

Shifting minds

Queensland Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs Strategic Plan 2018–2023

January 2023

Have your say

Renewal of *Shifting minds: Queensland Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs Strategic Plan 2018-2023* and *Every life: The Queensland Suicide Prevention Plan 2019-2029* (Phase Two)

Overview

The Queensland Mental Health Commission develops the whole of government Strategic Plan for mental health, alcohol and other drugs and suicide prevention, on behalf of the Queensland government. Strategic Plans provide an enabling environment that support and promote shared leadership, collective responsibility and a balanced approach across policy, funding, planning, program development and service delivery.

The current Strategic Plan - [Shifting minds: Queensland Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs Strategic Plan 2018-23](#) (*Shifting minds*) - is coming to an end, and the Queensland Mental Health Commission has begun consulting with Queenslanders to renew the plan for the next five years, and also develop the second phase of [Every life: The Queensland Suicide Prevention Plan 2019-2029](#) (*Every life*). We want to hear your views on what the future mental health, alcohol and other drugs and suicide prevention systems in Queensland should look like, as well as what you think are the key priorities to support this vision.

Since *Shifting minds* was released in 2018, a lot has changed for Queenslanders. From the impact of natural disasters, including prolonged drought, fires and floods, to the COVID-19 pandemic, all Queenslanders have been impacted in broad and varying ways. At the same time, reform of the mental health, alcohol and other drugs, suicide prevention and related systems in Queensland continued to occur within an environment of reform at national, state and local levels. Specific reform initiatives include the [National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement](#), the [Bilateral Schedule on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention: Queensland](#) (the Bilateral Agreement), the Mental Health Select Committee [Inquiry into the opportunities to improve mental health outcomes for Queenslanders](#), a record investment of \$1.64 billion for mental health initiatives, and the release of [Better Care Together – a plan for Queensland’s state-funded mental health, alcohol and other drug services to 2027](#) and [Achieving balance: The Queensland Alcohol and Other Drugs Plan 2022–2027](#) (*Achieving balance*).

The [Queensland Mental Health Commission Act 2013](#) (the Act) requires the whole-of-government Strategic Plan (the Strategic Plan) to be reviewed at least once every five years. Given the impact of significant events, investments and reforms, this renewal is well-timed to ensure that the Strategic Plan is both contemporary and future-focused, as well as grounded in the needs of Queenslanders, particularly people with lived experience, their families, kin, carers and support people. The Queensland Mental Health Commission (the Commission) is undertaking a state-wide consultation process to inform the renewal of the *Shifting minds*. In addition, a review of contemporary best practices, evidence, and evaluation outcomes from the current *Shifting minds* will inform the renewal. The renewal will align with policy reforms and strategic directions within and across tiers of government.



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Through the consultation process, we have asked people to consider the outcomes they would like to see at the individual, population and system levels, and the what is required to to achieve those outcomes.

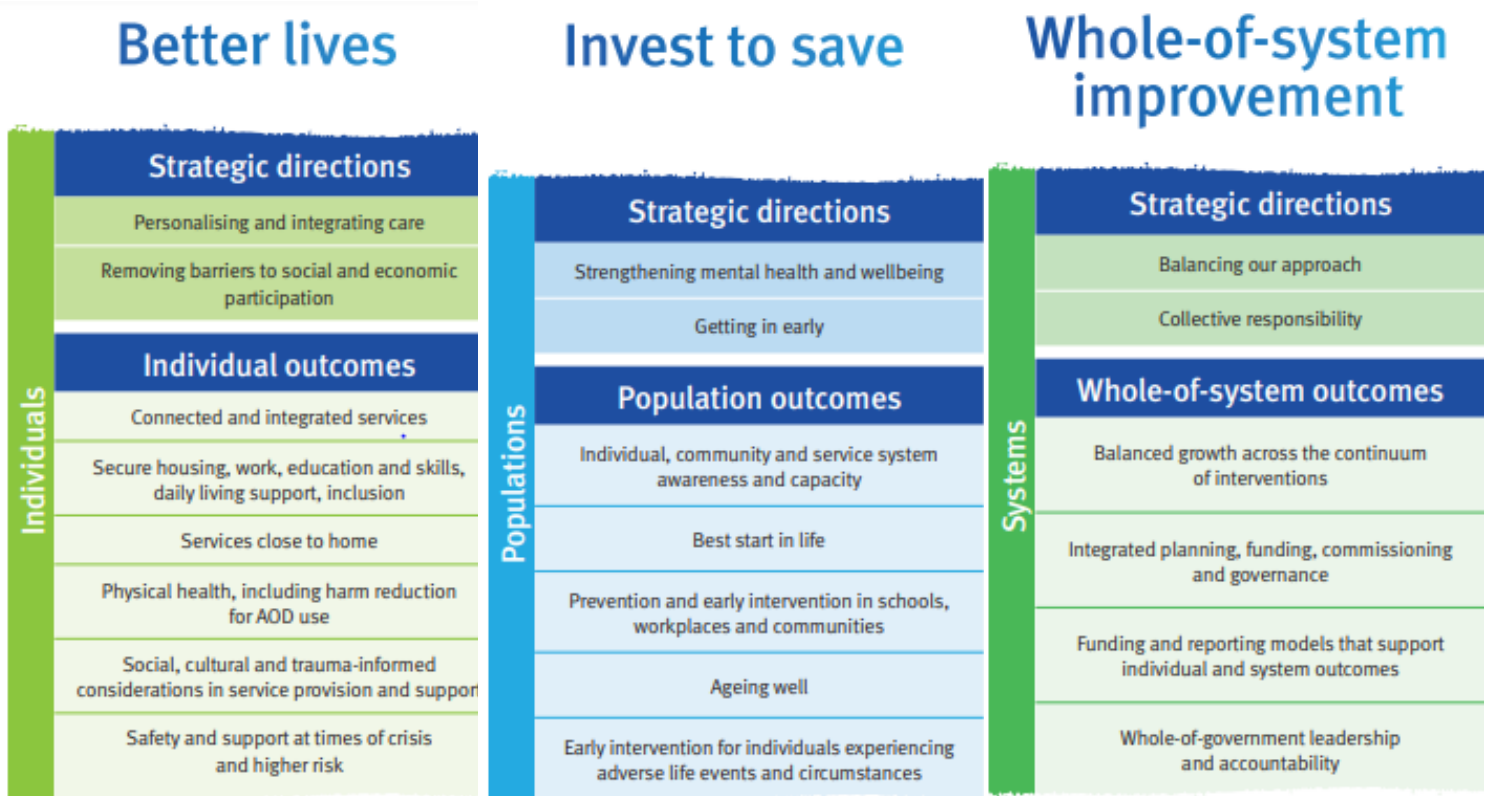
Considering the individual, population and system outcomes enables us to determine what is required, where it is required and how to stretch our collective efforts to achieve the vision for our future mental health, alcohol and other drugs, and suicide prevention systems. This discussion paper provides an overview of *Shifting minds* and its sub-plans, *Every life* and *Achieving balance*. It will give a broad understanding of what we have heard so far and an opportunity for the broader Queensland community to have input into the vision for the future mental health and wellbeing systems in Queensland and how it might be achieved.

Shifting minds

In 2018, the Queensland Government launched *Shifting minds*, which established a renewed strategic direction for a whole-of-government, whole-of-community, and whole-of-person approach to improving the mental health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders. It was developed following significant state-wide community and cross-sector consultation with Queensland Government agencies, the public, private, primary health and non-government sectors, and the broader community.

From the outset, *Shifting minds* was designed to be ambitious, to stretch collective efforts and responsibility to support and improve the mental health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders. Promoting positive mental health and wellbeing is a shared responsibility across all areas of the community. No one agency, level of government, group or community can improve the mental health and wellbeing of Queenslanders alone. It requires collective effort and action from within and across all tiers of government, sectors, industries, communities, and individuals to make a meaningful and sustained difference. The overarching aim is to ensure Queenslanders get well, stay well, and lead thriving and purposeful lives.

Shifting minds has three focus areas reflecting individual, population and system levels, listed below, with each area outlining the strategic directions and priorities for cross-sector action.



Shifting minds outlined a range of improvements across service delivery, treatment, care and support, that balanced clinical and psycho-social approaches, as well as a population mental health and wellbeing approach. *Shifting minds* recognised that better outcomes for people requires access to quality, timely and appropriate supports, resources and services both within and beyond the healthcare sector, placing clinical care alongside broader needs that include physical health, housing, education, employment and social inclusion. An effective system of care must also address these broader human needs to achieve better outcomes for individuals, because these can have significant influence over mental health and wellbeing, and if not met can contribute to illness and prevent recovery.

Renewal of *Shifting minds*

In renewing *Shifting minds*, it is proposed that the three focus areas of individual, population and system levels is continued in the next iteration. The renewal seeks to:

- refresh strategic directions and priorities
- build on what has been achieved and progress to the next stage of reform
- respond to what has changed or new drivers, and
- address ongoing challenges, barriers and needs.

Shifting minds adopted a long-term approach to reform, recognising that we want to build on existing foundations and continue progress towards the strategic priorities identified in 2018, which remain relevant and evidence-informed, while we also work towards new directions and priorities that respond to current circumstances. This approach recognises that reform of complex systems takes time, and to achieve reform, we need to have consistency of approach over a longer timeframe. Through renewing *Shifting minds*, we also want to take the opportunity to strengthen the capacity of stakeholders to understand and engage at the strategic and structural levels – where there is the greatest potential for impact and key leverage points for change.

During November and December 2022, the Commission has undertaken a series of face-to-face stakeholder consultations in various locations across Queensland and hosted online stakeholder consultation forums. In addition, we have been meeting with existing networks, key stakeholders and peak bodies, including hosting several consultations for specific priority areas and cohorts, including people with a lived experience, families, carers and support people, people who use alcohol and other drugs, people from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, people living in rural and remote areas, and older persons. Additional consultations will be completed in January 2023 to hear from lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning and asexual (LGBTIQ+) communities and First Nations people and communities.

To date, some of the emerging characteristics for a future mental health and wellbeing system include:

- responsive, integrated, and compassionate community-based services and support systems that are accessible when and where needed by the person, their families, carers, and kin, and support people—across the age range, continuum of need, and settings (place-based and digital)
- a balanced approach to harm minimisation for alcohol and other drug use, with a strong prioritisation on harm and demand reduction
- individuals, families, and communities experiencing vulnerability, adversity or who are at-risk of mental ill-health, problematic alcohol and other drugs use and/or suicidality are supported through equitable and tailored approaches early across the continuum of need and life course, including tailored promotion, prevention, and early intervention strategies
- support, including treatment and care, is compassionate and safe, culturally-responsive, trauma-informed and tailored to diverse needs and experiences
- services and responses that are co-designed and co-produced with people with a lived experience, and their families, carers and kin, are adopted as business as usual
- the whole-of-person needs of families, carers, kin, and support people are met

- the whole-of-person needs across social, cultural, educational, employment, and housing are addressed to foster mental wellbeing, tailored across the life course and settings
- Queenslanders feel part of a compassionate and socially-connected community, free from stigma and discrimination
- strong leadership, governance and accountability, and data mechanisms are embedded at all levels within and across sectors, including collectively agreed roles, responsibilities, resourcing, and deliverables
- the leadership and voices of people with lived experience are embedded in governance, planning, policy, funding, and service delivery
- mental health and wellbeing are prioritised across sectors and government agencies, based on a contemporary wellbeing approach to policy, planning and funding that prioritises prevention and early intervention
- joint planning, funding, and commissioning to achieve equity of access, balanced growth of interventions across the continuum of need, and addressing service provision gaps for under-served communities
- workforces across the continuum of need, sectors and settings are well-resourced, skilled, supported and enabled, including growing and supporting the consumer and carer peer and lived experience workforces, and multidisciplinary workforces.

Every life – phase one

Shifting minds is supported by two whole-of-government sub-plans, [Every life: The Queensland Suicide Prevention Plan 2019-2029](#) and [Achieving balance: The Queensland Alcohol and Other Drugs Plan 2022-2027](#).

Every life is a whole-of-government plan for suicide prevention in Queensland. *Every life* recognises suicide is preventable and emphasises the critical importance of working together to reduce suicide. It acknowledges that effective suicide prevention requires responses beyond health services and must incorporate the voices of people with lived experience. Aligned with national and international best practices, evidence, and innovation, *Every life* identifies four action areas (see figure below and overleaf).

Action area 1 Building resilience

Improve wellbeing in people and communities

- Enable children and families to thrive
- Strengthen school mental health supports
- Build mentally healthy workplaces
- Public sector leading by example
- Build inclusive, resilient communities
- Create safer public spaces

Action area 2 Reducing vulnerability

Strengthen support to vulnerable people

- Prioritise suicide prevention for men
- Work together to support vulnerable people
- Target interventions for those at greater risk

Action area 3
Enhancing responsiveness

Enhance responses to suicidality

Make every contact an opportunity for intervention

Enhance options for care

Pursue excellence in care

Provide timely support following a suicide

Action area 4
Working together

Achieve more by working together

Create a coordinated approach to suicide prevention

Strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership in suicide prevention

Improve use of data, evidence and evaluation

Every life adopted a phased approach to implementation, with each phase informing renewed direction in the next phase. For example, phase one was designed to be delivered between 2019-2022 and consisted of 60 cross-sector actions across four pillars.

Phase one of *Every life* made significant progress embedding the whole-of-government approach, including creating a shared sense of ownership of suicide prevention reform across the government and beyond the health system. In addition, as the first phase reaches completion, annual reporting on progress against these actions has confirmed that many actions have been embedded into business-as-usual for government departments beyond the health system, creating a solid foundation to leverage system reform in the next phase of the plan.

Developing phase two

It is proposed that the pillars under phase two of *Every life* are slightly adjusted, with the original ‘Working together’ pillar to be expanded to encompass the broader enablers of reform. The identified system-level enablers will support the goals across the other three pillars.



Building resilience: This pillar is about building personal resilience, social connectedness, and positive wellbeing, which can be protective factors against a wide range of adversity. The key settings in which we are born, live, work, learn, connect, play, and age have a significant role in building resilience. Community connection can strengthen resilience by fostering social cohesion, understanding and embracing diversity, reducing stigma and discrimination, and providing safe environments. Building resilience early in life sets a strong foundation for social and emotional wellbeing.

Reducing vulnerability: This pillar focuses on strengthening support to the people, groups and communities that are more vulnerable to suicidality because of their experience of adversity, trauma, intergenerational disadvantage or discrimination, or through increased presence of adverse social, economic and health factors. This includes developing a greater understanding of the drivers of vulnerability and risk, enabling early interventions at key touchpoints and providing tailored approaches.

Enhancing responsiveness: This pillar focuses on enhancing and improving responsiveness to people in crisis and distress and those affected by suicide. This includes all parts of the system, including the health system, housing, employment, social services, law enforcement and justice services, child protection services, other government agencies and the broader community.

Enabling reform: This pillar is foundational and focuses on the systemic enablers needed to drive reform across the other three pillars of *Every life*: Building resilience, Reducing vulnerability and Enhancing responsiveness. This may include strengthening lived experience leadership within phase two, improved data collection and linkage across multiple systems, and increasing and supporting the workforce.

Every life phase two will identify opportunities and develop strategies to influence and shift the system to improve the effectiveness of suicide prevention in Queensland. It will build on the activities and outcomes achieved in phase one and continue to provide an authorising environment at the strategic and systems level to enable agencies across government to develop and deliver coordinated, targeted, and aligned actions that drive reform.

Several face-to-face and online consultations have already been completed. To date, these consultations have identified the areas of priority for the future of suicide prevention in Queensland, including:

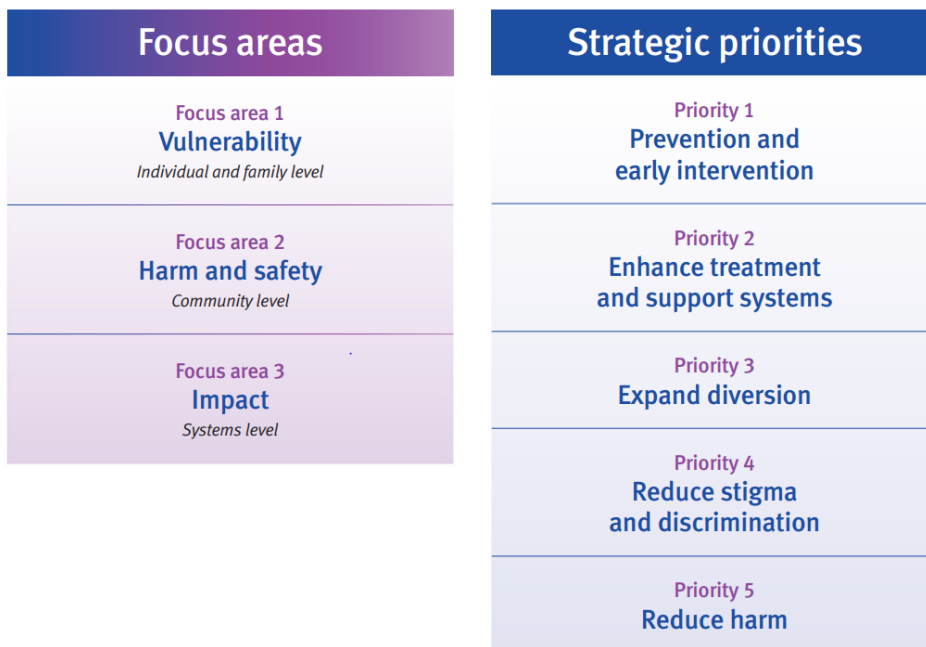
- build community resilience through fostering social connection and inclusion, addressing social determinants
- give people the best start to life, providing universal support and adopting positive mental health and wellbeing approaches with children and young people, in particular within schools
- all government, non-government agencies and the private sector prioritise and support mental health and wellbeing
- provide targeted, culturally-responsive and accessible supports to priority populations, including:
 - Young people
 - First Nations people
 - Men
 - Culturally and linguistically diverse populations
- increase community capability, including equipping all sections of the community to respond to distress and vulnerability
- expanded, accessible and innovative service options for people in distress
- engage, support and nurture a broader workforce, including a peer workforce, and equip them with the capability to respond to people in distress
- improved surveillance system and utilisation of data for improvement
- joint and whole of government ownership and accountability for implementation of suicide prevention activities

- expand, invest in and embed lived experience leadership at all levels.

Additional consultations are planned for early 2023 to further explore emerging priority areas for suicide prevention. This consultation paper and survey is an additional mechanism for stakeholder and community feedback, and provides another avenue for people who prefer a written format. Survey results and submissions will supplement the consultations already completed.

Achieving balance

Released in 2022, *Achieving balance* establishes a whole-of-government, cross-sector alcohol and other drugs plan that sets the direction for a more coordinated system to achieve balance across the three pillars essential to minimising harm—that is, demand reduction, harm reduction and supply reduction. Through the identification of three focus areas underpinned by five strategic priorities listed below, *Achieving balance* seeks to improve outcomes for Queenslanders by strengthening prevention and early intervention, enhancing treatment and support systems, expanding diversion, reducing stigma and discrimination, and reducing harm.



As *Achieving balance* has only recently been released, the next iteration of *Shifting minds* seeks your consideration in determining the next critical system shifts required to progress the alcohol and other drugs reform agenda in Queensland. To date, the consultations have identified the following emerging priorities:

- contemporary drug law and policy reform to reduce individual and community drug-related harm and stigma
- address barriers to education, employment, and training, including examining approaches used in other jurisdictions and consideration of drug law and policy reforms
- greater resourcing to assist people, including families, carers, kin and support people, who are engaged with the criminal justice system, including increased investment into prison health, expanding harm reduction services, and improved wrap-around supports for people transitioning through the criminal justice system
- family-based models of support, addressing areas of risk and harm, while focusing on keeping families together
- strengthen and adequately resource the alcohol and other drug lived experience peak body
- greater engagement of alcohol and other drug lived experience and expertise across all areas, particularly governance, leadership, policy, co-design, and co-production
- build the capacity and capability of health, human and social services to better meet the whole-of-person needs of individuals, their families, carers, kin, and support people, and

- address stigma and discrimination associated with alcohol and other drug use, including recognition of the impact of stigma on access to housing, employment, and training.

Your feedback matters

It is critical that we hear your views to better understand and shape a renewed *Shifting minds* and *Every life* (phase two). To support your participation in the consultation process, we have drafted *Shifting minds* and *Every life* proposed future systems overview to help consult with stakeholders about a proposed future state.

This overview is intended to be a **starting point** for conversation and reflection. It is knowingly imperfect, and we welcome your insights, knowledge and experience to develop a shared vision for the future of mental health and wellbeing in Queensland, and how we will get there. These insights will help guide us as we write the renewed *Shifting minds* and *Every life* (phase two). The final Strategic Plan and *Every life* Phase Two will be published later in 2023, and we will also publish information about the progress made under *Shifting minds* and *Every life* (phase one).

You can participate in renewing *Shifting minds* and *Every life* (phase 2) in several ways.

Respond to this Consultation paper

Shifting minds

To support your thinking about a proposed future state and a renewed *Shifting minds*, we ask you to review the *Shifting minds* future system overview and respond to the following questions in our online survey:

1. **What features and improvements would you like to see in a future mental health, alcohol and other drugs and suicide prevention system?**
2. **What supports, actions or changes required to achieve the proposed future system?**
3. **What do you think the priorities should be under a renewed *Shifting minds* strategic plan?**

The *Shifting minds* survey closes on 23 January 2023. Complete the survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SPWBZVH>

Every life

To support your thinking about phase two of *Every Life*, we ask you to review the *Every life* future system overview and respond to the following questions:

1. **What are the opportunities and priorities for building resilience in people and communities?**
2. **What are the opportunities and priorities for reducing vulnerability and strengthening support to vulnerable people and communities?**
3. **What are the opportunities and priorities for enhancing responsiveness to suicidality?**
4. **What are the key enablers for the next phase of the *Every life* suicide prevention plan?**

The survey closes on 23 January 2023. Complete the *Every life* survey here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/3CTXK55>

Make a submission

You can submit to the renewal process at shiftingminds@qmhc.qld.gov.au by 3 February 2023.

Participate in a Community Engagement Session

30 January 2023	Register for the Cairns Community forum
31 January 2023	Register for the Mackay Community forum
1 February 2023	Register for the Rockhampton Community forum

2 February 2023	Register for the Longreach Community forum
10 February 2023	Register for the Toowoomba Community forum
10 February 2023	Register for the Ipswich Community forum

Updates

Updates about the renewal of *Shifting minds* and *Every life* phase two can be found on our consultation websites or via subscription to our eNews:

- Renewing *Shifting minds*: <https://info.qmhc.qld.gov.au/renewing-shifting-minds>
- *Every life* phase two: <http://info.qmhc.qld.gov.au/every-life-phase-two>
- eNews subscription: <https://www.qmhc.qld.gov.au/subscribe>