



Recovery Stories Policy

APPROVED BY: RW Executive	REVIEW DATE: March 2017
APPROVAL DATE: March 2014	VERSION NUMBER: 1
FILE NUMBER: POL10014	

THIS POLICY APPLIES TO: RW Staff and Consumers



1. Title

This policy will be known as the Recovery Stories Policy.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the capturing recovery stories policy is to outline the procedure for recording recovery stories and to ensure that consumers recording their recovery stories for RW use are giving informed consent and are supported at all stages of the process.

The stages are:

1. Discussion and contemplation of the decision to share
2. Submitting an expression of interest and signing consent
3. Preparation for the recording
4. The recording process itself (being filmed or writing one's story etc.)
5. Debrief and integration of the experience
6. Feedback evaluation

NB These stages may not be linear and people may go back and forth in the decision making

3. Introduction

The sharing of recovery stories plays an important part in: reducing stigma surrounding mental distress, promoting the recovery process and giving hope to others on their own recovery journey. While the sharing of stories can have many benefits for those involved it is important that RW support individuals recording their stories as this can involve revisiting periods of great distress.

Sharing of one's personal story of recovery involves open acknowledgment of experiencing mental health issues. This sharing can be an exhilarating experience but so too it can be daunting. One's story of having navigated dark moments of distress and journeyed toward wellbeing is deeply personal and the decision to share it should not be made lightly. The potential impact of 'going public' needs to be considered from all angles.

4. Policy

Content

- This policy outlines the process for gathering recovery stories.
- Ensuring RW is supporting the consumer before, during and after the recording process.
- Ensuring that the consumer is giving informed consent to release their story.
- Guiding RW staff in the supporting the process of capturing the recovery story and supporting consumers.
- Ensuring the process of capturing and production of the recovery story is co-produced (being informed by the values of full consumer participation).

- Ensuring the person has an opportunity to feedback to the organisation how the process was

Reimbursement of costs

While consumers are volunteering to share their recovery stories, consumers participating are to be reimbursed for any travel costs, childcare, or carer costs that they may incur during this process.

5. Procedure

Prior to recording the Recovery Story

- The Site Manager or Team Leader must give written approval to the Key Worker to proceed.
- Sensitivity is required in gauging the day of writing / filming (for example Fridays might need to be avoided due to the fact that less support staff are around on weekends).
- The consumer's Key Worker will take responsibility and manage the process from beginning to end in liaison with the Communications & Marketing Officer.
- Key Worker invites the consumer to have a nominated support person accompany them for the entire process outlined in this policy.
 - Please note: The nominated support person could be a family member, friend etc. RW Recovery Worker will need then to ensure that this relationship is supported to be helpful – i.e. that the nominated person knows that they have been nominated and what will be entailed in supporting the person (that they have a plan also).
- Key Worker ensures that they are familiar with the documentation and reference material ahead of time.
- Key Worker discusses what a Recovery Story is with the consumer, and together they explore why we record them and what our objective is in distributing the stories.
- Key Worker prints off a copy of the booklet *Speaking Our Minds: A guide to how we use our stories* and uses it to support the discussion.
- The Key Worker discusses the topic with the person (and if needed their support person) they mutually explore the implications (potential positive and negative impact) of sharing one's story for the immediate and long term future (drawing on the prompt questions in the Appendix).
- Key Worker discusses the limits of confidentiality, ownership and the fact that due to the nature of online media and the fact that they are circulated, tagged and forwarded broadly by numerous different people, the recordings may stay in circulation forever.
- All components of the process are discussed with the consumer and all principles of informed consent making must be adhered to – specifically that the person has had the opportunity to explore all relevant information and think about the issue broadly. The staff member discusses the Consent Form including the clause allowing for consent to be withdrawn at any time and the inability for assured confidentiality due to possible recognition. Then the person is invited to sign the consent form.

- The consumer may negotiate which media they are giving consent for the story to be advertised whether that is television, radio, printed media, or social media.
- The consumer is informed that they are able to withdraw consent at any time during the process.
- The consumer and Key Worker mutually construct a plan outlining needs, type of supports, self-care, and crisis management for the entire process.
- Most recordings will occur at head office, however should the consumer expressly not be able to do this, they will be able to contribute to the decision for an alternative location for the recording, and what format they will be in.

During the recording process

- The Consumer's Key worker will keep the consumer fully informed throughout the process.
- The consumer is offered the opportunity to have a nominated support person accompany them for the recording process.
- The capturing of the recovery story may occur through a variety of electronic and/or print medium, as decided upon prior to the recording.
- The consumer may wish to record their story themselves or they may use the assistance of RW staff.
- RW staff's primary role is to offer support when required and ensure the recovery story is captured in a person centred, respectful way.
- The consumer's primary role is to develop a story through their chosen medium which encapsulates their recovery journey.
- The consumer is to be made aware that there will be editing and that not everything that is recorded will be in the final release. However consumers are encouraged to participate in these decisions and can request the removal of particular subjects or points at any time.
- The consumer is encouraged to utilise their support management plan, including their support network, and RW staff throughout the process.

Following the recording

- After completing the recording the consumer is given the opportunity to immediately debrief with the Key Worker (or mutually agreed upon proxy).
- During debriefing the support management plan is reviewed, and, if required, consumers are given contact details for afterhours support including the RW on-call number. (The on-call list is notified of this ahead of time.)
- Five to seven days following the recording the RW Key Worker (or proxy) will make contact with the consumer to check in with how they are feeling and to offer support.
- Once the story has been edited the consumer is shown the proposed final version. At this point the consumer has the opportunity to correct or revise the written story, however with film footage the person can either accept or withdraw the material in its entirety. The

consumer is also reminded that at any stage of the process they can withdraw consent.

- RW Recovery Worker will give the consumer a copy of the feedback evaluation sheet to complete and then submit to RW Communications & Marketing Officer and cc to the Metropolitan Residential Services Manager.

The release of the story

- Following notice from the RW Communications & Marketing Officer, the RW Key Worker shall inform the consumer that their story will be released, in what medium it will be released, on what dates, and for what time period.
- The consumer is again reminded of their right to withdraw consent to the process.
- The consumer and Key Worker review the support management plan and update the plan when they feel it necessary. The consumer is encouraged to seek support as often and for as long as required.
- Five to seven days following the release of the story, the Key Worker shall contact the consumer to check in.
- Once this period of exposure is completed, RW may release the story again as agreed upon by the consumer, and all steps of this stage are repeated.

6. Reference documents to support the process

- Booklet *Speaking Our Minds: A guide to how we use our stories* – Available from <http://www.ourconsumerplace.com.au/consumer/resources#2>
- *IAP2 Spectrum of participation* http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/imported/IAP2%20Spectrum_vertical.pdf
- The following 3 links are part of the *National COPMI consumer and carer strategy for organizations project* (and included media prep)
 - *Checklist for Interviews: With people with lived experience for Resource Development* <http://www.copmi.net.au/images/pdf/Get-Involved/checklist-for-interviews-with-people-with-lived-experience.pdf>
 - Lived Experience Partnership Checklist <http://www.copmi.net.au/images/pdf/Get-Involved/lived-experience-partnership-checklist.pdf>
 - Sample clip and more at <http://www.copmi.net.au/get-involved/participation-strategies.html>

7. Breach of Policy

Any breach of the capturing recovery stories policy must be brought to the attention of the respective manager of the service.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following RW policies:

- Informed Consent Policy

POLICY CONTEXT: THIS POLICY RELATES TO

APPLICABLE STANDARDS (or other external obligations)	
APPLICABLE LEGISLATION (or other requirements)	
APPLICABLE CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATION	

REVIEW BY CONSUMER FAMILY REFERENCE GROUP

POLICY VERSION	APPROVED / REVIEWED	COMMENTS

POLICY VERSION CONTROL

POLICY VERSION	APPROVED / REVIEWED	COMMENTS
Version 1	April 2014	RW Executive
Version 2	March 2016	Richmond Wellbeing Rebranding

APPENDIX: DISCUSSION PROMPTS

It is the aim, that at the end of this process that the people we work with who engage in these 'sharing stories' activities feel:

- a) sufficiently supported regarding the potential vulnerability and exposure.
- b) that their contribution to the material resources on recovery is appreciated and valued.

Essentially, we need to demonstrate (actions not just words) that we really value people and their stories. Further, staff needs to demonstrate sensitivity to the fact that people are sharing an intimate part of themselves into a world where stigma and discrimination of difference is sadly alive and well.

Some prompts for discussion might be:

- a. What kinds of feelings might emerge throughout the process? What sorts of things come up when writing and speaking ones story, being filmed, seeing oneself on YouTube or reading it in the annual report (e.g. revisiting this material can evoke grief and guilt etc. – all of which can be fodder for voices).
- b. What if you are going really well on your journey, want to talk about your recovery – then some time later you become unwell – how do you reconcile what you have spoken about recovery but now are unwell? It is helpful to remember that recovery is not a linear journey and life happens to us all and when we respond using our usual coping strategies this does not mean we have 'failed recovery'. It is *all* part of recovery.
- c. Reflecting and planning: What sorts of needs might people have? Developing a support / self-care plan for the entire process before during and after including after launch.
- d. What does informed consent mean in this instance? Can someone give informed consent if they are on a CTO?
- e. Where could the media material end up (You Tube forever?)
- f. What days of the week would we not want to do this on (e.g. a Friday so people are left all weekend to work through it themselves if no staff on).
- g. What kinds of pre-briefing and debriefing might they like?
- h. How can we support people sharing their recovery story to keep 'in recovery' while processing any difficult memories, thoughts, voices and stay 'in recovery' i.e. normalize their responses and not pathologise them
- i. How do we support people to be media ready and focused and 'on topic' – i.e. what sorts of support might they need to not just write their story but write their recovery story?
- j. Reflecting and planning: How much time might it take to write ones story – they might want to do several drafts
- k. Are there any questions that can be used as prompts for focusing their story on their recovery journey rather than life journey?
- l. Would you like your nominated support person to also prompt you when telling your story?

Recovery Stories Feedback Evaluation

Name of RW Key Worker supervising the project _____

Position _____ Site / Program _____

Is the Site Manager / Team Leader aware of this activity? Yes No _____

Manager please initial

Consumer's Name

Site / Residence

Contact details (voluntary)

1. I have received an opportunity to discuss this idea of telling my recovery story Yes No
2. I understand the process and how the material will be used Yes No
3. I understand the limits of my ownership of the material Yes No
4. The conditions of its use have been explained to me Yes No
5. I have had pre-briefing before the event Yes No
6. My post activity questions / concerns have been addressed adequately Yes No
7. Do you feel that your story and your message has been honoured and respected? Yes No
8. Do you feel your lived experience and expertise has been valued and respect? Yes No
9. Would you recommend this activity to someone else? Yes No
10. On a scale of 1-10 (where 1 is not good and 10 is great) how was this experience for you _____

Is there anything you can think of that would improve our process for next time?

Recovery Stories - Filming and Broadcasting Consent Form

(RW) Richmond Fellowship of Western Australia Inc. seeks to capture some stories of Recovery. The purpose of sharing recovery stories is to offer hope and inspiration to others who are experiencing similar issues while at the same time celebrating success. Additionally, the sharing of Recovery stories plays an important part in: reducing stigma surrounding mental distress, promoting the recovery process and giving hope to others on their own recovery journey.

RW invites you, your family members, friends or allies to volunteer to be involved by sharing your story.

If you wish to participate, we require that you complete the following consent form:

I _____ give my consent to Richmond Fellowship of Western Australia Inc. to record MY LIKENESS/ MY RELATIVE [circle correct description] on a video, audio, digital and electronic medium relating to my recovery journey to appear on the WORLD WIDE WEB, and ASSOCIATED ONLINE PUBLICATIONS [circle all or correct description].

Please choose your preferred method from the below statement:

- I would like the recording to be broadcast without my real name
- The recording will be broadcast with my real name

I understand the following:

- (1) That while RW will make every attempt to ensure my anonymity by not disclosing my name without permission, it is possible that someone may recognise my face
- (2) While the recording of the story will take 30 minutes, not all of it will be always used as some of the footage may be edited for style, consistency, and length.
- (3) I will be given the opportunity by RW staff to view the proposed final version once it has been edited.
- (4) I will have a RW Staff member as a support person who will manage the entire recording process The RW support person will be advised when and if my story will be released, on what dates, and will inform me of this.
- (5) I have discussed the RW Recovery Stories Policy with the RW staff member allocated to me for this process
- (6) Due to the nature of online media and the fact that they are circulated, tagged and forwarded broadly by numerous different people, the recordings may stay in circulation forever.

I can withdraw my consent after the viewing, but once the information has been committed for transmission it will only be possible to withdraw the footage from RW sites and publications due to reason listed in the previous point.

Consumer Signature _____ Date _____