

# Results of the NEMHSCA Partnership Survey 2024

## Summary

In October 2024, the NEMHSCA Partnership Survey gathered insights from members to evaluate the Alliance's effectiveness, identify areas for improvement, and explore future opportunities. Most respondents felt the Alliance met its aims and objectives partially or fully, though some initiatives, such as collaborative advocacy tools and multi-level collaboration, were less successful.

Members expressed satisfaction with the Alliance's operations, noting its evolution beyond information sharing to fostering connections and relationships. The Alliance Coordinator was praised for effective leadership. Currently, the Alliance operates at a 'collaboration and coordination' level, with aspirations to reach 'integration' for deeper interdependence and resource sharing.

Future opportunities include a Multiagency Panel Project to address service gaps, enhanced collaborative advocacy using RORI & MACNI data, and strengthening local collaborations. Challenges identified include funding advocacy, supporting the Lived and Living Experience Workforce, and improving the integration of AOD and mental health services.

Key focus areas for the next year involve system integration, demonstrating the Alliance's value, and staying aligned with mental health reforms. To boost member engagement, suggestions include better communication, a detailed workplan, targeted projects, and occasional in-person meetings.

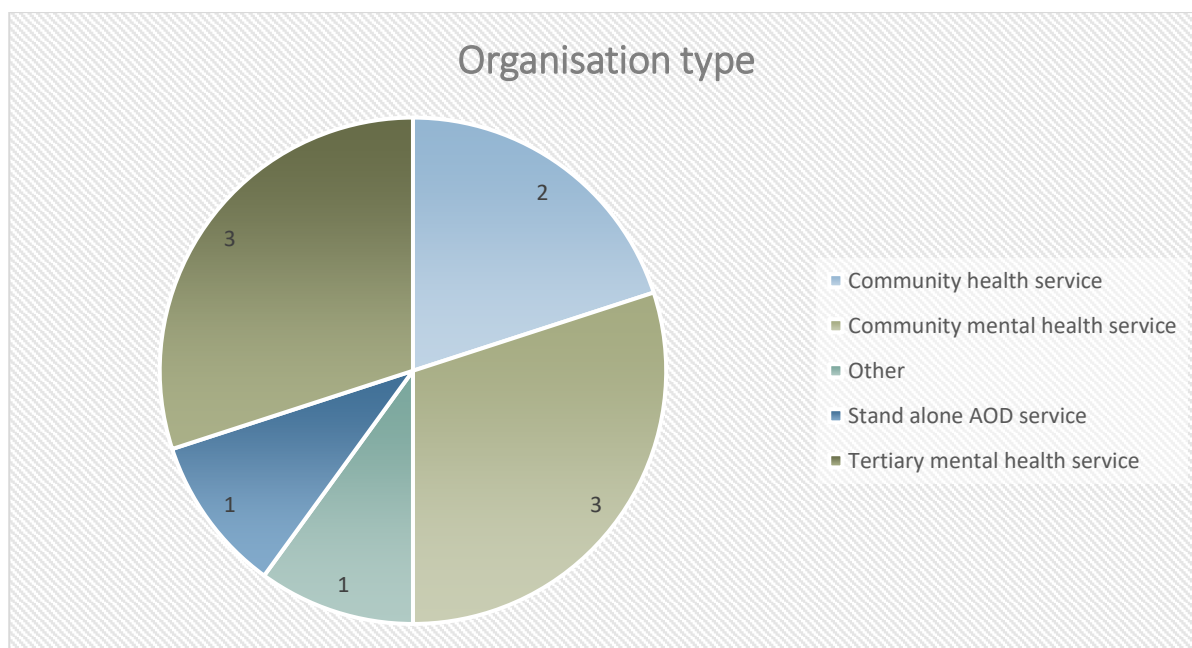
## Background

The NEMHSCA partnership survey was undertaken in October 2024 to:

- understand how effective the Alliance has been at achieving its aims and objectives in 2024
- identify strengths of the Alliance and areas for improvement
- understand the barriers and enablers you may have experienced in participating in the Alliance
- identify opportunities for the Alliance's action in the future

The information gathered through this survey will assist us in planning NEMHSCA activities for 2025.

From 15 active NMHSCA members, nine survey responses (60%) were received from a variety of service providers (see Figure 1 for details).



**Figure 1.** Types of organisations who completed the survey

## Achievement of the Alliance objectives

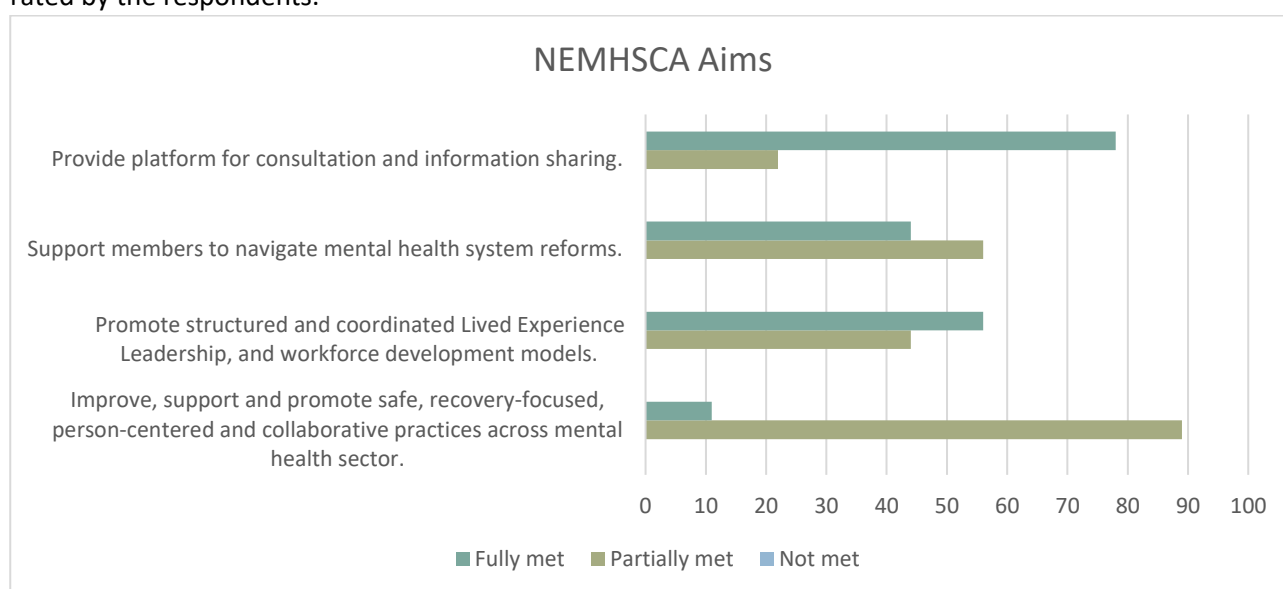
Respondents reflected on the Alliance's performance in 2024, rating how well it met the EMHSCA aims and strategic objectives.

Most aims and objectives were rated as 'partially' or 'fully' achieved by the majority of respondents.

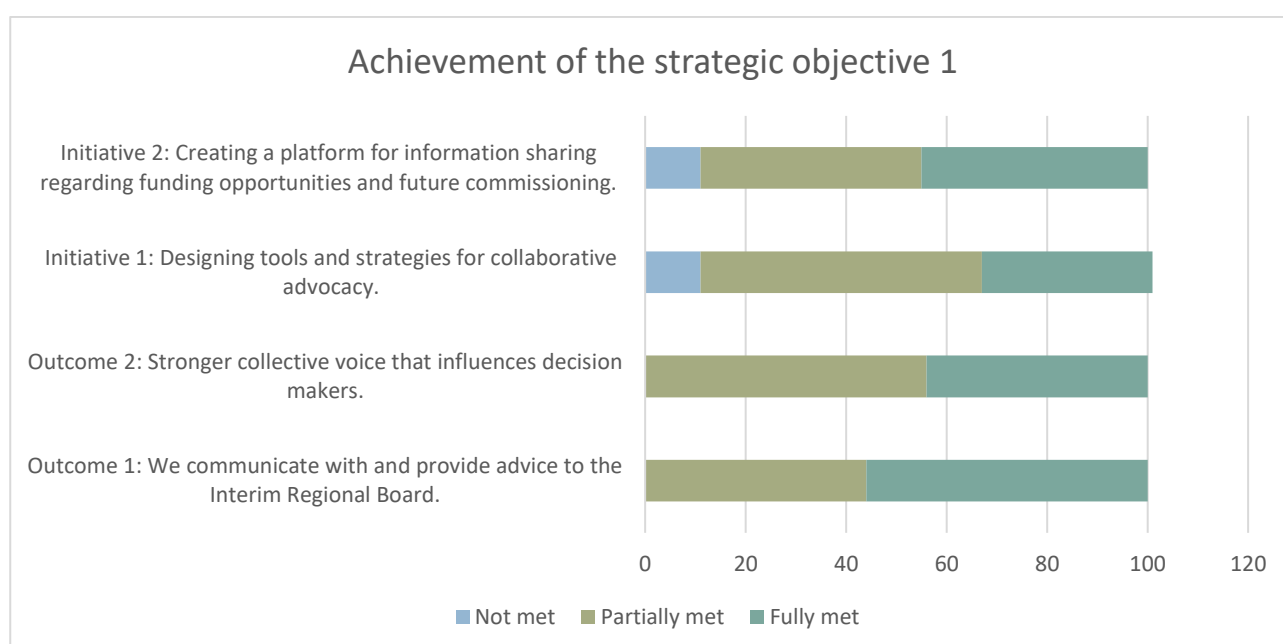
The following objectives/initiatives were reported as least achieved:

- Strategic objective 1 - Initiative 1: Designing tools and strategies for collaborative advocacy.
- Strategic objective 1 - Initiative 2: Creating a platform for information sharing regarding funding opportunities and future commissioning.
- Strategic objective 3 - Initiative 3: Creating opportunities for collaboration at different levels.

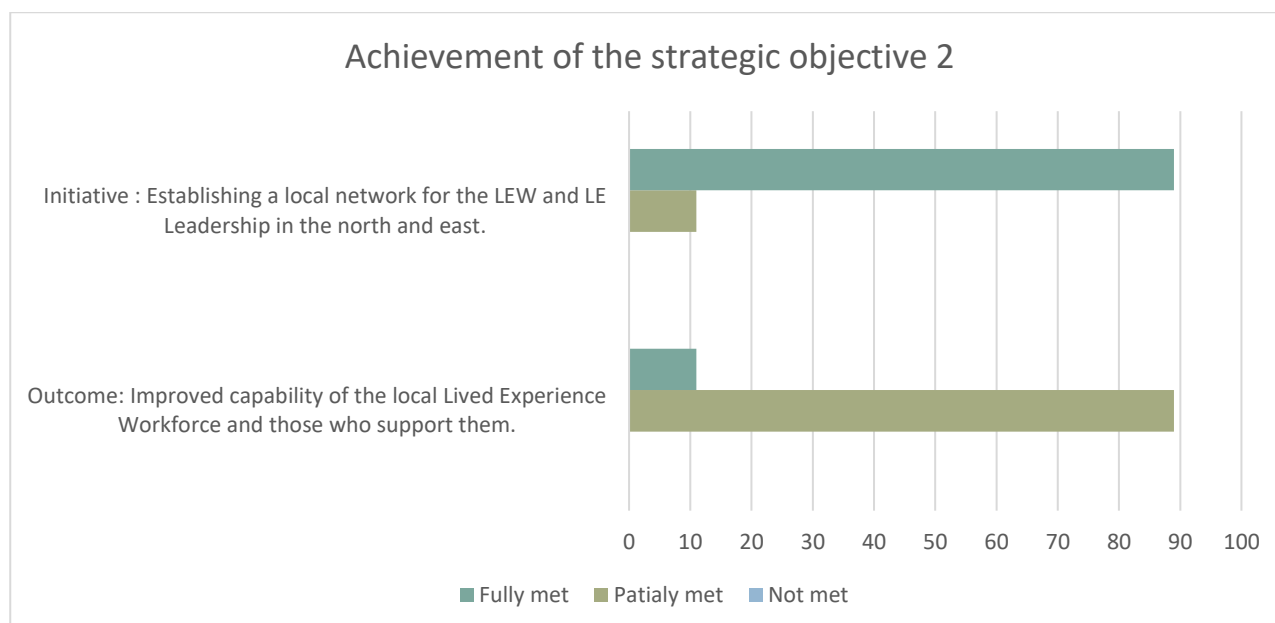
Figures 2 - 5 on the following pages breakdown the achievement of the aims and each strategic objective as rated by the respondents.



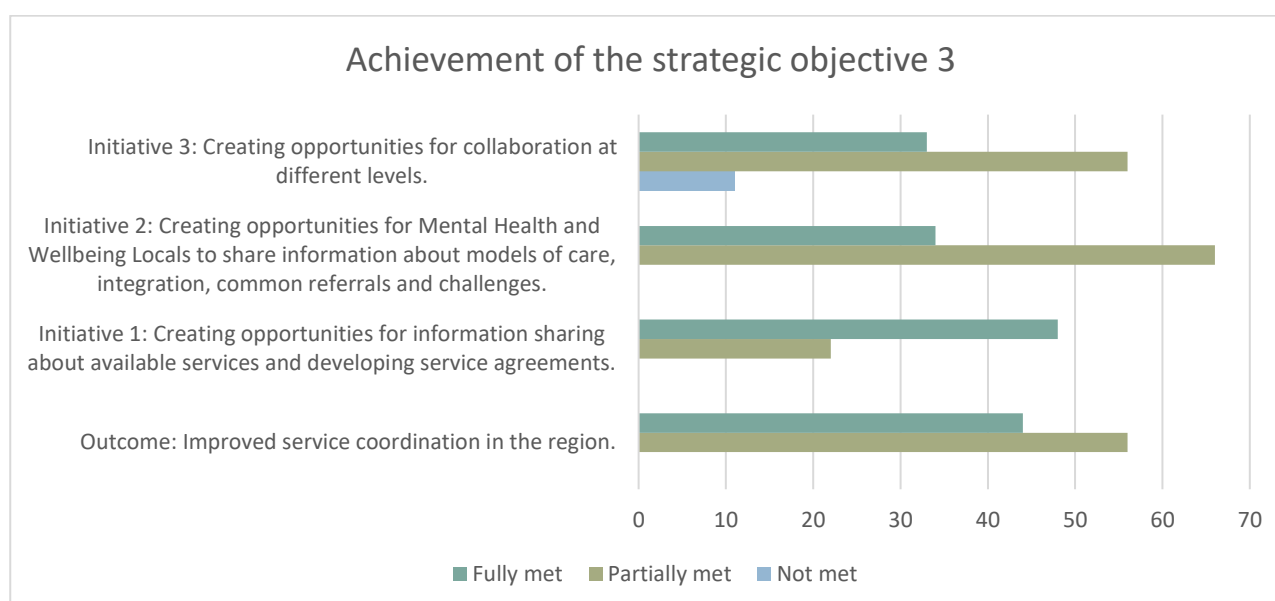
**Figure 2.** Achievement of NEMHSCA aims



**Figure 3. Achievement of the strategic objective 1**



**Figure 4. Achievement of the strategic objective 2**



**Figure 5. Achievement of the strategic objective 3**

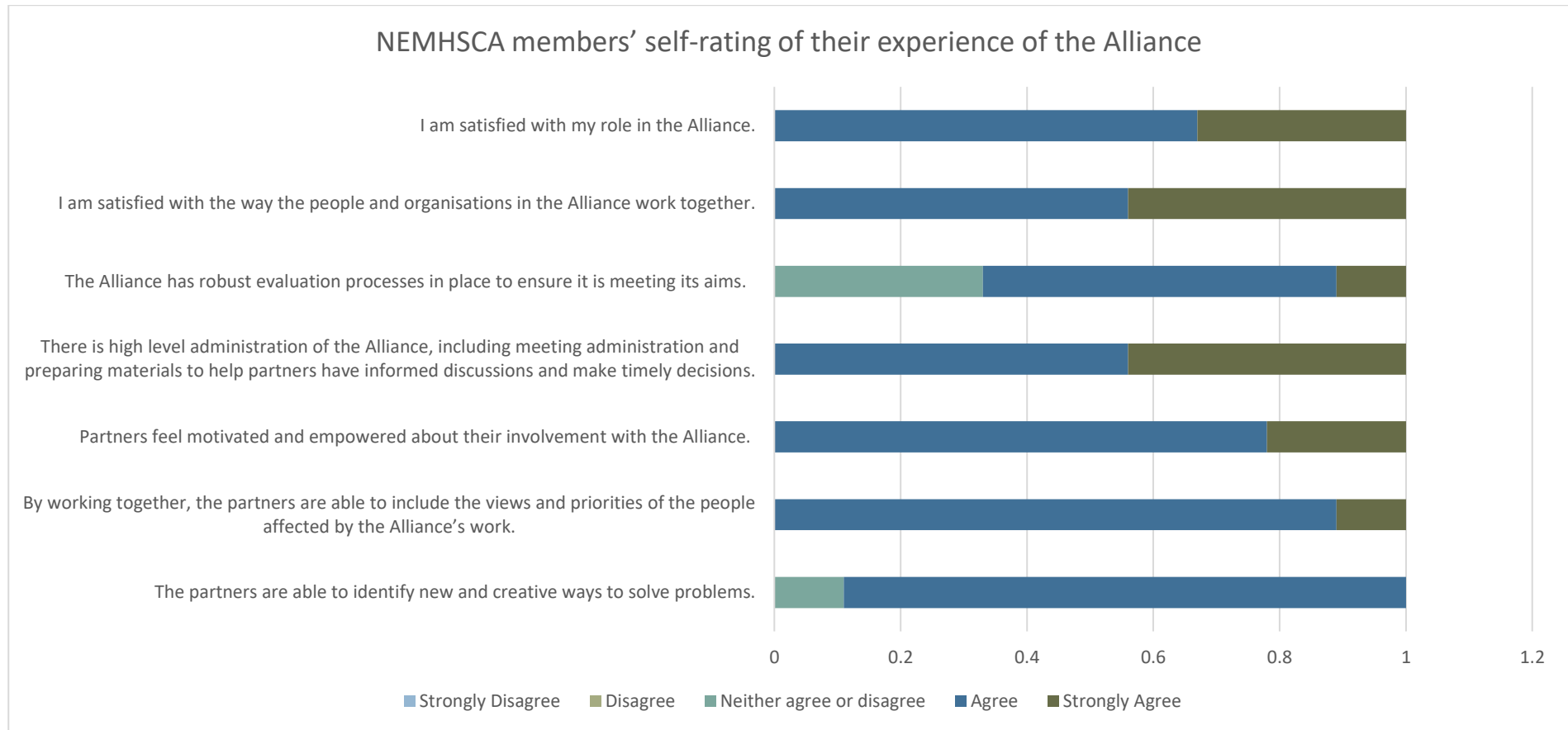
### Members' self-rated experience of the Alliance

A summary of the survey questions relating to the functioning of the Alliance are presented on the following page (Figure 6). Each statement was rated on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being 'strongly disagree' and 5 being 'strongly agree'. Overall EMHSCA members are satisfied with the Alliance and the way it operates.

Respondents noted that partnerships take a long time to develop and are forever changing (especially with staff turnover) therefore will never complete the journey of partnerships, however having the forum to connect people and build relationships is really progress in and of itself.

Additionally, the members commented that the Alliance has really matured over the past year and is moving beyond an information sharing platform.

The members also applauded the Alliance Coordinator for supporting the Alliance well, driving the initiatives and making everyone accountable.



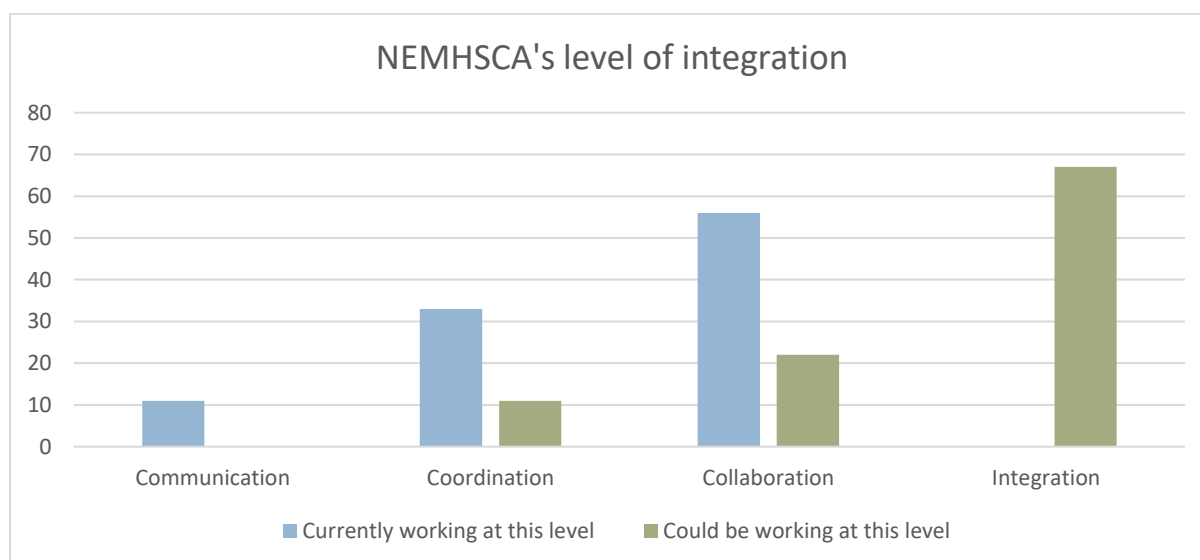
**Figure 6.** NEMHSCA members' self-rating of their experience of the Alliance (n=9).

### Level of integration of the Alliance

Respondents were asked to rate on the integration continuum where they felt the Alliance was working, and where they felt it could have been working (Figure 4). Each of the levels were defined as follows:

- **Isolation:** Agencies don't recognise the need to communicate, no attempt to communicate.
- **Communication:** Agencies talk to each other, share some information.
- **Coordination:** Staff from agencies work together on case-by-case basis to coordinate some support.
- **Collaboration:** Agencies work together on project-by-project basis, including joint analysis and planning.
- **Integration:** Intensive collaboration, agencies interdependent, significant resource sharing and trust.

The majority of respondents felt the Alliance currently operates at the level of 'collaboration and coordination'. In the future, respondents reported they felt the Alliance could be working at 'integration' level.



**Figure 7.** Levels of collaboration and integration of the Alliance.

Qualitative comments from respondents highlighted that to move across the continuum the Alliance needs to be operating at multiple levels. The Alliance members need to consider how to engage staff on the ground who are able to influence the change.

### Future opportunities of the Alliance

Members shared their views on future opportunities and functions of the Alliance, leading to the following emerging themes:

- **Multiagency Panel Project:** integrating collaborative approach, identify gaps in services and across the system with a view to working toward fixing these gaps or advocating to government to help with fixing the gaps.
- **Collaborative advocacy:** more advocacy work together using the RORI & MACNI data to inform target areas for the members to work on.

- **Strengthen local collaboration:** joint planning and resource (funding) allocation, connections with local service, demonstrating the impact of the alliances, reviewing the structure of the alliance and exploring how to engage with different levels of the partner agencies.

#### Current sector challenges

Members were asked what they saw as the current sector challenges that the Alliance should be working together on, with the following themes emerging:

- **Advocacy re funding and reform:** different funding buckets with very different demands, funding cuts and restraints, funding for collaboration, advocacy for the RCMHS initiatives to be reinstated and rolled out.
- **Lived and Living Experience Workforce:** employment opportunities for the LEWs, advocating for pay-parity for lived experience staff.
- **Improving integration of AOD and mental health:** translation of the recommendations from RC into practice, greater shared integrated care between member organisations.

#### Alliance focus areas for the next 12 months

Members were asked what they saw as the key focus areas for the Alliance over the next 12 months, with the following themes emerging:

- **System integration and collaboration:** Information sharing and connections, promoting regional response to support consumer in accessing the range of mental health and wellbeing supports they need, integrated care pathway development.
- **Demonstrating value of the Alliance:** Being able to demonstrate what the impact of the alliance activity in order to attract future funding.
- **Mental health reform:** keeping across the mental health reform and the health services reform.

#### Enhancing member engagement in the Alliance

Members were asked what would enhance their engagement and buy-in to the Alliance, with the following suggestions being put forward:

- Communication
- Time available
- Developing a workplan that articulates activities, tasks, roles and responsibilities and timelines
- More targeted projects with practical outcomes for member services
- Occasional face-to-face meetings