

Planning a sector event?

You need this checklist.



Trauma-Informed Events Checklist and Policy and Protocol

MHCC has developed an easy-to-use resource to help organisations ensure that events or activities follow trauma-informed principles.

Organisations across mental health and human services regularly facilitate consultations or workshops which include presentations of diverse lived experience. Events where attendees and presenters share their lived experience can be distressing for all involved. People may experience reminders or triggers that affect their emotional and physiological state.

Often the focus of a training session or meeting can be considered to be neutral, however, issues could still arise that need to be managed sensitively. Safety needs to be considered in every circumstance. Carefully considering the physical and social environment when organising and introducing an activity can help participants feel safe and supported in order to take part.

MHCC has developed the Trauma-Informed Events Checklist and Policy and Protocol in response to sector concerns. The Policy and Protocol Document which underpins the Checklist is a guide for organisations to develop their own protocol for hosting events. It includes a suggested introductory statement that can be adapted for any event.

These resources aim to embed trauma-informed and recovery-oriented principles into all activities that engage with people with lived experience, carers and families, the workforce and the community. They promote a supportive culture that encourages collaboration and trust between the host organisation, presenters and attendees.

We encourage organisations to use these free resources to help create a trauma-informed, safe and collaborative culture.

Both the Trauma-Informed Events Checklist and Policy and Protocol can be found here:
<http://mob.mhcc.org.au/policy-resources/practice-improvements/trauma-informed-care-practice.aspx>



Checklist: A Trauma-Informed approach for events and consultations

Attendees and presenters at an event where people share their lived experience can sometimes become distressed by the material disclosed. They may experience reminders or triggers during the event that affect their emotional and physiological state. Carefully considering the physical and social environment when organising and introducing an event or activity can assist participants to feel safe and supported in order to take part.

When planning an event or consultation we recommend considering the following:

- Have participants and presenters been clearly informed prior to the activity of the focus of the activity and the potentially traumatic content being presented or discussed?
- Is the space clearly identified with an entry that is properly lit?
- Is the space inclusive of disability needs?
- Have you considered that a person presenting/ participating in an event may wish to bring a support person with them, and therefore accommodate this request?
- Have staff or volunteers been organised to greet people at the entry point?
- Are staff/volunteers aware of the facilities and resources at the venue?
- Does the opening introduction include safety or content warnings about the material?
- Has a private place been made available for a person to retire to if they need a break at any point in the activity, and is it identified at the outset?
- Does the opening introduction detail the location of a quiet room for time out if necessary?
- Have appropriately trained staff been assigned to provide trauma-informed support during the event if required, and are attendees informed of who they are and where to find them?
- Have appropriately trained staff been assigned to provide trauma-informed support or de-briefing opportunities for presenters or attendees as required after the event?
- Have you planned to follow up with participants (e.g. via email, phone) to check if any support is required?
- Have water and refreshment breaks been negotiated?

NOTE: To get a greater understanding of this checklist please also see the *Policy and Protocol Document: A Trauma-Informed Care and Practice Approach to facilitation of events and consultation activities*.

<http://mob.mhcc.org.au/policy-resources/practice-improvements/trauma-informed-care-practice.aspx>

This document includes a Suggested Introductory Statement (Item 8) that can be amended to suit your needs.