Centre for Psychiatric Nursing
The Psych Action and Training Group

**Critical success factors**

- The Psych Action & Training Group (PAT) was set up by the consumer academic in 2002 as a think tank to support the development of activities undertaken in the role. PAT members, though, have consistently reported that the group performs a mutually supportive role in terms of sharing/identifying structural work problems and providing a safe space in which to strategise and find solutions.

- The intention is to create a robust, safe discussion environment within an academic setting where issues can be critically debated in safety between academics, clinicians and those applying a consumer perspective lens.

**Promoting consumer perspectives**

- The focus is on bringing together consumers and academics/clinicians to ascertain how best to use and support the development of consumer perspective expertise in an academic setting across research, policy development and education/training activity.

**Implementation ideas**

- Other universities can duplicate groups like this. Provided organisations set aside funds for consumer leadership, this model could also be a powerful engine for change in mental health services and other settings.

**Participant perspectives**

- “PAT is a special place where consumer knowledge and perspective can be nurtured and articulated and its important contribution to mental health service delivery articulated. It is one of, if not the best, example of consumer participation as defined by policy that is not tokenistic, where consumers are the experts and the role of allies is to support and facilitate”. (Professor Brenda Happell, Professor of Nursing and Executive Director SYNERGY: Nursing & Midwifery Research Centre, University of Canberra and ACT Health)

- PAT allows me to hear from consumers who are leaders in critiquing our MH system. Informed by these critiques I can then reflect on and develop my MH nursing practice, so that I feel confident that I am practising in a way that promotes and protects human rights. In short, learning from PAT helps me love my work more. (Kylie Boucher, Lecturer, Centre for Psychiatric Nursing)

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