

Drawing on Lived Experience at Work – A reflective practice tool for family carer lived experience workforce

Purpose

This is a resource for mental health family carer lived experience (FCLE) workers. It was designed to be used by FCLE workers in supervision and reflective practice sessions to develop expertise.

It aims to start and deepen conversations that help FCLE workers reflect on and understand how FCLE roles and associated tasks are informed by lived experience practice. It is recommended that FCLE workers revisit this tool regularly to see how practice has shifted or developed over time.

How this tool was developed

This resource has been created by family carer researchers at RMIT in consultation with Mental Health and Wellbeing Connect workers. It emerged from a focus group data collection activity that was designed for the Mental Health and Wellbeing Connect centre Workforce research project.

Potential outcomes

Deeper
understanding of
lived experience
work

Developing
of FCLE
expertise

Identify
possible areas
to reduce
burn-out

Increased
understanding
of the use of
self in the work

Increased
team
connection

This resource was created as part of the following project:
Stojanovska, D., Lambert, C., David, C., Nipperess, S., Martin, R., & Bashfield, L. (2025). *Changing lives: The Mental Health and Wellbeing Connect centre family carer lived experience workforce story*. FaCRAN and Social Equity Research Centre, RMIT University. DOI: 10.25439/rmt.30727901

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This activity is expected to take approximately 45 mins – 1 hour.
Begin by following the steps below:

Step 1

Get a group of two or more FCLE workers together.

Step 2

Write down on individual sticky-notes or on a virtual whiteboard all the activities/tasks that you do in your role. These can be things you do when working one-on-one with carers, making cups or tea, or admin activities like phone calls, emails, case noting.

🕒 10 mins

Step 3

Once you have all your activities/task written down locate where you think they sit across the Continuum of Lived Experience Practice below – ranging between not using lived experience, sometimes using lived experience, and fully and purposefully using lived experience in a task.

🕒 10 mins

Continuum of Lived Experience

I don't use
lived experience in
this activity

I sometimes use
lived experience in
this activity

I fully and purposefully
use lived experience in
this activity

Step 4

Share with others in your group why you chose to put the different tasks in certain places across the continuum. You may notice that others put the same task in a different place along the continuum. Your placement of tasks may move as you reflect together as a group.

🕒 35 mins

Conversation prompts:

- Describe what each activity looks like in your day-to-day practice.
- Does this reflect what you thought you were doing?
- Is there something that surprised you?
- Is there anything else you notice?

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