

CHALLENGES & BENEFITS OF THE LIVED EXPERIENCE WORKFORCE

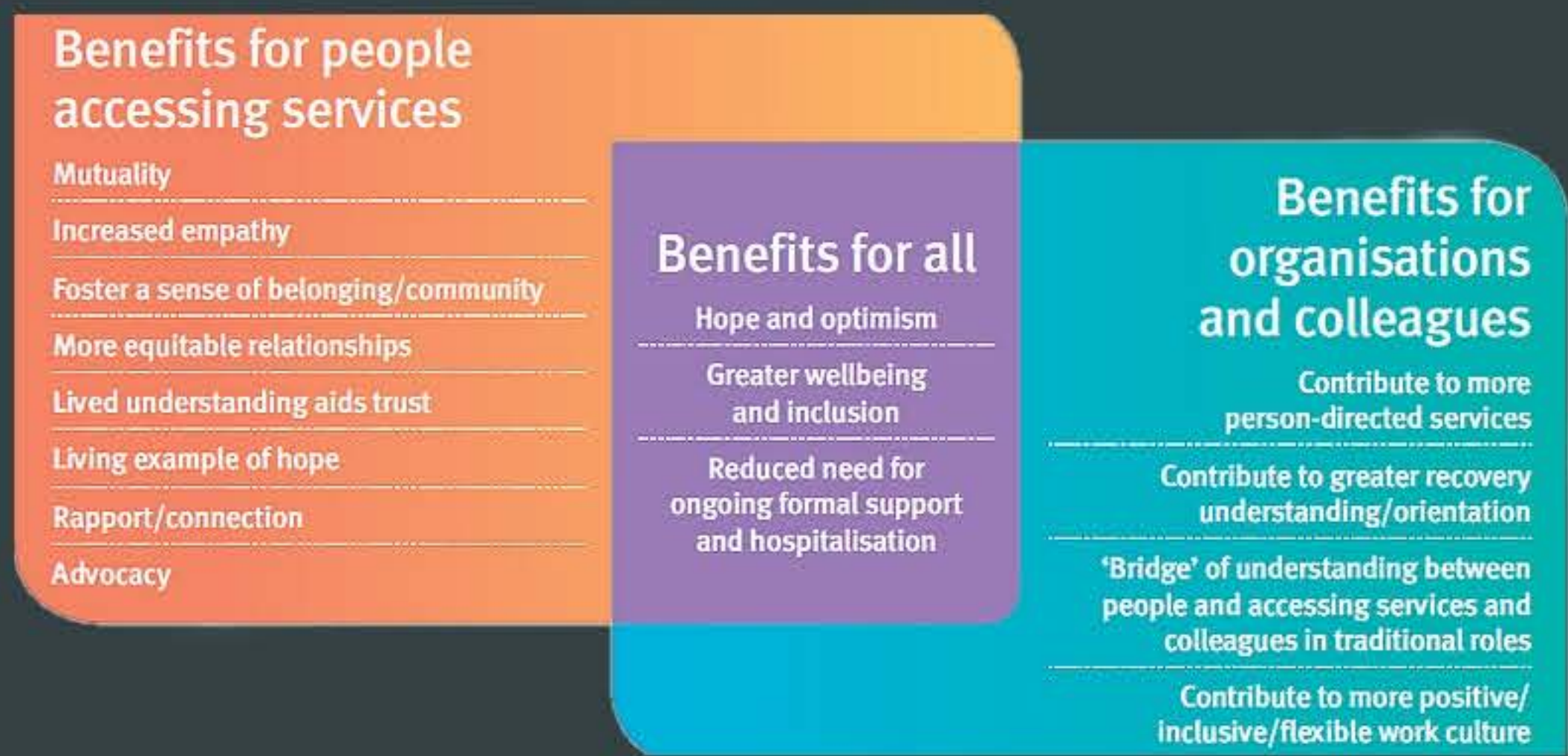
There are many potential benefits of Lived Experience roles including benefits for the organisations they work for, their colleagues and most importantly, for people accessing services, their families and significant others.

Meaningful inclusion of Lived Experience workers is in line with an ongoing service transformation agenda and efforts and provides a benchmark for contemporary, recovery-orientated, person-directed service delivery. However, the way Lived Experience workers are employed is often 'ad hoc' with little or no industry wide standards for resourcing or pay.

While current national and state guidelines recommend future development of Lived Experience work, there are a number of challenges for both Lived Experience workers and the organisations that seek to develop and implement a Lived Experience workforce. Some of these challenges include:

- No accountability or auditing
- A lack of exposure to and understanding of Lived Experience roles, which reduces the perceived value of the roles
- Lack of award wage, union or dedicated Peak Body

Greater structures and formalisation of the Lived Experience workforce is needed to improve equity but still allow for individual role flexibility.



(1) Council of Australian Governments, *The fifth national mental health and suicide prevention plan, 2017*, Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/mental-fifth-national-mental-health-plan

(2) Queensland Mental Health Commission, *Shifting minds: Queensland Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs Strategic Plan 2018-2023*, 2018, Brisbane: Queensland Mental Health Commission qmhic.qld.gov.au/shifting-minds

Respect and Value

While Lived Experience workers are a key reform strategy, respecting and valuing lived experience is broader than just employing designated Lived Experience roles. Respect and value includes:

- Acknowledging the expertise each individual accessing services holds regarding their own life and mental wellbeing.
- Promoting a workplace culture in which it is safe for all people, including those in non-designated roles to disclose.

Continue to Explore Key Areas...

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