

Peer Networks: Finding organisations to assist where necessary with the group

Introduction

There are often many organisations in your community who will be willing to support a Peer Support Network - they just need to hear about it, and be asked. Here are some ideas for finding them and for inviting their assistance.

Let's make it happen

Organisations that could assist

- Community organisations e.g. youth organisations, welfare and community service organisations, disability organisations, Men's Shed
- Local business
- Church groups
- Local clubs e.g. sporting clubs, RSL,
- Service clubs e.g. Rotary, Lions, Apex, Rotaract, Zonta clubs
- Local Council
- Members of Parliament

How to find organisations in your community

- Search your local service directories for the groups available in your community
- Ask at your local library or council office for directories of organisations in your community
- Ask your members and your friends what organisations they know of, or are members of
- Check your local newspaper and Facebook groups for leads
- List any organisations or businesses that you and your members receive services from

How to ask for assistance

- Remember your value proposition! (See Fact Sheet: Thinking about the value proposition that a group would offer)
- Think about which organisations from your list might have similar interests to your group e.g. your local sporting group might have an inclusion program, your Member of Parliament may be a human rights champion, one of your members may be in Rotary, or own a local business - think creatively!
- When you have thought about who you will approach, set up a meeting, or write a letter or make a phone call.

QuickGuide

- When you approach the organisation, be polite, enthusiastic, and show you have done your research on the organisation and value the time the organisation is spending with you. Be sure to speak enthusiastically about your value proposition - what benefit the network can have for its members and the wider community
- Also speak about what benefit the network could provide for the organisation you are approaching - it might help them fulfil their mission, or they may be able to refer people to the network, or they may even like to be a sponsor and put their logo on your marketing materials
- Ask for something specific - it could be low cost or free catering for your meetings, use of a venue, a cash donation, some administration support, transport or any other of the resources you need for your group. See Fact Sheet: Understanding what resources will be needed for the group to operate
- Regardless of the answer, thank the organisation for their time, and if they have made an offer, follow up with a thank you and a note outlining their offer and making arrangements for receiving the offer
- Finally, keep your supporters informed of how the network's achievements - perhaps an occasional newsletter or thank you note noting the number of meetings and members, and/or how their assistance was appreciated and enjoyed.

Where you can find more information

The Centre of Excellence for Peer Support (mental health) has some great resources for setting up a peer support network: <http://www.peersupportvic.org/index.php/2014-12-15-22-42-49/2014-12-16-02-22-27>

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