

# Global Mental Health Peer Network

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES TERMS OF REFERENCE



*Strengthening the voice of persons with lived experience globally through empowerment and inspiring respect and acknowledgement of their experiences, views and opinions as valued and equal citizens of the world*

### Global Mental Health Peer Network (GMHPN)

**The GMHPN is a global mental health care user organization that functions as an entity of its own that strives to ensure that the voice of persons with lived experience, wherever in the world, have the platform to share their experiences, views and opinions in a well-established and sustainable structure.**

**Definition:** *Mental health care users – individuals, with psychosocial disability/ mental health problems/ disorders, who make use of any form of mental health care services, not necessarily restricted to medication*

### 1. Purpose of the Executive Committees

**The Executive Committees will provide strategic direction and leadership to ensure that the GMHPN achieve its objectives in line with its principles.**

#### **Two principles are fundamental to the GMHPN:**

- Working together with all stakeholders involved to affect the desired change
- The views, opinions and experiences of persons with lived experience reflect the change desired

#### **Through the principles, the objectives of the GMHPN are to:**

- Create communities where persons with lived experience are valued as equal citizens of the world, free from stigma, inequality and inequity

- Give a voice to the voiceless and create a platform where what persons with lived experience say and share, matters
- End isolation from the world and connect user groups and movements globally to form a community of experts by experience and who are empowered to self-advocate and advocate on a broader and global scale

### **The GMHPN objectives will be achieved through key activities:**

- Developing leadership in mental health through the Executive Committees
- Creating platforms where mental health care users can share experiences, views, opinions and ideas, through the GMHPN website, social media, newsletter, participation in engagement opportunities, such as discussion platforms both online and face-to-face gatherings
- Building partnerships with stakeholders across the globe
- Participate in global initiatives with partners and stakeholders
- Linking user groups and movements with each other and developing a database of user groups and movements to provide peer support, knowledge sharing, sharing of evidence-based information and collaborative campaigning opportunities
- Empowerment of mental health care users through the GMHPN website, social media, newsletter, participation in engagement opportunities, development of infographics and online training, by:
  - Dissemination of mental health related information on evidence and research, innovations, new developments and opportunities in mental health; and
  - Improving human rights literacy
- Promotion of recovery stories, both in written and video formats, shared on online platforms and through public engagement opportunities

## **2. Structure of the GMHPN**

The GMHPN will strive towards establishing a **well-represented global structure** that consider diversity within country settings, and in which the organisation will operate.

The **Global Office is based in South Africa** and managed by the Founder of the GMHPN. The Global Office is responsible for the day-to-day operations; project development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation; sustainability and donor relations; coordinating mental health care user groups and the structural committees.



### Two key international structures exist:

- Regional Executive Committee (*Representation from 6 World Health Organisation Regions: African; Americas; South East Asia; European; Eastern Mediterranean and Western Pacific Regions*) and sub-regions.
- Country Executive Committee (*Representations from Countries*)

### Country-level structures exist:

Mental health care user groups in countries are linked to the GMHPN as members and to its representative/s in the Country and Regional Executive Committee.

***\*Executive Committee Members serve in a voluntary capacity \****

## **Sub-Committees & Structure:**

The GMHPN has initiated 4 (four) Sub-Committees to operate as working groups for Research (already set up), Youth, LGBTQ and Carers/Family related issues. The Sub-Committees' objective is to focus on specific issues impacting on the lives of people associated with these specific population groups (youth, LGBTQ and carers/families) and in so doing, enhance diverse voices and perspectives within the GMHPN.

The Sub-Committees ordinarily consist of no more than 5 members from the GMHPN Executive Committee and no more than 5 external members (not part of the formal structure). Only external members will have to follow a formal application process to join a specific Sub-Committee of interest. You will be notified as soon as external members are appointed.

Sub-Committees' will rotate every 2 years, giving an opportunity for other members to join and participate accordingly. Sub-Committee members will be in an advisory capacity to inform the GMHPN of specific issues identified, propose recommendations, and collaborate in advocacy initiatives. The GMHPN Executive Committee members shall lead the group but will work equally and fairly with external members.

The member contributes an amount of time that is reasonable and within the capabilities of the member, considering that members in many instances are full time employed or have unrelated GMHPN commitments.

## **3. Country Executive Committee**

The **Country Executive Committee** consists of representatives from various countries and serve as key persons who represents mental health care users in their respective countries.

### **The membership of the *Country Executive Committee* will commit to:**

- Attending all scheduled meetings (online and in-person), and if necessary, nominate a proxy
- Wholeheartedly championing the GMHPN within and outside of work areas
- Sharing all communications and information across the GMHPN Executive Committee members
- Making timely decisions and taking action so as to not hold up the project
- Notifying members of the GMHPN Executive Committee, as soon as practical, if any matter arises which may be deemed to affect the development of the GMHPN
- The member contributes an amount of time that is reasonable and within the capabilities of the member, considering that members in many instances are full time employed or have unrelated GMHPN commitments

### **Members of the *Country Executive Committees* will expect:**

- That each member will be provided with complete, accurate and meaningful information in a timely manner
- To be given reasonable time to make key decisions
- To be alerted to potential risks and issues that could impact the project, as they arise

- Open and honest discussions, without resort to any misleading assertions

## **Profiles of Country Executive Committee Members**

**COUNTRY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS comply with the following criteria:**

- Are mental health care users/ persons with lived experience who are making use of mental health care services of any kind, not restricted to pharmacological interventions
- Are fluent in the English language
- Are involved in mental health advocacy work in their country to any degree of involvement and not necessarily at a large scale
- Are familiar with mental health structures within their country
- Are passionate and dedicated to the cause of mental health and improving the quality of life of all mental health care users.

## **Key Role of Country Executive Committee Members**

- Assist the Global Office in identifying local mental health care user groups/movements and facilitate communication between the groups/movements and the Global Office, where these groups and movement could be signed up as members/partners of GMHPN, and added to the database
- Assist the Global Office with sourcing of content for its newsletter and social media and online platforms – news related to mental and human rights in the country, articles on activities of mental health care user groups/movements, recovery stories, etc.
- Community intelligence – provide the Global Office and the Regional Executive Committee with information on mental health care users’ needs, challenges, views and opinions in the country on matters that impact on their lives (be the “*eyes and ears*” on the ground)
- With the assistance of the Regional Executive Committee, develop short, medium and long-term recommendations in addressing challenges and needs of mental health care users that considers country context
- Build good standing relationships with stakeholders in the country
- Representing GMHPN at country-level engagement platforms, events, and other opportunities, such as conferences and relevant consultation processes
- Provide inputs into mental health related documents from lived experience perspectives
- Collaborate with stakeholders and partners in implementation of initiatives
- Participate in quarterly online meetings with the Regional Executive Committee representatives
- Ongoing liaison with the Regional Executive Committee

## **4. Regional Executive Committee**

The **Regional Executive Committee** consists of representatives from World Health Organisation 6 regions (*African; Americas; South-East Asia; European; Eastern Mediterranean; and Western Pacific Regions*) and serve as key persons who represents mental health care users in their respective region.

### **The membership of the *Regional Executive Committee* will commit to:**

- Attending all scheduled meetings (online and in-person), and if necessary, nominate a proxy
- Wholeheartedly championing the GMHPN within and outside of work areas
- Sharing all communications and information across the GMHPN Executive Committee members
- Making timely decisions and taking action so as to not hold up the project
- Notifying members of the GMHPN Executive Committee, as soon as practical, if any matter arises which may be deemed to affect the development of the GMHPN
- The member contributes an amount of time that is reasonable and within the capabilities of the member, considering that members in many instances are full time employed or have unrelated GMHPN commitments

### **Members of the *Regional Executive Committees* will expect:**

- That each member will be provided with complete, accurate and meaningful information in a timely manner
- To be given reasonable time to make key decisions
- To be alerted to potential risks and issues that could impact the project, as they arise
- Open and honest discussions, without resort to any misleading assertions

### **Profiles of Regional Executive Committee Members**

#### **REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS comply with the following criteria:**

- Are mental health care users/ persons with lived experience who are making use of mental health care services of any kind, not restricted to pharmacological interventions
- Are fluent in the English language
- Are involved in mental health advocacy work in their country and have experience in international engagements and participation platforms
- Are familiar with mental health structures at an international level
- Are passionate and dedicated to the cause of mental health and improving the quality of life of all mental health care users

### **Key Role of Regional Executive Committee Members**

- Country-level intelligence – identify common denominators among countries in terms of matters that impact on mental health care users and escalate these to the Global Office that will assist in developing awareness and advocacy campaigning materials
- Liaise with Country Executive Committee and develop short, medium and long-term recommendations in addressing challenges and needs of mental health care users that considers country context
- Escalate situation analysis and recommendations to the Global Office for strategic development and response
- Provide inputs into mental health related documents from lived experience perspectives

- Representing GMHPN at international engagement platforms, events, and other opportunities, such as conferences and relevant consultation processes
- Collaborate with stakeholders and partners in implementation of initiatives

## 5. Membership Term and Appointments

Members of the Country Executive Committees will serve a 2 (two) year term and no re-election will take place. Notwithstanding this, at the end of said term, member/s may apply for Honorary Mentorship placement.

### Members to the Executive Committees are appointed through:

- Applications received for vacancies on the Executive Committees (COUNTRY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE)
- Nominations received for vacancies on the Executive Committees (REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE)
- Country and Regional Executive Committee member/s may apply for **Honorary Mentorship** upon the second year of their membership via an official application process (after completing a FULL term)
- **At the end of the term of either Country Executive Committee membership or Honorary Mentorship, members/s** will automatically be recognised as Honorary Members by virtue of their continued service to the GMHPN.

**If member/s do not wish to be placed in this (Honorary Membership) category**, they will have the opportunity to decline it. All communication in this regard must be done in writing and provided to Global office management.

Applications (including nominations) are screened by the Global Office to ensure compliance with the criteria. Eligible applications will be considered and appointed by the Global Office management.

Members of the Regional Executive Committees will serve a 1 (one) year term and may not stand for re-election at the next consecutive year. However, thereafter a member may be eligible for re-election.

Members to the Regional Executive Committees are appointed through an election process where members of the Country Executive Committee vote for their choice of representation at regional level.

## 6. Honorary Mentorship, roles and duration

GMHPN undertakes to introduce continued learning and development for our member/s and with that said, upon reaching the second year of their term on the Country Executive Committee, member/s will have the opportunity to apply for an Honorary Mentorship position within the GMHPN. Having a mentoring programme in place benefits the mentor, the mentee and the Organisation by driving increased engagement, empowerment, skills and leadership development amongst members.

Member/s wishing to apply for Honorary Mentorship will be required to complete an application

form and submit it to the Global Office management team who will review the application accordingly. Only fully completed applications will be considered for review. Refer to annexure "A" of this document for the application form and a list of the application criteria.

Person/s that are successful in their application for the mentorship programme are hereinafter referred to as *Mentors*. Mentors will be required to make themselves available (whenever reasonably possible) to provide a supportive role to newly appointed members of the Country and Regional Executive Committee, referred to hereinafter as *Mentees*.

In addition, mentors will also be required to assist the Global office management team by hosting GMHPN orientation for newly appointed Country and Regional Executive Committee members. The orientation pack will be designed and prepared prior to the orientation event and training will be provided to mentors to be able to host the orientation event.

Mentees are encouraged to design a goal and action plan specific to their mental health advocacy professional career. This serves two purposes: a) it brings focus at the onset which helps the mentorship get off to a good start and b) it demands accountability to accomplish desired goals.

At the end of the mentorship programme, the Global Office management team will request the mentor and mentee complete a survey as part of a more formal process that brings closure to the mentoring experience. Both parties will have an opportunity to reflect upon what was learned and provide feedback on the benefits of the program and process.

Mentors will serve in this position for a duration of 2 (two) years after which the term of service shall terminate. An official letter of termination will be provided via e-mail to member/s at which point the member/s will be recognised as Honorary Member/s of the GMHPN. See section 7 below for more information.

## 7. Honorary Membership

Honorary membership is awarded to member/s who serve full-time in GMHPN Country Executive Committee and this type of membership is life-long. GMHPN believes retention of members is essential in creating a continued relationship with member/s and GMHPN.

Members who have successfully served full term in the Country Executive Committee and as Mentors as well, will have the opportunity to remain affiliated with the GMHPN through unrelated Executive Committee activities. At this stage of the relationship, members may approach the Global Office management team for only organisational collaborations and/or partnerships.

## 8. Termination of Membership

The GMHPN Executive Committee membership can be terminated by:

- The member submitting a **written resignation** to the Global Office with an explanation as to why the member wishes to resign from the Executive Committee
- The member being **inactive for a period of more than 3 months** (unless a leave of absence had been awarded for a said period of time)
- The member **failed to attend 3 consecutive meetings** (unless the member submitted a valid reason for non-attendance)
- The member **not responding to communication** from the Global Office or project partners or **failed to meet deadlines** for project specific targets, **despite follow up communication** (unless the member submitted a valid reason for inability to respond to



communication or where the member submitted a valid reason for being unable to participate in a said project or partnership)

- The member bringing the GMHPN name and reputation into **disrepute**. A good business reputation is essential for distinguishing GMHPN from its from other organisations and can even be the deciding factor in attracting potential clients and funders. Examples of inappropriate behaviour includes but is not limited to:
  - The member behaving in a particular way in their private lives that may be considered inappropriate as a result of the nature of their GMHPN Executive Committee appointment (country/regional level).
  - Making inappropriate comments in the public domain or, by association, or on social media, that brings the GMHPN's name and reputation into disrepute. This includes comments on racism, sexism, ageism and so forth.
- **Chronic illness** deemed the member incapable of fulfilling their role as an Executive Committee member
- Honorary Mentors' membership shall be deemed terminated if mentor duties are unmet/unfulfilled and similarly, if the member mentee does not meet their duties as assigned to them in the mentorship programme.

The termination of membership, resulting from any of the above, will be done via an official letter to the member in question from the Global Office stipulating the reason/s for termination.

The member in question, whose membership had been terminated, resulting from any of the above, may appeal the decision of termination by submitting a letter of appeal that provides a motivation as to why membership should continue. This letter of appeal must be sent to the Global Office within **30 days** of receipt of the official letter of termination from the Global Office. Such an appeal will be presented to the GMHPN Board of Management for a final decision and the outcome communicated to the member in question within **14 days** from the date that the letter of appeal had been received.

## 9. Leave of Absence

The GMHPN acknowledges that members health and wellbeing is of utmost importance and that there may be times when health and wellbeing should take priority. A member of the Executive Committee, may request Leave of Absence, should he/she experience a personal crisis and need time out to focus on their health and wellbeing. A member will decide the length of Leave of Absence required. An application for Leave of Absence can be made via email request to the Global Office to either the GMPHN CEO or Deputy CEO . [Email addresses are set out on page 10 of this document.](#)

## 10. Usage of GMHPN Logo and Organisational name

The branding of the Global Mental Health Peer Network (GMHPN) and its logo is the icon by which others recognize the organization and associate it with the way it is presented. The use of the logo **MUST** always be used in a manner that associates it with professionalism, trust integrity and maintain its good reputation.

A copy of GMHPN Branding policy can be found in our Dropbox folder. Find link below:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/u357592c2oxpiyg/AAD0ILqrAd4TPsTe1qcKBew9a?dl=0>

## 11. GMHPN Representation

The use of the GMHPN name is permitted and required to be used by Executive Committee and Sub-Committee members, as an affiliation when representing the GMHPN at events and engagement platforms, writing academic or commentary publications as part of or by invitation through the GMHPN, or promotion of the GMHPN at online or other public platforms. Thus, any invitation for engagement and participation coming through the GMHPN or as part of the GMHPN, means that the member/s designated, represents the GMHPN first. The member/s organization can be noted as the secondary affiliation, if more than one affiliation is permitted.

## 12. Use of GMHPN WhatsApp group

The core function and purpose of the Global WhatsApp group for all Country and Regional members is to provide members with a safe space to share information on topics related to lived experience, mental health and human rights. The sharing of member's advocacy, awareness activities and work, is permitted via the WhatsApp group. Invitations of events in the mental health/health/disability field is welcomed. Peer support is also welcomed but GMHPN insists that this be kept simple and not triggering to other members of the group.

The core function and purpose of the Regional WhatsApp groups for members of the regions shall be the same as the abovementioned paragraph with the addition of providing a safe space to share and request advice on a situation or issue related to lived experience, mental health and human rights within the particular region.

The content on the WhatsApp group shall remain simple and non-triggering for other members and should relate to mental health/health and human rights. The content should be posted within reasonable timeframes and with consideration of the differing time zones within GMHPN countries (preferably during working hours- 8am to 5pm). This is also applicable to the Global office team. WhatsApp messages should be refrained as much as reasonably possible over weekends.

Content relevant to a global audience should be posted ONLY on the Global WhatsApp group, and content relevant ONLY to a specific country should be posted ONLY on the relevant Regional WhatsApp group.

## 13. Amendment, Modification or Variation

This **Terms of Reference** may be amended, varied or modified in writing after consultation and agreement by the GMHPN Executive Committee members.

**Ms Charlene Sunkel** (Founder/CEO: Global Mental Health Peer Network)

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**Ms Claudia Sartor** (Deputy CEO: Global Mental Health Peer Network)

Email: [Claudia.sartor@gmhpn.org](mailto:Claudia.sartor@gmhpn.org)



## ANNEXURE A



### APPLICATION: HONORARY MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME

*\*Refer to the GMHPN Executive Committee's Terms of Reference*

#### Applicant Contact Information

Name & Surname

Date of birth

Country

Affiliation/Occupation/Role  
In your Organisation:

Please list your field of Interest (for mentorship) and top skills/academic background/ years of experience

Contact  
Number:

Email  
Address:

## Declaration

I am a person with lived experience	YES	NO
I am fluent in the English language	YES	NO
I have completed a 2-year period within GMHPN Country/Regional Committee	YES	NO
I agree to fulfil my duties as mentor during the 2 -year term of the mentorship programme	YES	NO
I agree to apply for leave of absence in the event of sickness or unexpected family responsibility	YES	NO

## Capacity to Execute Activities

**Please indicate your capacity to contribute towards some of the key activities of the GMHPN Mentorship Programme:**

	YES	NO
Attending quarterly online and other scheduled meetings (online and in-person) to report back on mentorship provided and key challenges and/or recommendations		
Participate in orientation sessions with new Executive Committee Members		
Respond timeously to any and all communications via email or phone		

**Please state your availability and estimate time that you are able to spend on the GMHPN mentorship activities**

**Please briefly write a motivation as to why you believe that you are suited for the position as a mentor of the GMHPN Mentorship programme:**