

Pacific Wayfinders mentoring program information 2021-22



Program summary

The need for more continuous professional development opportunities, including mentoring, was first identified by Pacific region health workers at the 2019 Pacific Rehabilitation and Mobility Conference held in Nadi, Fiji. Ongoing consultation with partner staff since then and feedback requesting a one on one mentoring program has led to the introduction of this program.

In Motivation Australia's 2020 Continuous Professional Development and Online Learning survey, 34% of 50 health workers in PICs surveyed indicated that they would learn best from one on one mentoring, in the same survey, 98% (49/50) of 50 health workers surveyed indicated they were interested in group mentoring sessions with other health professionals in the Pacific region.

There is a growing health and rehabilitation workforce across the Pacific region. By providing an opportunity for the people in these workforces to collaborate with other professionals outside of their own country, we aim to strengthen the capacity of these workforces and to provide an opportunity for personal and professional growth for mentees and mentors alike.

The Pacific Wayfinders mentoring programme was piloted in 2020/21 to develop the professional and personal skills of health workers and health service managers working in the Pacific region. The pilot was highly successful and participants in the mentoring programme have encouraged and supported Motivation Australia to run the Pacific Wayfinders mentoring programme again in 2021/2022.

Motivation Australia will provide supporting resources throughout the program. These resources aim to provide background information and a framework for mentees and mentors participating in the program. Motivation Australia recognises that each mentee and mentor pair will communicate, interact and achieve their program goals differently. The programme and resources intend to facilitate the participation and positive growth of the mentoring relationship, enabling both parties to explore the great possibilities created when experience meets enthusiasm.

Program Purpose

Through the programme, mentees will be encouraged to drive the mentoring process and discussion. They will gain insight and perspectives from experienced mentors, which helps them set and work towards career goals, build confidence and develop their professional skills.

Eligibility criteria

To allow the best chance for a rewarding and enjoyable mentoring relationship and program, the following eligibility criteria must be met by the mentee and mentor:

For mentees

The following eligibility criteria exists for mentees in the Pacific Wayfinders mentoring program:

- Currently involved in a field which supports health and rehabilitation in the Pacific. This includes people working for, or involved in, government departments, private health organisations, disabled persons organisations, community groups.
- Residents of Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu. Applications will be considered from other countries based on availability of spaces.
- Must be able to commit to the minimum participation requirements.

For mentors

The following eligibility criteria exists for mentors in the Pacific Wayfinders mentoring program:

- At least three years' experience in their field.
- Excellent communication skills and ability to listen.

- Able to listen and analyse information, give feedback and encourage creation of new ideas.
- Keen and willing to contribute to the learning and growth of the mentee and be able to commit their time and availability throughout the duration of the programme.
- Be a member and inducted volunteer of Motivation Australia.

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is when someone with experience shares their knowledge, skills, advice and life experience in a supportive and mutually beneficial learning relationship, to help guide another person to reach their full potential.

Mentoring relationships may develop naturally or via a formally structured programme, such as the Pacific Wayfinders mentoring programme.

Being a mentee

A mentee is a person who is actively committed to self-development and learning, who is goal-orientated and open to support and guidance from other people.

In order to get the most from a mentoring experience, the mentee must be willing to ask questions, learn, define goals for their career and invest the time into realising these goals. A mentee always has the ultimate responsibility for their career and professional development.

Being a mentor

A mentor can be a coach, advisor or counsellor. They are someone who can provide advice, insight and perspective on a wide range of topics to help the mentee achieve their goals or better understand complex professional situations.

Mentors are usually people who have lived experience, and can share their experiences and lessons learnt along their journey with the mentee. This exchange should help mentees develop the skills and knowledge to be successful in the way the mentee desires.

Benefits of mentoring

Mentoring builds the professional capacity of both mentor and mentee.

For the mentee

Benefits to mentees may include, but are not limited to:

- Coaching on practical topics and skills
- Development of career goals and structured plans to achieve them
- Insight into a career field or organisations
- Perspective on professional challenges and difficulties
- Non-judgemental and confidential feedback on workplace situations and professional work.

The mentoring process also enables mentees to develop socially and emotionally in a range of ways:

- Development of communication skills
- Building confidence and self-esteem
- Building professional networks and a support system
- Increased motivation and morale.

For the mentor

Mentoring is also a great way for mentors to develop their own professional and personal skills by:

- Contributing to the future of their profession, specifically in the Pacific region
- Increasing awareness of new ideas and different ways of doing things
- Improving management, leadership and communication skills
- Gaining recognition for their knowledge, skills and dedication

- Reflecting on current and past practices and projects
- Learning from their mentee's expertise, different life experiences, culture and background
- Exploring different learning styles and reflect on how they can be used
- Expanding their professional network
- Gaining personal satisfaction from helping and supporting their mentee.

For the employers of the mentor/mentee

The benefits to the mentor and mentee help their employer by:

- Increasing mentee and mentor productivity
- Improving management and technical skills
- Helping the mentee and mentor discover hidden talents
- Motivating the mentee and mentor.

Minimum participation requirements

To get the most out of mentoring program and give the best opportunity for professional and personal development, a successful mentoring relationship must exist between the mentor and the mentee, and the mentee must be invested in setting career goals and working towards them.

To enable a greater chance of a successful mentoring relationship the following minimum participation requirements exist for this program:

- All participants **must attend two induction sessions** with Motivation Australia in late September/early October 2021 (dates and times to be advised)
- All participants must prepare for and participate in **at least eight meetings** together over an approximate nine month period (October 2021 – June 2022)
- The mentee and mentor **must attend at least four out of five group mentoring sessions** facilitated by Motivation Australia (times to be advised): November 17, January 19, March 16, May 11, July 6
- The mentor must assist the mentee to **set goals** for the programme, their career and personal life, and negotiate the steps the mentee must take to work towards achieving those goals
- The mentor must assist the mentee to **set open and clear boundaries** and expectations for the programme
- The mentee **must report to Motivation Australia after each meeting** with three things they have learned in their meeting and a photo from the recent meeting
- All participants **must be willing to provide programme feedback** and evaluation after the programme has ended.

Program structure

Selection

Motivation Australia will use 'mentor profiles' to give mentees first choice over who they would prefer to be mentored by. Mentors will provide background information on their career, interests, goals, mentoring style and what they are looking for in a mentor to inform their mentor profiles.

All of the mentor profiles will be then sent out to the mentees, allowing them to select their first, second and third preferences of mentor.

In the situation that more than one mentee chooses one mentor, the mentor will be given the opportunity to provide mentoring to as many of those mentees they like, depending on their availability and willingness.

The mentor is under no obligation to choose more than one mentee to mentor and will be provided basic information about each of the mentees who have selected them to inform their choice.

In the situation that a mentor is not selected by any of the mentees, Motivation Australia would still love to have them part of the group mentoring sessions if they wish to continue their involvement in the programme.

Meetings

Meetings will be held using Zoom, WhatsApp, Telegram or other video teleconferencing applications where possible. Where internet or location does not allow for video teleconferencing, meetings may be held via telephone.

All data use for internet requirements will be funded by Motivation Australia for the duration of the programme, allowing the mentees to meet and communicate regularly with their mentors via email or other messaging platforms.

Discussion

As this programme is mentee-driven, the mentee can decide and negotiate with the mentor the topic they would like to discuss. The mentoring programme aims to provide an opportunity for the mentee to ask any questions they may have, or any advice they would like, about their career or professional life, as long as it is within the boundaries that they have set.

To help stimulate ideas and discussion, Motivation Australia will provide the mentee with a programme handbook that contains suggested discussion topics, sample meeting plans and supplementary mentoring information. Some examples of suggested topics to discuss include:

- Self-awareness and career values
- Health industry trends and issues
- Leadership skills and methods
- Conflict resolution
- Motivation and mindset
- Career progression and self-development.

Support

Motivation Australia will provide supporting resources throughout the programme. These resources will include background information and a guiding framework for mentees and mentors.

Motivation Australia recognises that each mentee and mentor pair will communicate, interact and achieve their programme goals differently. The programme and resources intend to facilitate the participation and positive growth of the mentoring relationship, enabling participants to explore the great possibilities created when experience meets enthusiasm.

Throughout the duration of the mentoring programme, Motivation Australia staff will be available to contact for any queries, concerns or feedback.

If the mentee prefers, Motivation Australia staff can also be present at meetings between mentors and mentees.

If you have any questions or want more information about this program, or to apply to be a mentee or mentor in the next program, please contact Motivation Australia Project Officer Tom Fitzpatrick by email at tomfitzpatrick@motivation.org.au.