

Position Description

Position Title:	Policy & Advocacy Lead
Employment Type:	Full Time
Hours of Work:	1 FTE
SCHADS Classification Level	SCHADS Award Level 6.1
Reports to:	CEO
Direct reports:	Nil
Works closely with	MHCT Communications Team

About the Mental Health Council of Tasmania:

The Mental Health Council of Tasmania (MHCT) is the peak body representing the mental health and wellbeing needs of all Tasmanians, and the community organisations that work with and support them. We work closely with the government to amplify the voices of our members and Tasmanian communities, to provide input into public policies and programs. We advocate for reform and improvement within the Tasmanian mental health system.

Our purpose:	Strengthen and advocate for our communities and service providers to support the mental health and wellbeing of all Tasmanians.
Vision:	Every Tasmanian has access to the resources and support needed for good mental health and wellbeing
Values:	Compassionate and respectful, collaborative, and supportive, responsive, and adaptive, leading, and engaging

Position Summary:

The Advocacy and Policy Lead is a senior position responsible for providing specialist policy advice and advocacy support to the CEO and the MHCT team, including the media and communications team. This position drives MHCT's policy development, research, and advocacy efforts, engaging extensively with stakeholders, participating in specialised working groups and committees, and contributing to sector reform initiatives. The Lead will be responsible for reviewing and developing high-quality policy submissions and proposals, and for providing clear, timely advice on policy implications to inform MHCT's strategic direction and public positioning.

Duties and Responsibilities:

Policy Development and Advocacy Leadership:

- Provide specialist, high-level policy advice to the CEO and the media and communications team on emerging issues, policy announcements, and their implications for the Tasmanian mental health sector.
- Lead the research, analysis, and development of evidence-based policy submissions, position papers, and proposals that align with MHCT's strategic priorities and advocate for systemic reform.
- Monitor and critically appraise national and state policy landscapes, identifying strategic opportunities and risks related to mental health and wellbeing.
- Coordinate and conduct comprehensive consultations and surveys with MHCT members, consumers, carers, and other stakeholders to inform policy positions and advocacy campaigns.
- Support advocacy strategies and campaigns, working collaboratively with the MHCT team to amplify the voices of members and Tasmanian communities.

Stakeholder Engagement and Representation:

- Actively engage in specialised working groups, committees, and sector reform initiatives on behalf of MHCT, influencing policy development and implementation.
- Build and maintain strong, collaborative relationships with key government departments, peak bodies, service providers, and lived experience organisations.
- Represent MHCT at high-level forums, meetings, and events, effectively articulating MHCT's policy positions and advocacy priorities.

Communication and Advice:

- Provide clear, concise, and timely advice on policy implications to the CEO, Board, and relevant MHCT staff, ensuring they are well-informed to make strategic decisions.
- Work closely with the media and communications team to ensure MHCT's advocacy messages are effectively communicated through various channels and are relevant and timely.
- Develop high-quality publications and resources that effectively inform stakeholders, influence decision-makers, and advise government.

Research and Analysis:

- Design and coordinate research and analysis of best practice models and frameworks to support system improvement within the mental health sector.
- Monitor service gaps and emerging needs within the Tasmanian community to inform policy and advocacy efforts.

Other Duties:

- Undertake other duties as required and directed by the CEO or Delegate, in response to organisational needs and priorities.

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Required Skills and Personal Attributes:

- The position requires a highly experienced and strategic policy professional with a deep understanding of the mental health sector.
- Demonstrated high-level experience in policy research, analysis, and development, preferably within the health or community services sector.
- Proven ability to provide specialist, high-level policy advice and strategic insights to senior leadership.
- Extensive experience in conducting consultations, surveys, and engaging with diverse stakeholders to inform policy.
- Strong understanding of the political landscape at both State and National levels, and its impact on mental health policy.
- Exceptional written communication skills, with a track record of preparing high-quality policy submissions, reports, and proposals.
- Highly developed oral communication and presentation skills, with the ability to represent an organisation effectively in high-level forums.
- Demonstrated experience in building and maintaining strong, collaborative relationships with government, sector partners, and community groups.
- Strong organisational and project management skills, with the ability to manage multiple priorities and deadlines.
- High level of initiative, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities.

Key Performance Indicators:

Policy Development and Advocacy:

- High-quality, evidence-based policy submissions and proposals are developed and submitted on time, effectively influencing relevant policy discussions.
- Specialist policy advice to the CEO and media/comms team is consistently timely, accurate, and strategically valuable.
- Advocacy campaigns are effectively designed and implemented, contributing to positive policy and systemic changes.

Stakeholder Engagement and Representation:

- Active and influential participation in relevant working groups, committees, and reform initiatives, enhancing MHCT's profile and impact.
- Strong, collaborative relationships are maintained with key government and sector stakeholders, as evidenced by feedback and successful joint initiatives.

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Communication and Impact:

- MHCT's policy positions and advocacy messages are clearly and consistently communicated through various channels.
- Timely and insightful briefs and updates on policy developments are provided to the CEO, Board, and team.

Research and Analysis:

- Research and analysis activities effectively inform policy development and identify emerging needs and opportunities within the sector.
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Selection Criteria:

Essential Criteria:

1. Demonstrated extensive experience in policy research, analysis, and the development of high-quality policy submissions and proposals.
2. Proven ability to provide specialist, strategic policy advice and insights to senior management and external stakeholders.
3. Extensive experience in conducting stakeholder consultations, surveys, and actively participating in specialised working groups and committees.
4. Strong understanding of the Tasmanian and national mental health policy environment, with a demonstrated ability to analyse and interpret complex policy documents.
5. Excellent written and oral communication skills, with experience in influencing policy outcomes through clear and compelling advocacy.
6. Demonstrated experience in building and maintaining effective relationships with government, sector partners, and community representatives.
7. Strong organisational skills, with the capacity to manage multiple priorities and deliver high-quality work within tight timeframes.



Desirable Criteria:

1. A qualification in Public Policy, Social Sciences, Health, or a related field.
2. Experience working within a peak body or advocacy organisation.
3. Knowledge of contemporary lived experience principles and their application in policy development.

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