

# Member Representative Survey Report

2023

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This report highlights responses related to strategic priorities for the peak body in the future.





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# KEY THEMES

## Overview

The **2023 Member Representative Survey** affirms Mental Health Coordinating Council as a respected peak body in the community-managed mental health sector. Our members value MHCC's unified and collective voice and endorse the priorities set by the organisation.

Results from the Survey demonstrate the consensus support Members share for the work and direction of the peak body. Members supported the work of the organisation across the three key themes examined in the Survey - Policy and advocacy efforts, Member satisfaction and Communication strategies.

This year the Survey asked for Member input and feedback to inform MHCC's strategic position ahead of the development of its three-year strategic plan. These outcomes are given priority in the report.

## Advocacy and leadership

- Over 95% of members agree or strongly agree that MHCC is a respected peak body for the community-managed mental health sector.
- 90% of members agree that MHCC engages with decision makers and is a strong voice for the sector.
- 96% rated our work to keep members well informed as excellent or very good.

## Member satisfaction

- 77% reported being satisfied or strongly satisfied with the benefits their organisation receives from membership of MHCC.

## Communication and capacity building

- 95% of members believe MHCC keeps members well-informed about issues relevant to their remit and the broader sector.
- 66% rated our resources and tools as good or excellent.
- 59% rated our training as good or excellent at meeting the needs of their organisation.

## Thanking you

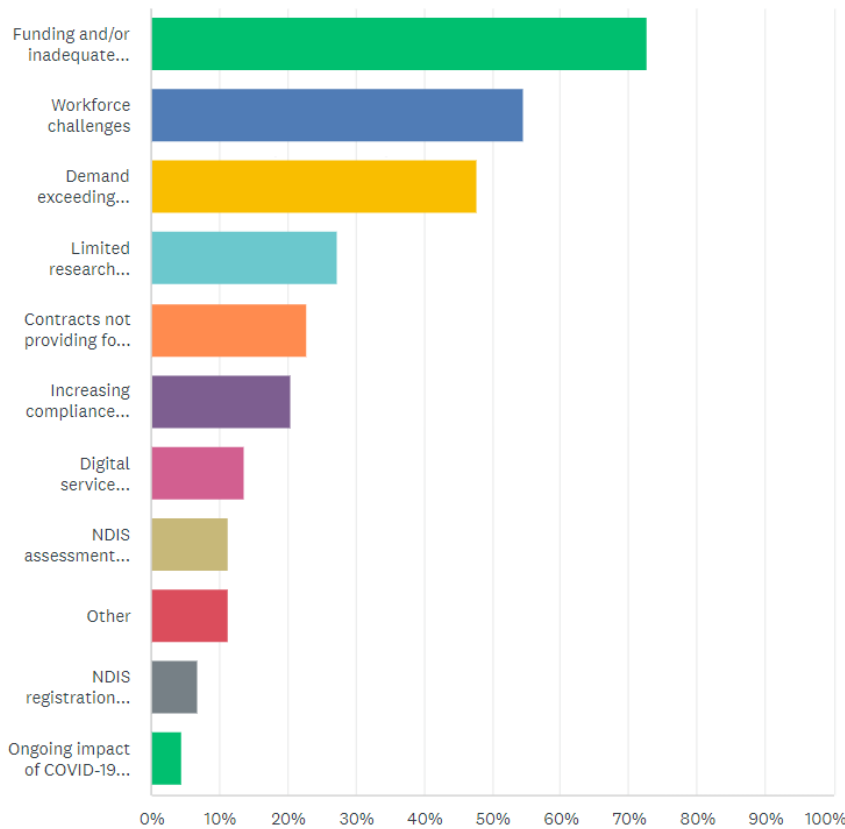
Many thanks to all members who responded to this year's Survey. Your insights are invaluable in informing our work and ensuring we continue to provide the practical supports you need and advocate for the issues that matter most to you.

## Priority issues

Respondents were given the opportunity to identify areas and topics for MHCC to further explore in our next three-year strategic plan. Several central themes emerged through responses to the question, including:

- Adequate resourcing for community-managed mental health organisations is of principal concern. Funding and inadequate indexation is rated as the most urgent priority for MHCC to focus on over the next three years. This includes issues around contracts not covering evaluation of direct service delivery and other programs and services.
- Workforce issues feature as an ongoing concern for our members. This includes the development of the Peer Workforce and challenges around providing pathways to improve collaboration between lived experience and clinical workforces.
- Other significant concerns identified included demand exceeding available resources, and issues related to NDIS complexity and the increasing compliance burden.

## Top priorities members want MHCC support on





## How MHCC can support Members

To help achieve our members' vision and mission, respondents identified a range of advocacy work they would like MHCC to prioritise over the next three years.

While there were a range of responses, they broadly fit into the six categories listed below.

### Funding and inadequate indexation

*"Improved indexation of funding, timely renewal of contracts, funding contracts to cover the actual cost of delivering services."*

### Workforce challenges

*"Workforce development is going to continue to be a challenge. I think the issue of burn-out and attracting skilled and qualified staff can be difficult, particularly in regional parts of NSW. We need to continue advocating for government funding to support a peer workforce and there needs to be adequate funding for supervision and training."*

### Peer workforce

*"A key area that now needs focus on is the collaboration and partnership between lived experience workforce and clinical workforce."*

### Collaboration across the sector

*"Improved collaboration and coordination between government and non-government mental health services: medical/clinical mental health services and psychosocial/non-clinical/holistic mental health services"*

### NDIS

*"Greater NDIS support for those severely impacted by mental health conditions."*

### Stigma and discrimination

*"Continue to advocate regarding mental health stigma in the community."*

## What MHCC should be known for

A diversity of views were expressed when respondents were asked what MHCC should be known for in the future. Members predominately want MHCC to represent change and reform. They want MHCC to continue to be a strong voice advocating and lobbying for the sector. To a large extent comments reflected much of the current work and priorities of the peak body.

## Leading and advocating

*“The voice of the community-managed mental health sector in NSW, which is listened to by Government and Ministers.”*

*“Sector capacity building, workforce development, thought leadership and advocacy.”*

*“More opportunities to connect with policy makers and advocate for the sector.”*

*“A trusted source of information for both Organisations and the Government”*

## Research and reporting

*“Bringing evidence-based research and innovative solutions to inform strategic directions service delivery.”*

## Fearless advocacy

*“Fearless advocacy with government... and continued awareness of what is going on at grass roots in the sector.”*

## Increased opportunities to collaborate

*“More formal collaboration and networking, not just capital city based.”*

## Supporting small organisations

One interesting theme reflected across several areas was the desire for MHCC to better support small service providers.

*“Resources, funding and partnerships for smaller CMO organisations to survive.”*

This feedback is worth noting, as by size of organisation those with the most members are smaller organisations (see *Who are our members* section for details).

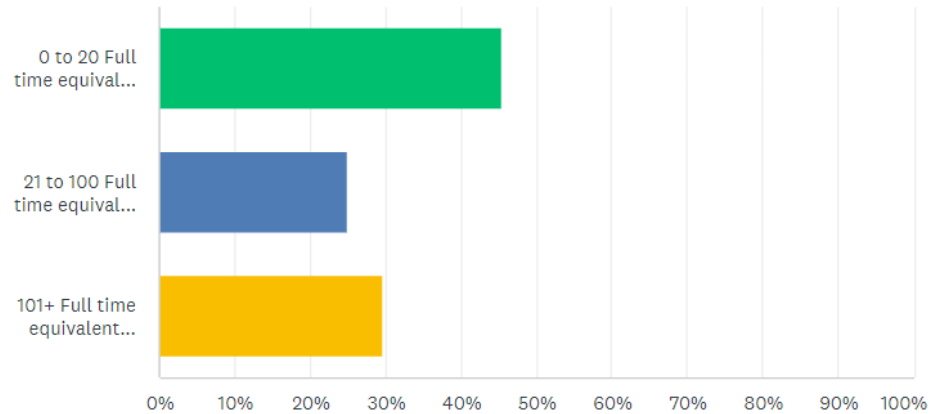
# WHO ARE OUR MEMBERS

Organisations were asked to identify the size of their organisation based on staff numbers. Results show most of our members are organisations with over 21 full-time equivalent staff.

However, the largest single grouping of member organisations (45%) report 20 or less full-time equivalent staff. The next largest grouping report 101+ full-time equivalent staff (30% of members), followed by organisations employing 21 to 100 employees (25%)

## Which of these categories best describes your organisation?

Answered: 44 Skipped: 0



Of the respondents, the vast majority are not NDIS Registered providers, with only 27% identifying as NDIS providers.

There has been a slight decline in NDIS member organisations since 2020, when NDIS providers made up 35% of members. However, it is worth noting that this figure could be affected by the respondents completing the survey this year as compared to previous years.

## REPRESENTING MEMBERS INTERESTS

MHCC has once again received strong support from members for the work being undertaken to represent the sector and members' interests.

- 95% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that MHCC is a respected peak body for the sector.
- When asked whether MHCC builds the capacity of community-managed organisations through supporting the development of a skilled and sustainable workforce, 48% agreed and further 38% strongly agreed.
- When it came to whether MHCC engages with decision-makers and is a strong voice for the sector 90% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed.

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
is a respected peak body for the community-managed mental health sector.	2.27% 1	0.00% 0	2.27% 1	43.18% 19	52.27% 23	44	4.43
engages with decision makers and is a strong voice for community managed mental health organisations.	2.27% 1	0.00% 0	6.82% 3	52.27% 23	38.64% 17	44	4.25
builds the capacity of the sector through supporting the development of a skilled and sustainable workforce.	2.27% 1	0.00% 0	11.36% 5	47.73% 21	38.64% 17	44	4.20
keeps members well informed about relevant issues and the broader sector.	2.27% 1	0.00% 0	2.27% 1	47.73% 21	47.73% 21	44	4.39

While the results are good, when compared to 2021 there has been a marginal decline in satisfaction with our advocacy and leadership goals.

In 2021, 100% of members either strongly agreed (64%) or agreed (36%) with the statement that MHCC promotes mental health and wellbeing in NSW by leading and advocating from a strong community sector.

# LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

## Summary of capacity building

Respondents were asked how they would rate the training MHCC Learning and Development offers in meeting the needs of their organisation and workforce. Over half rated MHCC as doing a good job. A further 7% responded that it was excellent.

When asked to comment on areas of training that would be useful to their organisation and workforce, respondents identified:

- cultural safety for diverse communities, in particular Aboriginal communities, and youth peer work.
- training for mental health standards
- supporting lived experience, and
- online training.

*“I love your training - please include more scholarship places for individual advocates so they don't miss out on opportunities just because they aren't employed.”*

It is worth noting that one response suggested MHCC focuses more on advocacy than training.

# BACKGROUND TO SURVEY

MHCC conducts a Member Representative Survey annually as an experiential check on the services, resources and work carried out by the peak body.

This year the Survey received a strong response rate, with 44 of our eligible member organisations completing the Survey. This represents almost 50% of all member organisations and is a strong result, compared to the 47% response in 2022 and 20% in 2021 (NB it is worth stating that the low rate in 2021 can be attributed to respondents increased workload during COVID-19). The response rate compares favourably to industry standards for member surveys and our own past performance.

The 2023 Member Representative Survey was sent to members in early November. Reminders, including emails and personal approaches, followed up to ensure the strongest possible response rate. All respondents chose to identify themselves, and as a result, we can confirm that responses were received from across the membership, in terms of organisational size (Question 2) and NDIS service providers (Question 3).

It is worth noting that the survey sample is low, therefore one or two responses can skew overall results more than when a larger sample is collected.

This year the Survey did not ask members to identify the particular services they provide, as this information was requested in the 2023 Workforce Survey conducted earlier in the year.

## CONCLUSION

The 2023 Member Representative Survey showcases MHCC's significant achievements and highlights potential areas for growth. Members appreciate MHCC's role as a strong advocate but express specific concerns regarding funding, workforce development and collaboration. Moving forward, MHCC is well-positioned to address these concerns and continue its impactful work in the mental health sector.

### Areas for future consideration

- While most members were satisfied with their membership, only one in four expressed a high level of satisfaction.
- When asked to rate our work building the capacity of the sector through supporting the development of a skilled and sustainable workforce, the results were not convincing. This could represent concerns with overall workforce challenges experienced by the sector.
- No respondents reported our training as being poor, but equally only a small percentage rated the training meeting their needs as excellent (7%).
- Our policy resources, publications and tools were rated as good by 50% of respondents, however it's worth noting the lower rating of average or poor (32%) stood out for these areas of our work. It is unclear whether this represents the number of resources offered or the quality of the resources themselves. This question will require further inquiry in the next survey.
- Comments from respondents reflected members' desire for more policy work in sector reform and future forecasting.



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