



Royal Commission
into Aged Care Quality and Safety

ADDITIONAL DRAFT PROPOSITION – MENTAL HEALTH

Proposition M8: Peer workforce

The Australian Government should inquire into the potential contribution of the mental health peer workforce in addressing access to mental health services in aged care

1. The Productivity Commission has noted that gaps in mental health services for older people are partly caused by a shortfall in the workforce providing State and Territory community mobile services to older people.¹
2. Consideration should be given to using the mental health peer workforce as a potential resource for providing companionship and trained support to people receiving aged care.
3. The Productivity Commission has recently proposed a draft recommendation to strengthen the peer workforce by professionalising it.² Further, the National Mental Health Commission has indicated it will develop guidelines for peer workers by 2021.³ Consideration should be given to whether this move towards professionalising the peer workforce might allow for one means of increasing mental health support in aged care.

¹ Productivity Commission, *Mental Health: Productivity Commission Draft Report Volume 1*, October 2019, p 284.

² Productivity Commission, *Mental Health: Productivity Commission Draft Report Volume 1*, October 2019, p 64.

³ National Mental Health Commission website, <https://www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/Mental-health-Reform/Mental-Health-Peer-Work-Development-and-Promotion> accessed 16 March 2020.