

ANNUAL REPORT 2022—23

FROM THE CHAIR AND CEO

Welcome to our fresh new look including our new name, Mental Health Lived Experience Tasmania (MHLET). What a big year it has been for our organisation. We have completed new projects successfully, built on our existing programs, and started planning for the future.

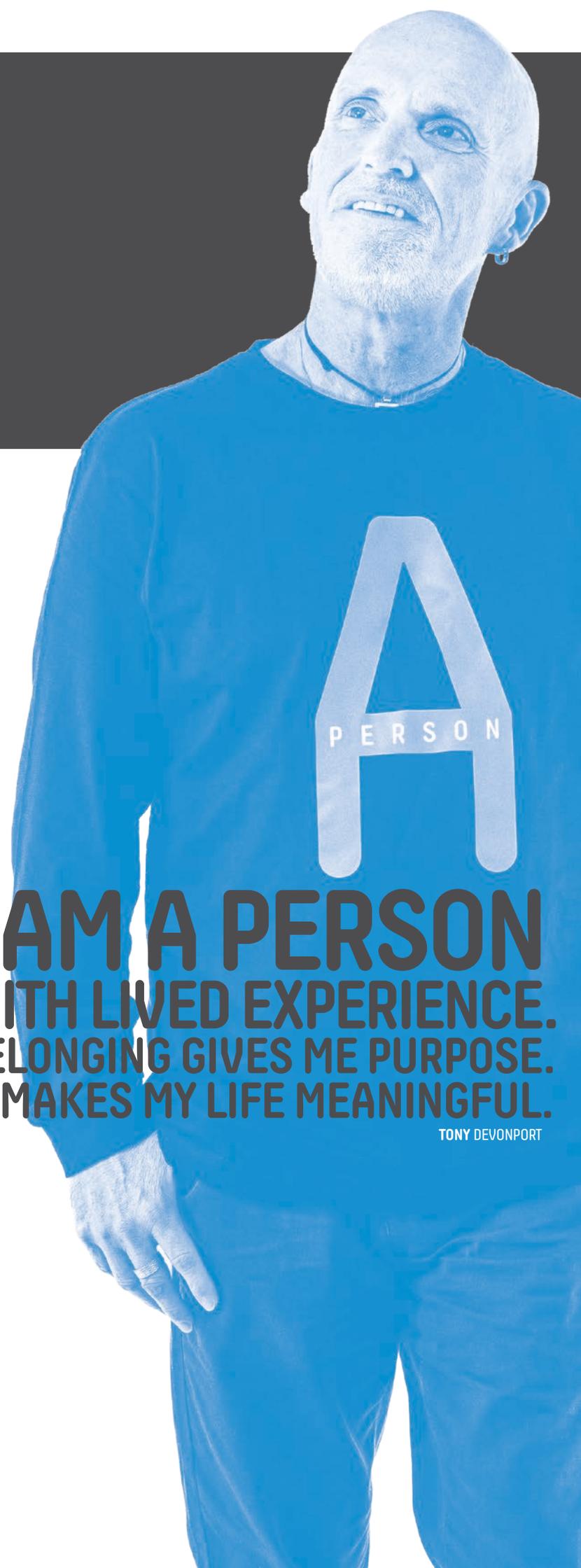
The lived experience movement has gained increasing momentum both at a state and national level. The announcement of funding for two new independent peak bodies, both consumer and carer has inspired an increase in the awareness and value of the lived experience voice. At an operational level this has resulted in increased demand for our core program, the consumer representative service. Outstandingly we have been able to match this demand despite only minimal increase in resourcing. This is testament to the work our member, consumer representatives and office team have put in over the past year. MHLET can confidently claim to be the leaders in the lived experience space in Tasmania. Something we are very proud of.

Looking to the future, we have commenced an independent evaluation of our programs, started our new Strategic Plan 2024-2027 and of course repositioned our organisation with amazing new branding which showcases our members. Real Tasmanians with lived expertise that are shaping the services for the future.

Kim and Tash would like to thank our members, Board, stakeholders, staff and supporters for all the amazing work you have put in to set MHLET up for another fantastic year.

DR KIM BACKHOUSE
CHAIR

TASH SMYTH
CEO



**I AM A PERSON
WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE.
BELONGING GIVES ME PURPOSE.
IT MAKES MY LIFE MEANINGFUL.**

TONY DEVONPORT

CONSUMER REPRESENTATIVE SERVICE



LIVED EXPERIENCE ENGAGEMENT

INSTANCES OF CONSUMER REPRESENTATIVE SERVICE	857 HOURS	↑ 44%
HOURS OF CRS ENGAGEMENT	1945 HOURS	↑ 56%
AVERAGE HOURS PER CRS PER INSTANCE	2.27 HOURS	↑ 08%



MHLET continued to experience growth in our Consumer Representative Service (CRS) with increases in request numbers, instances of consumer engagement and a significant increase in engagement hours.

56% increase in engagement hours totalling 1945 hours of direct lived experience engagement.

What this tells us is that decision makers are valuing more and more the lived expertise our people bring to service design, delivery and evaluation.

MHLET's activity in the North and Northwest has also resulted in growth of up to 116% in regional areas of Tasmania.

The increase in requests from outside Statewide Mental Health Services has been significant with a 235% increase.

A standout project was Anglicare's Consumer Audit, which was co-designed and carried out by people with a lived experience.

An independent evaluation of our CRS was commissioned in February 2023. This process will evaluate where we have done well and where our gaps are, we look forward to sharing the outcomes with you.



**I AM A PERSON
WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE.
I USE MY EXPERTISE TO
IMPROVE OUR SERVICES.**

ALLY HOBART



TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

A newly funded project role has enabled MHLET to refine our introductory CRS training, offering more of an insight into what can be expected when fulfilling engagements and the importance of this work. We have delivered this short course to over 30 participants.

MHLET's individually tailored mentoring programs continue to provide the most suitable path to onboard our Consumer Representatives (CRs.) Providing face to face support, online and phone support.

MHLET has introduced our monthly Knowledge Sharing and Skills Development meetings for CRs. These are statewide meetings held online for our CRs to share challenges they have encountered, and skills developed with their peers.

This year we developed our "Safe Spaces, Safe Talks" policy, which outlines safe ways of engaging in group settings for people with a lived experience. This policy was co-designed with members.

Above: Working together with SMHS to support training for The Peacock Centre Staff.



MEMBER ACTIVITIES

This year we have enjoyed many fantastic events highlighting the importance of lived experience.

- Mental Health Week – Parliament House Event, CEO spoke to the value of Peer work
- "Community Conversations" held in Launceston and Devonport
- "Breaking Stigma through Stories of Hope" events in Launceston and Burnie
- Christmas member events in Hobart and Launceston
- Monthly regional Local Action Group meetings
- CEO bi-monthly coffee catch-up held online
- Member coffee catch-up held face to face in Launceston

Above: Starting down the path to co-designing our new brand identity.

ADVOCACY

SUBMISSIONS & POSITION PAPER

This year MHLET has advocated for the rights of Tasmanian's with a lived experience in a number of ways. Beyond our CRS, we have produced a position paper on Older Persons Mental Health supported by both COTA and Palliative Care Tasmanian. Successfully tendered to lead the development of a Lived Experience Engagement framework with the support of Mental Health Family and Friends and Health Consumers Tasmania. MHLET was proud to be part of the launch of both The Head to Health Centre (Launceston) and The Peacock Centre (Hobart) speaking to the importance of lived experience engagement in the development of these centres.

ADVOCACY DIRECT TO STATE GOVERNMENT

We successfully advocated for specialist training in de-escalation to be provided to all security personnel in all parts of our public hospitals not just Mental Health Inpatient Units. We have advocated for young people's health information (after an inpatient stay) to not be automatically shared with the Education Department due to privacy and stigma concerns.

NATIONAL ISSUES

MHLET has been heavily involved in the implementation of The Mental Health Act 2014 Review. This has been particularly challenging navigating the technical legal landscape whilst always keeping the implications for people that may fall under this act at the forefront of our minds.

COLLABORATION

On a national platform, MHLET has entered a Memorandum of Understanding with other jurisdictional peaks — The National Mental Health Consumer Alliance (The Alliance). This has enabled us to advocate for Tasmania regarding The Better Access Reforms, the formation of the two newly funded peak bodies, one for Consumers and one for Carer and Kin. Through The Alliance we have access to monthly meetings with the National Mental Health Commission, have met Assistant Minister, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Emma McBride and have been able to share important knowledge to strengthen our advocacy efforts. MHLET proudly supports both the representative and proxy representative to sit on the National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum to ensure that Tasmania's voice is heard.

This year we have built new relationships and strengthened existing ones. Our increase in collaboration with Mental Health Family and Friends has enabled us to have a stronger united voice to government on important issues culminating in the submission to government of a position paper requesting formal recognition of peak body status.



**I AM A PERSON
WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE.
I AM ACCEPTED AND VALUED.
I AM CHANGING THE SYSTEM.**

ROB LAUNCESTON

OUR FUNDING PARTNERS

