

Considerations when working and engaging with persons with lived experience with mental health conditions

Through applying the considerations below when working and engaging with persons with lived experience with mental health conditions, may help a person/s to be more productive, effective and efficient. These measures may help improve the person/s' mental health through reducing anxiety, help manage concentration and memory problems, and improve confidence. Most importantly, they will feel valued and respected.

ALWAYS ASK WHAT OR IF ANY SPECIFIC REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION IS REQUIRED

Communications

- Emails requiring action must reflect "Action required" in email subject line
- **Should an urgent response be required, note "Urgent Action Required" in email subject line**
- Be reasonable with expected response time required or deadlines to meet
- **Be clear about the action/s required in communications and bullet list each action in order of priority**
- Be clear in the email subject line (ie. what the email relates to)
- **When following up from past emails, please briefly recap what was discussed in past communications before picking up the conversation**

Engagements

- **All engagements should be part of planning from the outset, well in advance and never as an afterthought - "Nothing about us, without us"**
- Make sure that your expectations for the engagement is aligned with the individuals' experience, expertise and skills
- **Provide adequate information about the engagement, including date/s and time/s (include time zone), the purpose of the engagement, what is expected from the participant/s**
- Be clear about the logistical arrangements from the outset
- **Be reasonable with time to prepare for the engagement**
- Consider time zones when setting up virtual meetings, workshops or other engagement sessions - avoid times too early in the morning or at night
- **Avoid virtual engagement sessions for longer than 2 hours, rather schedule additional sessions should the engagement require longer time**
- Participants in virtual sessions should avoid virtual backgrounds that are 'too busy', bright colours or over stimulating
- **In-person sessions should ensure frequent breaks, proper lighting, limited distractions, avoid over stimulation, in a space that is not overcrowded, and not exceed a 7-hour long day session**
- Persons with lived experience offer their expertise and knowledge as would any professional and should be remunerated as such