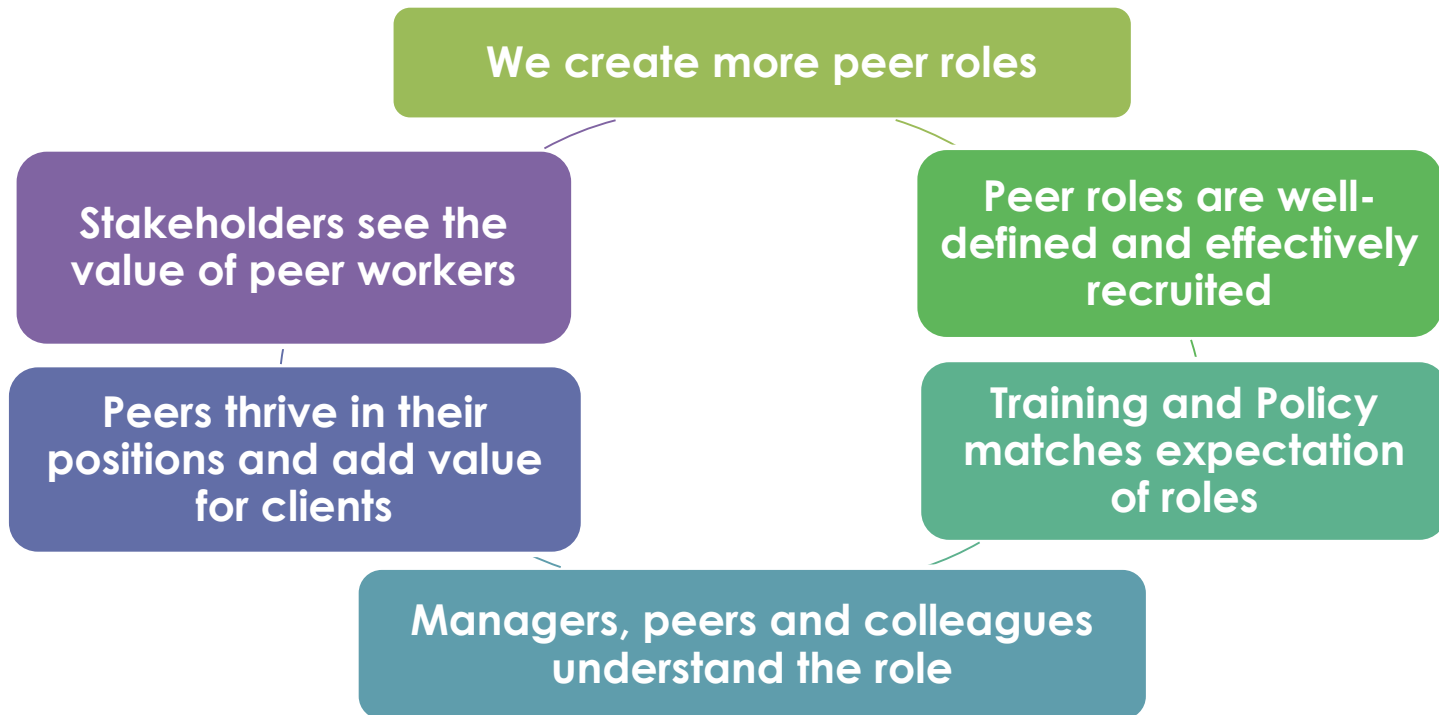


The Victorian Peer Workforce

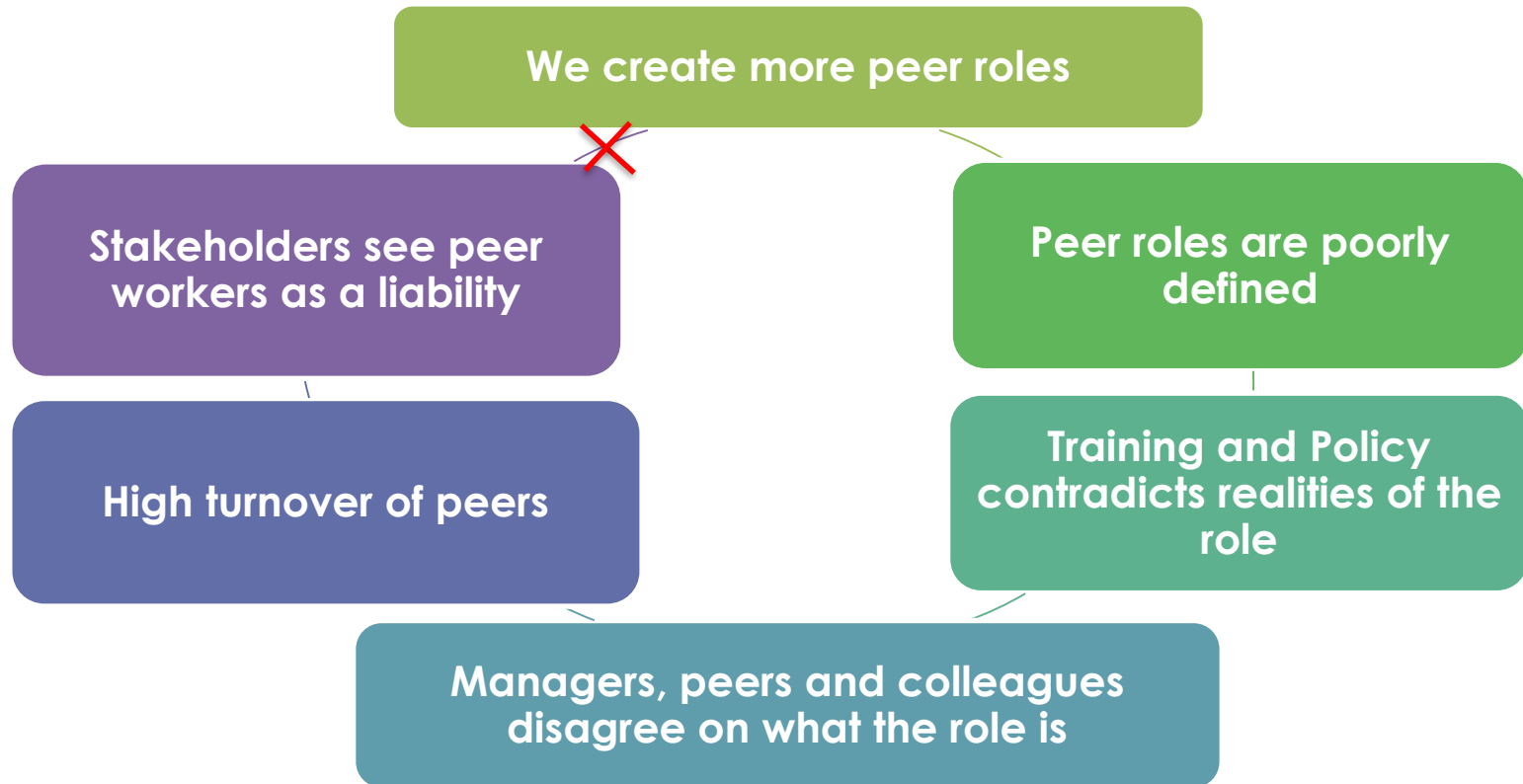
- In Victoria, the AOD peer workforce is recognised as an integral part of quality service delivery
- Many organisations are formalizing and integrating peer work into their service
- Organisations see this emergence as an opportunity to get it right from the beginning
- Successes stem from organisational readiness, considered preparation and planning along with thought through frameworks for sustainability

Peer Workforce Development

A thriving peer workforce - King and Panther (2014)



A surviving peer workforce



Implementing a Peer Workforce - Key Domains

Organisational
Readiness

Preparation &
Planning

Framework for
Sustainability

Organisational Readiness

Organisation wide preparation is crucial for the successful implementation of a Peer Workforce. This includes:

- Understanding the practice of peer work and the value it brings
- Endorsement and encouragement by committees of management
- Developing shared expectations about what peer workers actually do - the tasks they are responsible for - **but more importantly, how peer workers go about their work.**

Shared Understanding

King and Panther (2014) express the importance of having a coherent, shared understanding of the 'why, what, and how' of peer support, at all levels.

For policy-makers, managers, colleagues, this includes:

- High-level understanding of the role, and what makes it effective
- Understanding the values underpinning peer services
- Skills to manage and support peer workers

Preparation and Planning

Considered planning

- Development of the why and how.

Underpinned by considered Human Resources practices

- Identification and training of staff champions
- Positions are developed and operationalised in consultation with Peer Workers

framework for sustainability

A framework for sustainability should be thought through prior to implementation. This may include:

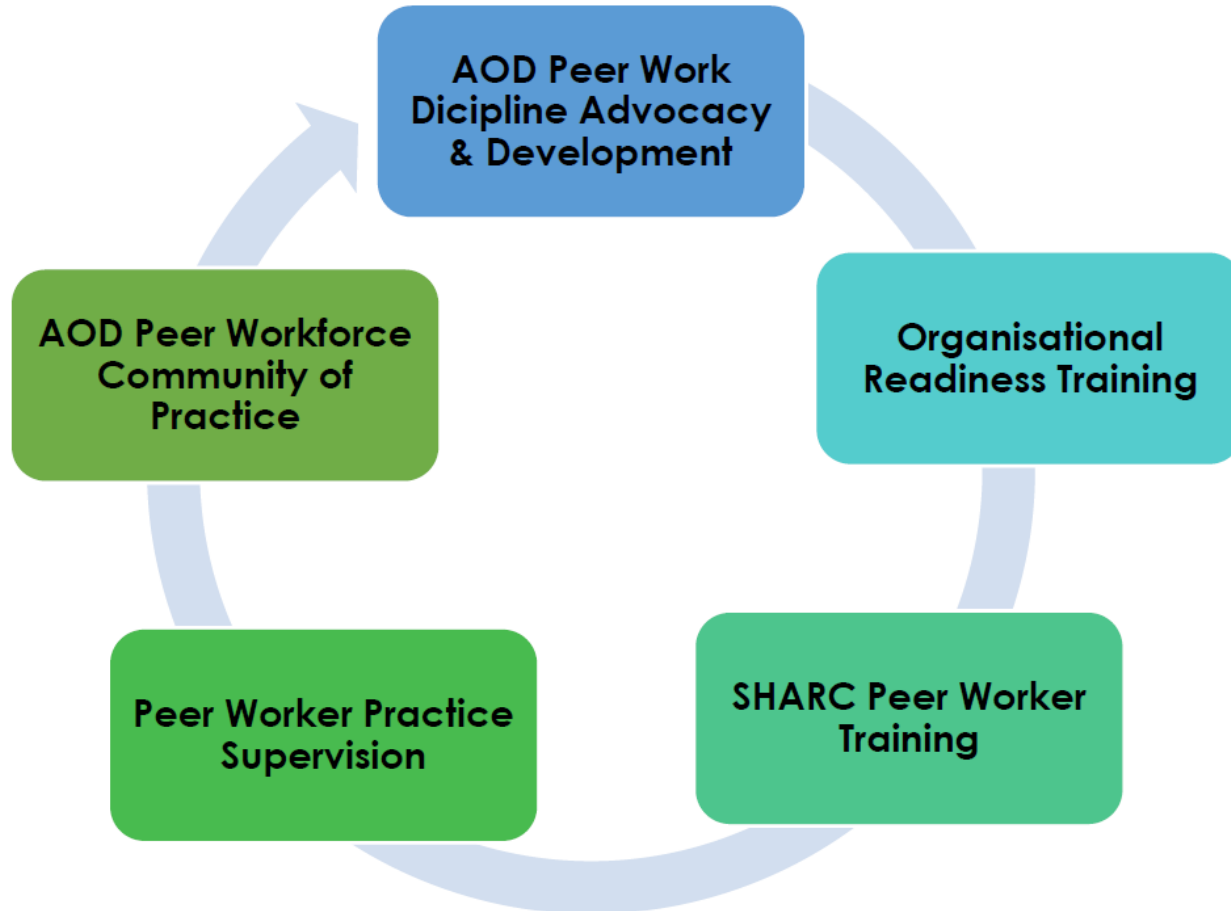
- Ensuring policy and procedures are consistent with, and reflect, the role
- Continued effort to emphasise, retain and value the distinctiveness of the peer work role
- Ongoing internal and external education about the role
- Provision of Peer Worker specific training, supervision, networking and ongoing professional development opportunities

Peer Worker Misconceptions

What are some of your concerns around peer workers?

- Peer workers need a specific skillset, not just lived experience
- Peer workers are complementary to a service, not a replacement of other staff
- Peer workers aren't fragile, they are like any other employee

SHARC Peer Worker Model



Questions



References

- King J, Panther G. (2014). *Peer Support Themes*. Report prepared for AOD Collaborative Group. Auckland: Julian King & Associates Limited – a member of the Kinnect Group.
- Commonwealth of Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, National Ice Action Strategy 2015
- Gagne, C. A., White, W., & Anthony, W. A. (2007). Recovery: A common vision for the fields of mental health and addictions. *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*, 32(10), 32-37.
- State of Victoria, Department of Health and Human Services, July 2018. Victoria's alcohol and other drugs workforce strategy 2018–2022.
- State of Victoria, Department of Health and Human Services, May 2013 Victorian Alcohol and Drug Treatment Principles.
- Intergovernmental Committee on Drugs, July 2014, National Alcohol and other Drug Workforce Development Strategy 2015–2018 (A Sub-strategy of the National Drug Strategy 2010–15)

Thankyou

Peer Projects

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