

PERSONAL HELPERS & MENTORS PROGRAM (PHaMs)

The Journey So Far

Presented by
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Altering States: Reforming the System

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Catchment Areas

The Journey So Far

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Program Values

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- Mutual respect and understanding
- Empowerment
- Strong relationships and trust
- Commitment to achieving positive outcomes
- Flexibility
- Collaboration
- Involvement

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Program Aims & Outcomes

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Increased opportunities for recovery underpinned by:

- Appropriate support services at the right time
- Personal capacity and resilience
- Community participation

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Program Innovations

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- **Easy access** – PHaMs has extremely flexible entry pathways
- **Not time limited** – There are no stringent time frames attached to how long a participant can remain in the program
- **Peer Workers** – Participants receive support from others with lived experience of mental illness
- **Flexible support** – PHaMs can support participants in many and varied ways

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Innovation

Easy Access

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Referral Pathways

Personal Helpers & Mentors Program
An Australian Government Initiative

There is a vast range of entry pathways for participants:

- Self Referrals
- Families / Carers
- GP's
- Disability Employment Networks
- Housing support services
- Youth services
- Drug and alcohol services
- QLD Health (community mental health teams, mental health inpatient units, community health services)
- Other Government and Non-Government Community Organisations

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Participant Example

Personal Helpers & Mentors Program
An Australian Government Initiative

- Middle aged gentleman
- Living independently in community
- Not eligible based on EST assessment
- Social phobias and anxiety
- Referred to 6 free psychology appointments

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Innovation

Not Time Limited

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Common Question

"How long until I'm discharged from the program?"

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Participant Example

Personal Helpers & Mentors Program
An Australian Government Initiative

- Elderly male
- Homeless for 20 years
- One of our initial referrals
- Working with mental health Case Managers
- Difficult to engage
- Alcohol and gambling addictions
- Still supporting him today

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Innovation

Flexible Support

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Support & Mentoring

Support and mentoring can take many different forms:

- Activities of daily living
- Finding suitable accommodation
- Re-establishing or maintaining positive relationships with family & friends
- Increasing social contacts & community connections
- Vocational goals
- Linkages with other support services

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Support & Mentoring

- It's about the participants goals – not our goals for them
- Emphasis is always on skill building rather than 'doing'
- Participants are supported to regain citizenship in their community and regain control over their own lives

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Levels of Support

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Innovation Peer Support

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Peer Support Workers

- Lived personal experience of mental illness
- Openly share their experiences
- Encourage relationships that involve listening
- Provide validation rather than just problem-solving
- Provide expert input and consultation to the team

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Peer Support Workers

- Many program participants express relief and hope after meeting the Peer Support Worker
- Peer Workers are successfully engaging and connecting with people who have struggled to make connections in the past
- Peer Workers also increase awareness and help reduce stigma in the community

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Challenges and Learning's

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- Managing the high demand for service
- Peer Support
- Managing external expectations

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The Journey So Far

"It's hard to measure the progress that I've made in PHaMs because I now feel as though I am a completely different person. A few months ago I was a slave to my illness, OCD. I also have depression and had lost all hope of finding a way out. At my first visit with my PHaMs worker, I was inspired and was given hope. This snowballed into a new journey of self discovery. I am now my own person. I am now employed and have my own home and am enjoying painting and drawing again. I now live life on my own terms, not on my mental illness' terms."

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Contact Details

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