

The Association of Participating Service Users

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position:	Systemic Advocacy Lead (0.5 EFT)
Service area:	APSU - The Association of Participating Service Users
Award	Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Award 2010
Duration of the position:	0.5 EFT (2.5 days per week) Two year contract with a four month trial period, extendable depending on funding and capacity.

INTRODUCTION

The Association of Participating Service Users (APSU) at the Self Help Addiction Resource Centre (SHARC) is a state-wide service that facilitates the furthering of consumer participation practices in the Victorian alcohol and other drugs (AOD) sector. APSU is a vehicle for systemic advocacy and representation of the consumer voice.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Association for Participating Service Users is threefold:

1. To work collaboratively with key stakeholders to increase community (consumer) participation in drug treatment and care provider systems.
2. To increase service user impact on relevant policy development and implementation at the local, state and national level.
3. To promote, encourage and assist service users in the development of service user run programs and activities at the local level.

THE ROLE

The Systemic Advocacy Lead is responsible for undertaking systemic advocacy on behalf and in partnership with the AOD consumers (service users and family members) and the APSU team. This role will ensure the presence of APSU in the conversations affecting AOD consumers, both within the AOD sector and broader society, and make the AOD consumer voices heard and amplified. In collaboration with the APSU Team, this role will identify the issues affecting AOD consumers, and prioritise the issues

for focus of APSU's systemic advocacy efforts. The role will develop and implement thematic advocacy plans and strategies to start public conversations, primarily within the AOD sector, and lobby for opportunities to influence decision making with consumer lens.

The successful candidate will have a direct lived experience of using alcohol and other drug services.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Systemic Advocacy Lead works in collaboration with the APSU Team and SHARC Leadership.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The following list describes the core responsibilities of the role, but does not exclude the role from other duties that may be necessary to carry out the APSU mission.

- Identify current issues affecting AOD consumers, select issues for focus, and develop plan for action.
- Write and disseminate position statements and issue papers.
- Collaborate closely with the APSU team in making decisions around relevant issues and plan for action.
- Consult the APSU membership of consumers to gain insight into their experiences in regards to specific issues.
- Participate in AOD sector meetings and events on behalf of APSU and AOD consumers.
- Develop and cultivate external relationships with other advocacy organisations, Government officials and service providers.
- Identify opportunities to increase the presence and impact of APSU and AOD consumers in public and AOD sector conversation.
- Maintain integrity with the APSU mission and SHARC values in all aspects of work.

EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Tertiary qualification in social sciences, public health, public policy or a related field.

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

- Current knowledge of the Victorian alcohol and drug service system.
- Highly developed writing skills and experience in research papers and report writing.
- Ability to identify issues affecting AOD consumers and recognise opportunities for consumer advocacy.
- Sound understanding of the issues surrounding problem drug use.
- Representational, lobbying, liaison and networking skills.



APSU is a service of sharc

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Self Help Addiction Resource Centre

- Practical understanding of relevant social theory and ability to apply it in advocacy activities.
- Sound understanding of consumer participation theory and practice.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Ability to meaningfully engage variety of stakeholders.
- Ability to work independently and effectively set priorities.
- Direct lived experience of using the alcohol and other drug treatment service system.
- Well-developed word processing and other computer skills.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- A current Victorian driver's license.
- The successful applicant will be required to provide a criminal records check.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

- Strong sense of social justice.
- Passion for consumer issues.
- Sociological imagination – the ability to recognise broader social issues in individual experiences.
- Openness to views different from own and new ideas.
- Critical thinking skills.
- Ability to retain a positive lens in changing environments.
- Ability to work within a small team in a collaborative way.