

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Purpose

The Mental Health and Disability Legal Assistance Forum (MHDLAF) is established as a specialist sub-forum of the Queensland Legal Assistance Forum (QLAF).

The purpose of the working group is to promote cooperation and collaboration between legal and non-legal service providers, including social, community and health services working with older people, people with mental health issues, intellectual disability, or cognitive impairment.

The MHDLAF will consider service planning and best practice in service delivery to maximise the reach of legal assistance services available to older people, people with mental health issues, aged care, intellectual disability, or cognitive impairment across Queensland.

### Membership

The MHDLAF may include representatives of QLAF members and other stakeholders who respond to the legal needs of people with mental health issues, intellectual disability, or cognitive impairment, including non-legal services.

Individual members of peak representative bodies who are nominated to join the working group will represent the views of the peak on a strategic basis, as well as their individual organisation.

Current membership is comprised of representatives from:

- The Office of the Public Advocate (OPA)
- Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia (ADA)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Legal Service (ATSILS)
- Bar Association Queensland (BAQ)
- Department of Justice and Attorney General (DJAG)
- Legal Aid Queensland (LAQ)
- LawRight
- Queensland Advocacy Inc. (QAI)
- Queensland Council of Social Services (QCOSS)
- The Advocacy and Support Centre
- The Office of the Public Guardian (OPG)
- Office of the Chief Psychiatrist (OCP)
- Queensland Health - IPRA's
- Queensland Law Society (QLS)

### Role and responsibilities

- Promote cooperation and collaboration within legal assistance service providers and other non-legal services working with people with mental health issues, intellectual disability, or cognitive impairment.

- Develop a work plan to address Collaborative Service Planning Initiatives for 2022-25 including:
  - Considering existing service provision, including outreach, and best practice in service design to inform:
    - strategies to deliver increasingly client-focused services; and
    - sector feedback to the Queensland Government on the allocation of any additional funding that becomes available for this priority client group, including developing and/or sponsoring applications for project funding as it becomes available.
- Identify, progress and implement priority initiatives and maintain flexibility to address new initiatives as these are identified, including those emerging from the review of the *Mental Health Act 2000*.
- Share information and resources to facilitate the implementation of agreed priority initiatives.
- Lead discussions around systemic change and advocacy between legal assistance service providers working with people with mental health issues, intellectual disability, or cognitive impairment.
- To advise the QLAF on issues relevant to the provision of legal services to people with mental health issues, intellectual disability, or cognitive impairment.
- Engage in discussion with MHRT and QCAT to achieve best practice for participation and outcomes.

### **Chair and secretariat**

The Public Advocate is the chair of the forum.

Secretariat support is provided by Legal Assistance Strategy and Funding (LASF).

### **Meetings**

The working group will meet at least four times a year.

Specialists or experts may be invited to attend, and members can nominate proxies to attend on their behalf.

Information about meetings, including agendas, will be distributed at least one week in advance where possible.

### **Reporting and governance**

The group will provide updates to the QLAF at least two times per year.

Decisions will be based on consensus among members. Members may choose to record dissenting views.