This project aimed to develop the confidence, skills and knowledge of people with self experience (PWSE) of mental health issues and their supporters to participate effectively in decision making forums. A grant received by the D10BeWell group from Genio in 2014 enabled all phases of this project.

**Phase 1: Research**

*‘A Seat at the Table’* (2015) sought to understand the needs and concerns of PWSE of mental health difficulties and their supporters in participating in decision making bodies, alongside the needs and concerns of mental health providers.

**Outcomes**

Should PWSE/supporters join committees?

- Yes
- Not Sure
- No

Recommendations for developing training program, peer representative group and a local plan.

**Phase 2: Training**

**Design:**

Interagency group formed design group with wider consultation.

**Recruitment and Delivery:**

Information sessions and interviews 50 hours training with two groups in Dec 2015 and Feb 2016.

**Evaluation:**

Independent evaluation completed after first course.

**Outcomes**

Skills for Change program developed with three modules:
1. Me on a Committee
2. Understanding the Mental Health Service
3. Translating Lived Experience to Expertise

16 people trained with mentoring available.

Training Evaluation:

- higher confidence
- higher skills
- strong value base
- meaningful relationships

Currently Writing up training resource.

**Phase 3: Representative Group**

Acorn Representative Group formed from training graduates meeting fortnightly. Peer community development worker supporting establishment.

**Outcomes**

- Mission statement developed
- Group members sitting on decision making bodies
- Ongoing networking, training and development

**Phase 4: Committee Working Group**

Diverse committee membership, including Acorn Representative Group working to develop recommendations and support for committees wishing to include PWSE/supporters.

**Outcomes**

- Collating directory of committees
- Report complied on representatives experiences
- Advocating for remuneration for Acorn members

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Reports available online