

Sharing Your Story Guide

It is very important that you tell your story in your own words and we are very keen to help you to do this. In telling your story we would like you to try to focus on sharing the processes that may have helped your recovery so that other people can be better informed. Below you will find some trigger questions that we think might help you to reflect on this information and gather it in a logical way. We hope you find the guide helps with this. Please email us if you have any suggestions for improvements or you would like assistance with understanding any of the questions.

Your story – guiding questions

1. Can you tell us a little about your cultural background and how you came to live in Australia?
2. What initial symptoms or signs did you have, that told you there was something wrong and whose help did you seek?
3. How long did it take to diagnose your condition and what tests did you need to have?
4. How do you think having a mental illness, has impacted on your life, your family? and/ or your partner?
5. What useful information or support has your family/partner received about your condition?
6. If you have been hospitalised or referred to a psychiatrist to help you recover, what treatment(s) have you found a) most helpful? b) least helpful?
7. How well do you think the mental health workers or your GP understand your cultural background? Did you or your family need to educate them about this?
8. Have you been prescribed any medication? If so, how have you managed any side effects?
 - a. What information have you received about your condition that was useful?
 - b. Where did you find it?
 - c. Is it available in your own language?
 - d. In your community where do you think are the most important places? or people? to give mental health information to?
9. Did or does having a mental illness affect your ability to work? If yes, how?
10. As part of the process of your recovery what has been the most difficult or challenging adjustment you have had to make? (eg dealing with stigma, medication side effects, explaining to other people?)

11. Is there else that you think it's important for people to know? Any advice that you would like to pass on to help other people recover from or manage a condition like yours?