

Better for us, better for you

A Trauma-informed Training Framework

The framework

Designed for you

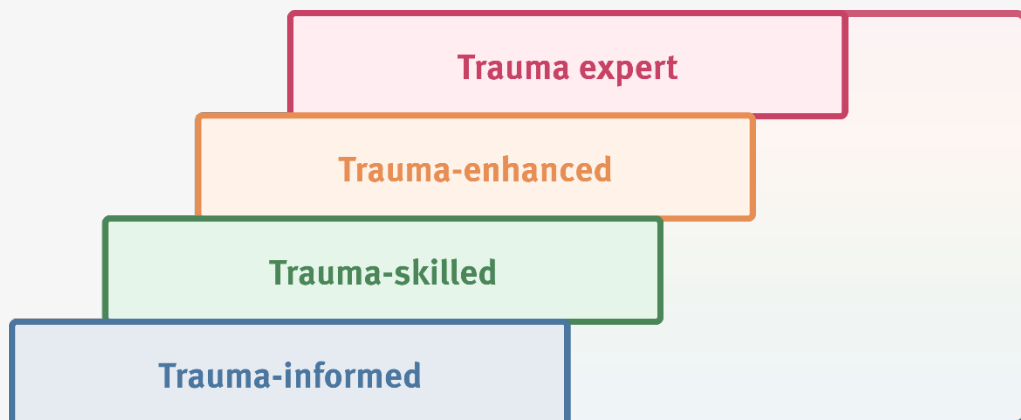
All public servants (and especially those interacting with victims of crime) should be trauma-informed, so we can better support our community, ourselves and our peers, and lead others.

By embedding this framework, you and your agency will be able to identify the best trauma-informed training for your role. You can use the framework as a tool to identify skill gaps and plan appropriate training to maintain a trauma-informed approach.

Practice levels

Everyone working in Queensland Government, either as a volunteer or as a paid employee, can use the role assessment tool included in this framework to find out what level is most appropriate to complement their role at work.

The framework defines 4 practice levels you can align with your role:



Outcomes

This framework is outcome-focused. It supports the successful adoption of behaviours and actions required to practice in a way that embodies the trauma-informed principles. The outcomes reflect the areas of focus that Queensland Government employees need to consider when implementing the trauma-informed training.



Supporting community

Our people serve the community in a way that embodies the principles of trauma-informed care. The services are delivered in a way that reflects the individual needs of those accessing support.



Supporting ourselves

Our people are safe and protected from harm because the risk of vicarious trauma is actively managed.



Supporting peers

Our people support their peers to be safe and protected from harm. They acknowledge that those within our workforce may have experienced trauma from personal experiences and through their work.



Leading others

Our people lead others in ways that embody the principles of trauma-informed care, recognising the specific needs of the workforce relevant to the service they deliver to community.



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Better for us, better for you

A trauma-informed way of working

Better for us, better for you is a trauma-informed training framework designed by the Office of the Victims' Commissioner to build the capabilities of Queensland Government employees and improve their interactions with victims.

Better for us, better for you is a guide to help public servants be trauma-informed, so we can better support victims, our community, and our peers (better for us), as well as ourselves and lead others (better for you).

Created specifically for Queensland Government employees, this framework includes tools to help you and your workforce understand the impacts of trauma, identify your own training needs and improve the way we work with victims (better for us). Having these skills and knowledge can also improve your health and well-being and increase your job satisfaction (better for you).

We use this framework internally (within the Office of the Victims' Commissioner) to help identify skills gaps and plan for the right training for our team.

We knew that more had to be done to deliver services to victims of crime in a trauma-informed way, following recommendations from three separate recent inquiries:

- the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce *Hear her voice – Report Two – Women and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system* (recommendation 18)
- the Commission of Inquiry into *Queensland Police Services responses to domestic and family violence: A call for change* (recommendation 34)
- the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee Inquiry into *Support Provided to Victims of Crime* (recommendation 6).



We know that victims of crime are vulnerable

Receiving services in a trauma-informed way reduces further harm. The training that is developed from this framework can and should be applied to all aspects of service delivery and internal practice with victims of crime.

This framework supports Queensland Government agencies to develop trauma-informed training that is appropriate for their employees, their volunteers and the community members they serve.

We acknowledge that agencies will be on different journeys when it comes to developing, delivering and implementing trauma-informed training.

This framework can be used to assess existing work to ensure alignment or develop new training. It has been designed as a whole-of-system approach, so that all elements work together in a trauma-informed way to deliver the best services for our community and to ensure employees are supported.

Developing the framework

The Office of the Interim Victims' Commissioner developed the framework using information gathered from:

- targeted interviews with learning and development teams in Queensland Government departments
- feedback from the Office of the Interim Victims' Commissioner Stakeholder Reference Group
- stakeholder consultation and workshops across Queensland
- a comprehensive survey to those with lived experience
- reviews of relevant existing training and trauma-informed training literature
- socialisation of the draft framework across departments at officer level
- feedback after socialisation has been collated and accepted.

Benefits for Queensland

Trauma-informed training will support Queensland Government employees to develop the necessary knowledge and skills to provide sensitive and effective care to those in our community who have experienced trauma as a result of being a victim of crime. There are also broader implications for employees and the community.

As examples of how employees might use a trauma-informed approach in their work, we have developed 4 imaginary stories of people who have experienced trauma as a result of crime. See Appendix 2 Victims' stories.

For the Queensland Government, trauma-informed training will:

- reduce vicarious trauma by providing employees and volunteers with the knowledge and skills to develop strategies that will protect and maintain their health and wellbeing
- increase employee and volunteer safety by reducing the risk of escalating trauma-response behaviours among community members
- reduce burnout and turnover because employees will have the skills and knowledge to protect and maintain their health and wellbeing.

For our Queensland community, trauma-informed training will:

- reduce the risk of retraumatisation and revictimisation by providing Queensland Government employees with the knowledge and tools to ensure they deliver services in way that does not create an environment for trauma
- improve customer service because services are provided in a trauma-informed way
- improve trust and engagement as trauma-informed principles are embedded in practice.

Realise | Recognise | Respond | Resist

Throughout this training framework, Queensland Government employees will be guided and supported to develop knowledge and actions relating to 4 key areas of focus:

- **realise** the widespread impact of trauma
- **recognise** the signs and symptoms of trauma
- **respond** by embedding practices, policies and procedures to integrate knowledge and trauma, and
- **resist** retraumatisation.

Principles of trauma-informed practice

A trauma-informed practice is founded on 5 core principles. These principles are designed to accommodate the vulnerabilities of trauma survivors, minimise the risk of retraumatisation and promote healing. They emphasise physical and emotional safety for everyone. Trauma-informed principles must be reflected across Queensland Government operations, people and culture. This ensures that safety and wellbeing for all remains a core focus.

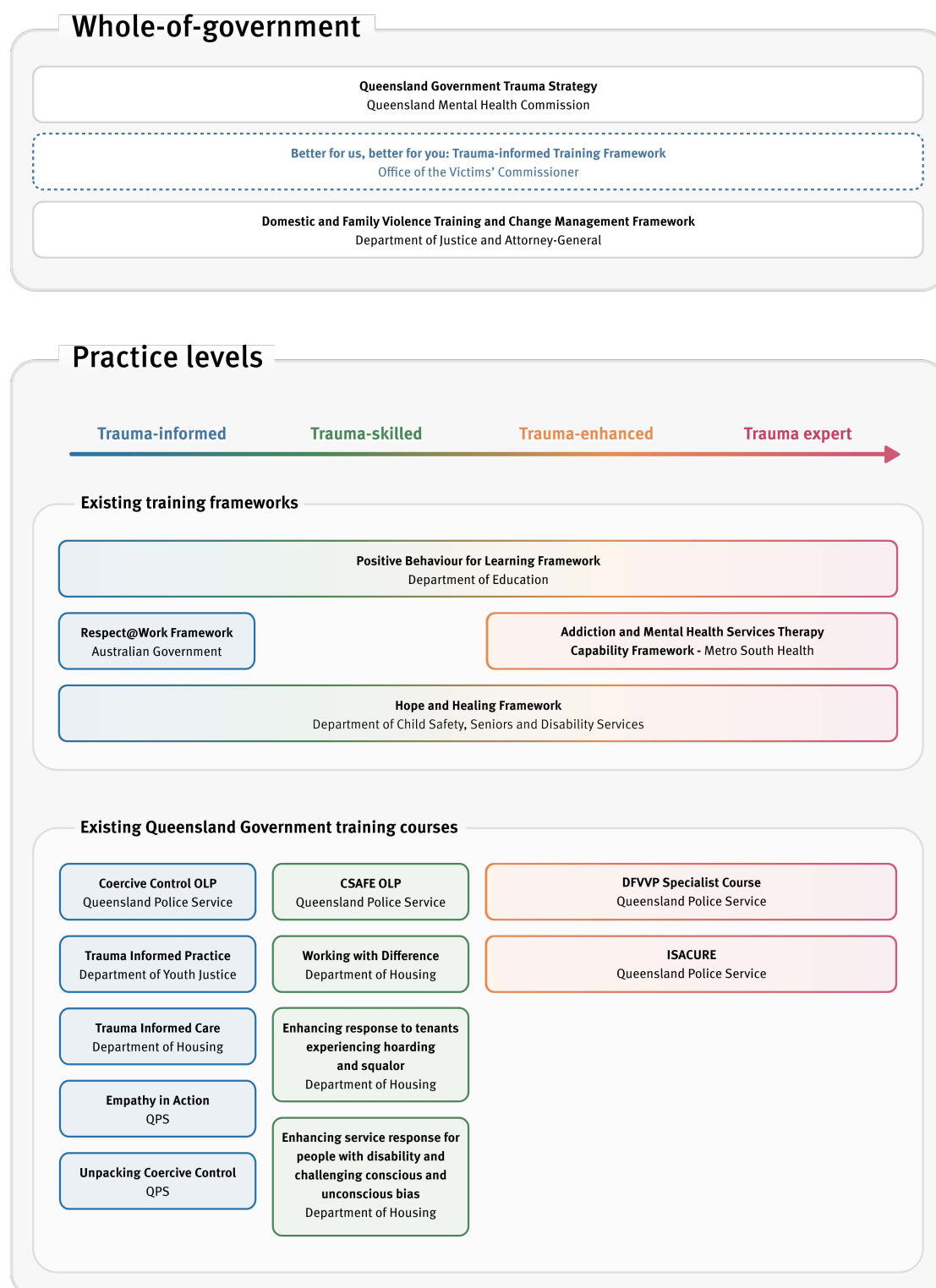
Principle	Description	For a victim this may look like...
Safety	Ensuring that activities, environments and settings provide physical and emotional safety.	...having a conversation with a victim in a room where you won't be interrupted ...taking short breaks during disclosures.
Trust	Being honest, consistent, reliable and compassionate in all interactions.	...setting expectations about services that can be provided
Choice	Providing options where possible to give choice and control over the situation.	...offering choices for location, time and date for an interview ...explaining recovery and healing options.
Collaboration	Creating an environment that encourages collaboration among services with and for the benefit of the victim.	...departments sharing information, with permission and in accordance with legislation, so a victim isn't required to repeat their story.
Empowerment	Finding ways to foster a sense of self and building of strengths.	...encouraging practices that support recovery and healing.

Existing approaches to trauma-informed training across Queensland Government

Agencies should consider complementary training already occurring in agencies.

During the development of this framework, we found that many agencies had already started to identify training gaps and develop relevant training in line with the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce report recommendations 23, 24 and 51.

This graphic shows some of the existing training in use across Queensland Government, but part of any future work on identifying training needs and implementing training should include an audit of current programs which exist in your agency.

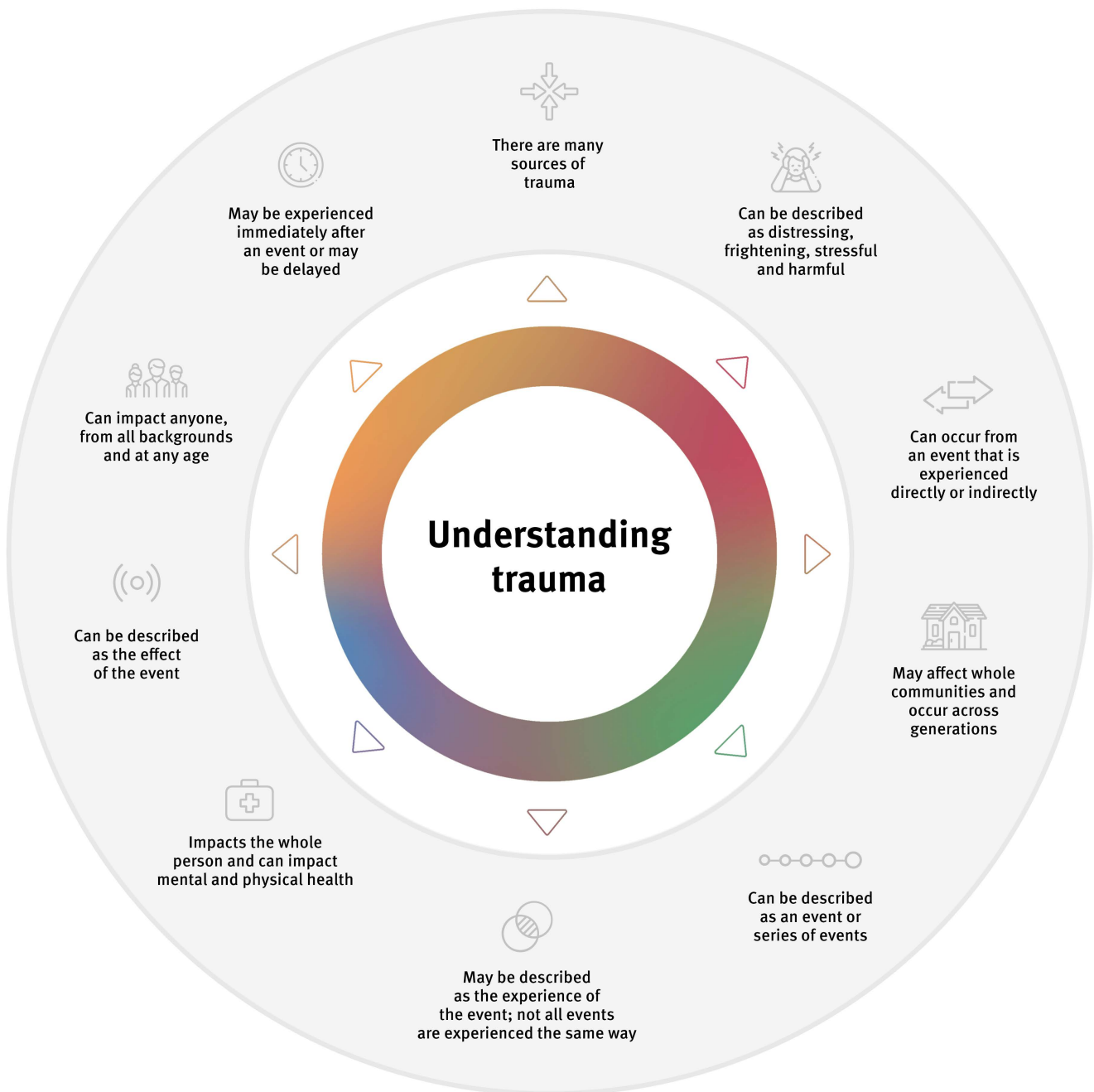


Understanding trauma

Where there is potential for harm, there is potential for trauma

The language we use to define and describe trauma is complex and nuanced to the individual's experience. The word trauma is used throughout this framework for a large variety of events and experiences.

While there is a need for consistency in language, it is important to acknowledge that complex issues cannot always be limited to a single, all-encompassing definition. This framework considers key factors that need to be acknowledged to build understanding of what trauma is, rather than providing a set definition to show what trauma is not.



Practice levels overview

To meet the different needs of the Queensland community, this framework has been structured into 4 practice levels. Each practice level outlines the knowledge, behaviours and actions required by Queensland Government employees. Each practice level reflects the level of capability and responsibility that is relevant to the role of a Queensland Government employee.

Level 1 Trauma-informed	Outlines the knowledge and behaviours needed to deliver services aligned with trauma-informed principles. This is the baseline required by all Queensland Government employees.
Level 2 Trauma-skilled	Outlines the knowledge and behaviours required by Queensland Government employees who, in their role, are likely to come into contact with people who are or have been, victims or victim-survivors of crime and therefore may experience trauma.
Level 3 Trauma-enhanced	Outlines the knowledge and behaviours required for Queensland Government employees who are, as part of their role, working with people impacted by trauma because they are or have been victims or victim-survivors of crime. This may come in the form of support, advocacy, care or provision of other services.
Level 4 Trauma expert	Outlines the knowledge and behaviours required for Queensland Government employees who provide evidence-based interventions for those people who are or have been victims or victim-survivors of crime and may be affected by trauma. This may involve roles responsible for providing treatment or responding to the trauma.

The training framework is designed to guide and support Queensland Government agencies to procure or develop trauma-informed training that is appropriate for their employees as well as the members of the community that they serve.

The framework is organised by practice level with the relevant knowledge and actions required to reach desired outcomes. Each practice level is broken down into:



The details contained within each practice level are designed to guide and form the basis for content development and assessment of capability upon completion. Each practice level is designed as a standalone level of competency.

Training is designed to be built upon with trauma-informed practice forming the foundation, however there is no requirement for Queensland Government employees to progress past their required capability.

Using the framework to build capability

Aligning your role with a practice level

A role assessment tool has been developed to help you identify the expected practice level associated with your role.



It is important to view this tool as a guide, not as a definitive categorisation system.

Step 1: Assess interaction and impact of your role

Roles are assessed on a 0–100% scale. Higher numbers indicate more trauma-focused interaction and trauma-related impact, respectively.

Q1. How much trauma-focused interaction does your role have with victims of crime?

Trauma-focused interaction relates to the **frequency of interaction or communication** your role may have with a victim of crime, where the victim's trauma is a primary reason for contact.

Examples:



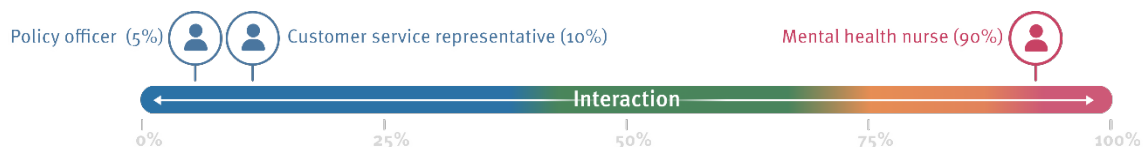
Customer service representative at the Department of Transport and Main Roads may have very little trauma-focused interaction with individuals engaging with their service – 10%



A mental health nurse working in inpatient mental health ward at a hospital may engage with individuals in the unit whose presentation is related to their trauma or trauma-related experiences as a result of being a victim of crime – 90%



A policy officer in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet has limited interaction or communication with victims of crime at work – 5%



Q2. How much trauma-related impact does your role have with victims of crime?

Impact is defined as the **marked effect or influence your decision-making** in your role may have on a victim of crime.


Examples:

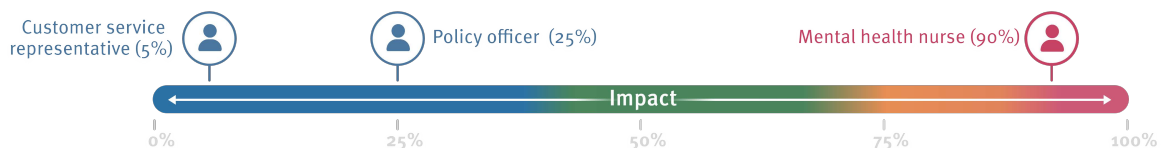


Customer service representative at the Department of Transport and Main Roads is unlikely to exert a significant impact on an individual who may have experienced trauma as a result of being a victim of crime – 5%






A mental health nurse working in inpatient mental health ward at a hospital is likely to make a significant impact on an individual presenting to the unit whose presentation is related to their trauma or trauma-related experiences as a result of being a victim of crime – 90%

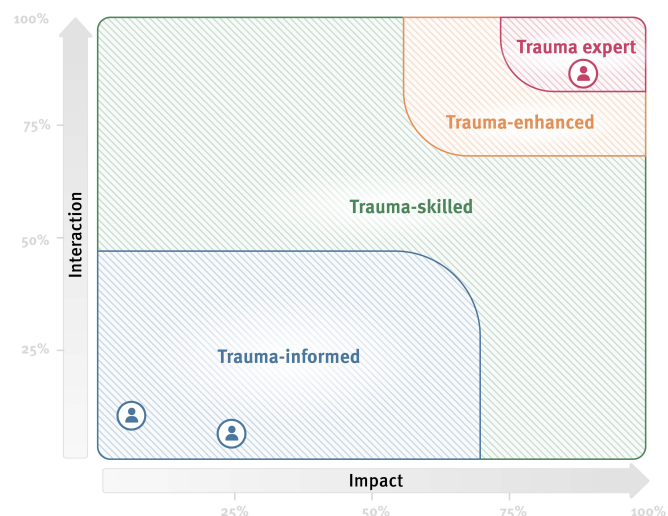
-  A policy officer in Department of the Premier and Cabinet does work that has direct impact on community members who may be victims of crime – 25%



Step 2: Map your numbers on the matrix

The results of the two questions can be mapped against this matrix.

-  A customer service representative at Transport and Mains Road has 10% interaction and 5% impact. Plotted on the self-assessment matrix, the corresponding practice level would be *Trauma-informed* under this framework.
-  A mental health nurse working in inpatient mental health ward at a hospital has 90% interaction and 90% impact. Plotted on the self-assessment matrix, the corresponding practice level would be *Trauma expert* under this framework.
-  A policy officer at the Department of the Premier and Cabinet has 5% interaction and 25% impact. Plotted on the self-assessment matrix, the corresponding practice level would be *Trauma-informed* under this framework.



Helping leaders assess roles and track capability

The matrix can also be used to assess the progress a team is making toward trauma-informed care competency. Team leads can complete the role assessment for their team members and plot them on the matrix.

Jointly, this framework and role assessment tool can:

- help leadership to quantify the number of roles **expected** for each level
- help leadership to quantify the number of roles the organisation **has at each level** at any given time.

This organisational assessment also allows for leadership to compare year-to-year changes, fluctuations and increases in trauma-informed care knowledge, allowing team leads and managers to identify areas for growth and training in their teams.

Appendix 1: Practice levels explained

Trauma-informed practice level



- ☒ Trauma-informed
- ☐ Trauma-skilled
- ☐ Trauma-enhanced
- ☐ Trauma expert

Supporting community: Delivering services to our community

Knowledge required	Behaviours and actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand trauma exists within the Queensland community. Understand trauma can affect people differently. Ability to recognise a person experiencing trauma and respond in a way that aligns to the principles of trauma-informed care. Understand recovery is possible for those who have experienced trauma. Understand that support is a critical part of recovery and healing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the sources of trauma. Know that a person's behaviours and/or responses to a situation may be trauma-related. Approach engagement by considering "What happened to you?" instead of "What's wrong with you?" Identify and implement appropriate behaviours and actions to respond to a person who has experienced trauma. Identify and implement appropriate behaviours and actions to reduce the risk of retraumatisation. Recognise the limits of our capability to provide services and when to advise of appropriate pathways for further support.

Outcome

Queensland Government employees deliver services and behave in a way that is trauma-informed.

Supporting ourselves: Ensuring our safety and wellbeing

Knowledge required	Behaviours and actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand that exposure to traumatic situations and hearing about the traumatic experiences of others can have an impact on our health and wellbeing. Understand that our peers may have experienced trauma in a situation outside of work. Understand how to support another experiencing trauma and/or vicarious trauma. Understand when to seek advice to support a peer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the sources of trauma relevant to our work environment. Identify and implement self-care practices that are relevant and supportive for us. Identify the resources and formal support networks that are available to us.

Outcome

Queensland Government employees are supported when responding to trauma and have the tools to manage the impact of trauma.

Supporting peers: Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our colleagues and peers

Knowledge required	Behaviours and actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand that exposure to traumatic situations and hearing about the traumatic experiences of others can have an impact on our health and wellbeing. Recognise that our behaviours may be a result of vicarious trauma. Understand the importance of self-care. Understand when to seek support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the sources of vicarious trauma relevant to the work environment of our peers. Identify the signs of trauma and/or vicarious trauma in others. Know the resources and formal support networks that are available to our peers. Identify ways to support a peer who has experienced trauma and/or vicarious trauma.

Outcome

Queensland Government employees engage with peers in a way that is trauma-informed and are aware of how to support a peer experiencing trauma.

Leading others: Supporting our teams to meet role expectations

Knowledge required	Behaviours and actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand our responsibility to support the safety and wellbeing of team members and encourage trauma-informed practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide effective support to team members to ensure they can identify the causes of trauma. Provide effective support to team members to ensure services are provided in a trauma-informed way. Implement systems and procedures that support staff to deliver services aligned to the trauma-informed practice level. Provide mechanisms for team members to seek support for trauma and/or vicarious trauma.

Outcome

Queensland Government employees lead and support teams in a way that is trauma-informed.

Trauma-skilled practice level



- ☒ Trauma-informed
- ☒ Trauma-skilled
- ☐ Trauma-enhanced
- ☐ Trauma expert

Supporting community: Delivering services to our community

Knowledge required	Behaviours and actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the scope and prevalence of trauma within the Queensland community. Understand the impact of trauma on a person's mental and physical health because trauma affects the whole person. Understand trauma can affect the people around the person who has experienced trauma. Understand that a person may require specific support services to encourage recovery. Understand the types of interventions that can be provided to support a person to recover from trauma. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide services in a way that aligns to the trauma-informed principles, irrespective of whether previous experiences of trauma are known. Respond in a way that acknowledges that a person's behaviours and/or response to a situation may be trauma-related. Have appropriate behaviours and actions to respond to a person who has experienced trauma. Have appropriate behaviours and actions to reduce the risk of retraumatisation and encourage recovery. Advise and connect a person with the appropriate pathways for further support.

Outcome

As part of their day-to-day role, Queensland Government employees have the knowledge and abilities required for frequent contact with members of community who have experienced trauma.

Supporting ourselves: Ensuring our safety and wellbeing

Knowledge required	Behaviours and actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand that, without support and appropriate interventions, our frequent exposure to people who have experienced trauma presents a risk to our health and wellbeing. Understand our own experiences may have implications for our ability to provide services to community. Understand that prevention and self-care are important to reducing the risk of vicarious trauma. Understand the formal and professional services available to us in our role. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish mechanisms to reduce the risk of exposure to the sources of vicarious trauma relevant to our work environment. Implement self-care practices that are relevant and supportive for the prevention of vicarious trauma. Access the formal support networks that are available to us.

Outcome

Queensland Government employees have the knowledge and ability to support themselves in managing the impact of frequent contact with community members who have experienced trauma.

Supporting peers: Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our colleagues

Knowledge required	Behaviours and actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand that, without support and appropriate interventions, frequent exposure to people who have experienced trauma presents a risk to the health and wellbeing of our peers. Understand how to recognise changes in our peers' behaviour that may be caused by trauma or vicarious trauma. Understand the formal and professional services available to our peers in their role and encourage access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide support in managing exposure to the sources of vicarious trauma relevant to the work environment of our peers. Support peers in connecting with the resources and formal support networks that are available. Facilitate support for a peer who has experienced trauma and/or vicarious trauma, with their consent.

Outcome

Queensland Government employees have the knowledge and ability to support others in managing the impact of frequent contact with community members who have experienced trauma.

Leading others: Supporting our teams to meet role expectations

Knowledge required	Behaviours and actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand our responsibility to support the safety and wellbeing of team members who have frequent contact with community members who have experienced trauma. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide effective support to team members to ensure they understand the prevalence of trauma. Provide effective support to team members to ensure services are provided. Implement systems and procedures that support staff to deliver services aligned to the trauma-skilled practice level. Provide mechanisms for team members to seek support for trauma and/or vicarious trauma.

Outcome

Queensland Government employees have the knowledge and ability to lead others who have frequent contact with community members who have experienced trauma.

Trauma-enhanced practice level



- ☒ Trauma-informed
- ☒ Trauma-skilled
- ☒ Trauma-enhanced
- ☐ Trauma expert

Supporting community: Delivering services to our community

Knowledge required	Behaviours and actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand trauma impacts people in different ways depending on factors relating to the age they experienced the trauma, cultural background, frequency of trauma and access to support. Understand that a person may not realise that they have experienced trauma. Understand the impact of triggers and events that may cause retraumatisation and/or impact upon recovery and healing. Understand the signs of current or ongoing trauma because of a current situation (such as recent and/or ongoing physical abuse). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise and acknowledge the impact trauma has on the long-term health and wellbeing of a person. Recognise where additional interventions and support are required. Establish safe and respectful mechanisms to maintain professional boundaries while providing services aligned to the principles of trauma-informed care. Act appropriately in response to identification of recent and/or ongoing trauma. Make a case for further support and advocacy that will facilitate immediate needs being met and ongoing support.

Outcome

Queensland Government employees have the knowledge and abilities required to deliver services, support or advocacy to members of community who have experienced trauma.

Supporting ourselves: Ensuring our safety and wellbeing

Knowledge required	Behaviours and actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the importance of professional supervision and support to manage the ongoing exposure to trauma. Understand our own experiences and exposure to trauma in the workplace may have implications for our ability to provide services and support to community. Understand when escalation of support services are required to manage our wellbeing. Understand the importance of receiving our own support that aligns to the principles of trauma-informed care. Understand the importance of reflective practices. Understand that resilience and self-care are critical to self-management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access professional supervision and debriefing services to ensure our wellbeing is maintained. Establish consistent mechanisms within the workplace and outside of the workplace to manage our health and wellbeing. Recognise the importance of our own mental health and wellbeing when supporting the community. Establish reflective and resilience-focused practices as part of broad self-care activities.

Outcome

Queensland Government employees have the knowledge and ability to support themselves in managing the impact of providing services to community members who have experienced trauma.

Supporting peers: Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our colleagues and peers

Knowledge required	Behaviours and actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the importance of supporting peers in a way that aligns to the principles of trauma-informed care. Understand the importance of safe relationships in the workplace as a mechanism for support. Understand the importance of encouraging and supporting a focus on recovery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the need for additional support services for our peers where necessary. Establish and maintain safe relationships while maintaining appropriate boundaries. Provide connections and referrals to services that support recovery with consent.

Outcome

Queensland Government employees have the knowledge and ability to support others in managing the impact of providing services to community members who have experienced trauma.

Leading others: Supporting our teams to meet role expectations

Knowledge required	Behaviours and actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand our responsibility to support the safety and wellbeing of team members who have frequent contact with community members who have experienced trauma. Understand the potential impact of trauma on how a worker thinks, acts and responds to stressful situations. Understand that the role context (high stress environment) changes what is an appropriate response to situations. Understand our role in providing guidance to team members seeking advice on work involving clients, customers and/or members of community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide effective support to team members to ensure they have the skills required to respond to trauma. Provide effective support to team members to ensure services are provided in a way that aligns to the trauma-informed principles. Implement systems and procedures that support staff to deliver services aligned to the trauma-enhanced practice level. Provide mechanisms for team members to seek support for trauma and/or vicarious trauma at a level relevant to trauma-enhanced practice. Create work environment where prevention and self-care in trauma is normalised and part of everyday employment (e.g. annual vicarious trauma training, use of regular EAP).

Outcome

Queensland Government employees have the knowledge and ability to lead others who provide services to community members who have experienced trauma.

Trauma expert practice level



- ✓ Trauma-informed
- ✓ Trauma-skilled
- ✓ Trauma-enhanced
- ✓ Trauma expert

Supporting community: Deliver tailored services aligned to a trauma-recovery model that meets the needs of the individual

Knowledge required	Behaviours and actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the importance of meeting the immediate needs of those who have experienced trauma to minimise the risk of further harm. Understand the factors that contribute to the risk of ongoing impacts for people who have experienced trauma. Understand the importance of a multi-service response to trauma through consultation and advice from others with expertise in relevant fields. Understand the range of theories, principles and models for support that exist to facilitate recovery. Understand the range of ways that trauma can impact a person's brain development, behaviours and responses depending on their age. Understand the need to engage the person receiving support in a way that empowers them towards recovery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage and collaborate in a multi-agency setting to deliver holistic supports in a way that is appropriately timed and coordinated. Deliver therapeutic interventions as part of a multi-agency response. Deliver services aligned to a trauma-recovery model that meets the needs and is tailored to the individual.

Outcome

Queensland Government employees provide evidence-based interventions for those affected by trauma.

Supporting ourselves: Ensuring our safety and wellbeing

Knowledge required	Behaviours and actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the risk associated with vicarious trauma relevant to our field of work. Understand our own level of tolerance to exposure. Understand our own self-care needs. Understand the importance of regular supervised practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise where our ability to deliver services in line with professional guidelines is being impacted due to the exposure to trauma. Adopt reflective practices and supervision to support the management of potential impact. Establish processes for self-care. Recognise when we have reached our tolerance level to exposure and require support.

Outcome

Queensland Government employees can manage the personal impact of providing evidence-based interventions for those affected by trauma.

Supporting peers: Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our colleagues and peers

Knowledge required	Behaviours and actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the importance of enabling safe work environments. Understand the effects of trauma on peers engaging with systems and structures. Understand that we do not hold an obligation to deliver services and support to our peers in the way we would support clients. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise the impact of supporting those who have experienced trauma. Recognise when additional support services are required for a peer. Recognise that we are not responsible for delivering services to a peer and should seek separate support.

Outcome

Queensland Government employees can support others to manage the personal impact of providing evidence-based interventions for those affected by trauma.

Leading others: Supporting our teams to meet role expectations

Knowledge required	Behaviours and actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand our responsibility to support the safety and wellbeing of team members who provide evidence-based interventions with community members who have experienced trauma. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate open and collaborative leadership that embodies the principles of trauma-informed care. Recognise where there are gaps in the systems, policies and processes that support the implementation of trauma-informed training. Demonstrate a commitment to trauma-informed principles ensuring continuous development and improvement. Recognise and respond to the needs of our people and the level of impact associated with delivering trauma support services. Provide access to continuous professional development and supervision. Create work environments where prevention and self-care in trauma is normalised and part of everyday employment (e.g. annual vicarious trauma training, use of regular EAP).

Outcome

Queensland Government employees can lead others in managing the personal impact and delivery of evidence-based interventions for those affected by trauma.

Training considerations

Consider these requirements for each practice level when developing or procuring training.

Practice level	Training requirements
Trauma-informed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop understanding of the types, prevalence and impacts of trauma and vicarious trauma. • Use a trauma-informed lens to reframe challenging behaviours as adaptive responses to trauma. • Apply the principles of trauma-informed practice to develop strategies that enhance safety, minimise retraumatisation and support recovery of people with diverse traumas. • Reflect trauma-informed leadership principles in practice. • Show how to recognise the signs of vicarious trauma.
Trauma-skilled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore dimensions of safety and their application. • Provide a greater understanding of trauma's effects on behaviour. • Provide ways of introducing trauma-sensitive conversations. • Provide de-escalation skills. • Identify key skills needed to apply a trauma lens when working with people. • Apply the 5 trauma-informed principles to the workplace and identify key areas to build on. • Show how to recognise and respond to the signs of vicarious trauma.
Trauma-enhanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify possible presentations of complex trauma. • Identify symptoms and signs with a trauma-informed lens. • Implement the 5 principles of trauma-informed care — safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration and empowerment — into daily practice. • Implement strategies to respond to and support people with trauma. • Implement strategies to respond to team members who are displaying signs of vicarious trauma.
Trauma expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the safety/risk paradox when leading a team in a trauma-informed environment. • Define vicarious trauma and distinguish it from other stress experiences. • Identify risk factors for vicarious trauma. • Understand vicarious resilience, empathy and compassion. • Discuss the role of organisations, trauma-informed supervision, professional development and self-care in managing vicarious trauma.

Training delivery guidance

- Training and professional development schedules are agency-dependent.
- Embedding trauma-informed practice requires a consistent organisational approach driven by leadership.
- Trauma-informed practice should be embedded into the professional development of staff, from induction through to role changes, and performance planning.
- Training should be tailored for agencies, to reflect an organisation's unique interactions with victims.
- Training may include a blend of e-learning and in-person training to suit each agency.
- Training should be included in inductions and through refresher training.

Suggested milestones and success measures

Year 1

- Agencies and work units have identified practice levels required across all roles.
- Agencies are developing, procuring or have available appropriate training.
- Employees recognise the practice level requirements of their roles and are working towards acquiring relevant knowledge as part of their positive performance planning.

Year 2

- All Queensland Government employees recognise and understand trauma-informed practice. (Quantified through the Working for Queensland Survey or other departmental mechanisms.)
- All employees are supported in achieving the practice level requirements for their role.

Year 3 and beyond

- Practice levels are incorporated in Queensland Government Leadership Competencies for Queensland.
- Community feedback and sentiment reporting reflects and/or acknowledges the change in service delivery due to trauma-informed behaviours and actions of employees.
- Employees realise the widespread impact of trauma.
- Employees recognise the signs and symptoms of trauma.
- Employees respond by embedding practices, policies and procedures to integrate knowledge and trauma-informed care.
- Employees resist retraumatisation of colleagues and customers. (Quantified through the Working for Queensland Survey or other departmental mechanisms.)

Appendix 2: Victims' stories

We know and appreciate that trauma can affect a person at any point in their life. To support Queensland Government employees' understanding of trauma, we have developed some examples showing how trauma may be experienced or present in members of the Queensland community who are or have been victims or victim-survivors of crime.

The stories can be used as a tool for training to support participants in understanding the scope of trauma and how their role may have contact with people who experience the effects of trauma as a result of being victims or victim-survivors of crime:

- Ashlee's story
- Long's story
- Coen's story
- Marianne's story

Stories have been developed to cover 4 key areas:



Ashlee's story



Age: 24 years

Location: Cloncurry

Occupation: Early childhood teacher

Income: \$95,000 per annum

About Ashlee

Ashlee lives in Cloncurry and shares a house with her partner who works as a geologist at the mine. Ashlee works as an early childhood teacher. She loves her job. She was born in Brisbane and moved to Cloncurry when she finished her teaching degree at university.

She has good relationships with her family. Her mother is a nurse in Brisbane, her father works in HR and her siblings work and live overseas.

In her spare time, Ashlee hangs out with her partner and friends having backyard BBQs, visiting the local pub and attending festivals and events held across the region. Ashlee is well known and loved in Cloncurry. Ashlee loves country life.

Her experiences

Ashlee is a victim of sexual assault.

She was raped by a man that she knew when she attended a rodeo. She was enjoying the events and talking with people, including the man that she knew. At the end of the evening, she was cornered in the carpark in the dark. The assault happened very quickly. She did not receive physical injuries that anyone could see.

After the incident, Ashlee was alone in the carpark at her car. She could not find her purse containing her personal identification documents. She can't remember what happened to them.

Ashlee always thought that rape happened to someone else. She thought she should not have been going to the car alone because there were so many people around from out of town and people were drinking alcohol. She thought it was her fault.

She withdraws and takes time off work. After some weeks pass, she begins to experience symptoms and fears she has contracted a sexually transmitted disease. She attends the Mobile Women's Health Service at Mount Isa. Following that visit, she reports her assault to police.



Ashlee needs:

- medical treatment and care
- sexual assault support
- medical examination
- replacement of property
- support reporting to police.



Ashlee fears:

- consequences from reporting to police and exposure from court proceedings
- not being believed
- being blamed for the assault
- telling her family, partner or friends
- contracting a sexually transmitted disease
- never being the same again
- retaliation from the perpetrator
- being cast out from the community.



Ashlee's challenges:

- close-knit town where everybody knows everybody's business
- no family support close by
- lack of sexual assault services
- remote location; nearest towns are Julia Creek and Mount Isa, 1.5 hours away, and train and flights to Townsville available only twice per week.

What would a trauma-informed interaction look like for Ashlee and Queensland Government employees?

Ashlee's contact with Queensland Government



Supporting Ashlee in a trauma-informed way



Supporting community

- Identify Ashlee's trauma and her needs.
- Understand that Ashlee's response/behaviour may be trauma-related.
- Approach conversations as "What happened to you?" or "How can I help you?"
- Reduce the risk of retraumatisation.
- Link Ashlee with support and wrap-around services she needs for her safety and wellbeing, considering financial constraints.
- Identify a close support person for Ashlee (e.g. sister, parent).
- Provide consistency with service providers where possible to limit retraumatisation.



Supporting ourselves

- Self-care practices in the work environment.
- Resources and formal support networks.



Supporting peers

- Know the signs of trauma and/or vicarious trauma in others.
- Know the resources and formal support networks available.
- Identify and support those who have experienced trauma/vicarious trauma.



Leading others

- Support team members to ensure they can identify causes of trauma.
- Ensure systems and procedures are in place to support trauma-informed practice.
- Establish or access mechanisms for team members to seek support.

Long's story



Age: 55 years

Location: Sunnybank

Occupation: Vietnamese pho restaurant owner

Income: \$7,000–\$8,000 per month

About Long

Long has been married to Fee for 37 years. He is a father of 2 daughters and a son, and grandfather to 8.

Long and Fee both grew up in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) during the Vietnam War and in its aftermath. When they were 15, their families decided to leave Vietnam in the hope of providing a better future for their children. They had some money and were able to buy passage for their children from Vietnamese government officials to Australia.

Long speaks Vietnamese at home and he insists that anyone in the house speaks it too. When he has appointments and meetings about business matters, he organises them at times when his oldest son can attend because he can't speak English very well and cannot read or write English. Long relies on facial expressions and gestures to understand when people speak in English.

Long is very proud of his children, their good education, professional vocations and the home they have found in Australia.

His experiences

Long is a victim of break and enter and stealing.

His restaurant is an easy target because it's not located in any of the main shopping centres in Sunnybank where there is extra security and protection. The break-in happened during the night. When he arrived at work in the morning, he found the back door smashed in, the shopfront damaged and the safe open with its contents gone. Long's and Fee's business and personal identity documents were in the safe.

He feels highly anxious about talking to the police. His son calls the police and is able to be with Long when the police arrive at the scene of the crime.



Long needs:

- to report the crime
- to replace business and personal documents
- to lodge an insurance claim to fund repairs
- repair to his shop so he can recommence trading
- to tell his wife and family about another break-in
- a translator.



Long fears:

- the break-ins won't stop
- being unable to keep the shop open
- loss of status from his wife and children thinking that he cannot protect his business or provide for the family
- being unable to keep his family safe.



Long's challenges:

- inability to understand or be understood due to language barriers
- underlying fears about the honesty of government officials due to history
- limited access to translators.

What would a trauma-informed interaction look like for Long and Queensland Government employees?

Long's contact with Queensland Government



Supporting Long in a trauma-informed way



Supporting community

- Identify the source of Long's trauma.
- Understand that Long's response/behaviour may be trauma-related.
- Approach conversations as "What happened to you?" or "What do you need?"
- Reduce the risk of retraumatisation.
- Refer to appropriate pathways for further support.
- Arrange support from a translator/interpreter.
- Provide consistency with services providers where possible to limit retraumatisation.



Supporting ourselves

- Self-care practices in the work environment
- Resources and formal support networks.



Supporting peers

- Know the signs of trauma and/or vicarious trauma in others.
- Know the resources and formal support networks available.
- Identify and support those who have experienced trauma/vicarious trauma.



Leading others

- Support team members to ensure they can identify causes of trauma.
- Ensure systems and procedures are in place to support trauma-informed practice.
- Establish or access mechanisms for team members to seek support.

Coen's story



Age: 17 years

Location: Stradbroke Island

Occupation: Apprentice refrigeration mechanic

Income: \$24 per hour

About Coen

Coen is a proud young Quandamooka man and lives on the land and water of Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) where his mother, aunts, uncles and cousins live. He is the youngest of 4, with 2 brothers and a sister.

He remembers the stories his grandmother told them when she was alive. He remembers when he was very young his mother hid him and his siblings in the bedroom if they had a runny nose because she was afraid the authorities would come and take them away. He is the only child living with his mother now. His brothers and sisters live up north, on the land of the Wulgurukaba.

He's been involved with the police before. Once, when his mates stole a car and another when he'd seen a fight in which people were hospitalised. He was 14 at the time and it was really bad. He had to give a statement and go to court because he was a witness.

He finished school at Year 10. He never liked school, so he was glad when it was over. The school had organised an apprenticeship. He didn't like the idea of it much, but after a short time he found he really liked the work, he got along with his boss and he liked how he was treated. Coen likes fixing things and his family say he's got a talent and a natural way with his hands. He's proud to be able to work to help out his family and his mob.

His experiences

Coen is a victim of physical assault and personal theft.

He was walking to the ferry after work when he was knocked to the ground from behind, kicked and had his backpack stolen. His forehead and arms were gashed and his stomach was bruised. He felt very confused and alone. No one had come to his aid.

The perpetrators had acted quickly and run away with his backpack. His backpack contained his wallet with his banking, TAFE and personal identification cards. He called his mother with his phone which was in his pocket. His mother doesn't have a car and asked if he can get to hospital where she will meet him. He finds his way to hospital using the train and walking.



Coen needs:

- medical treatment
- to file a police report
- to notify the bank, TAFE and work of stolen items
- to organise replacement of his belongings and identification
- help with recovery
- help with transport
- to be able to go to work.



Coen fears:

- not being believed by the hospital, police or work
- not being able to explain well enough what happened
- becoming confused and reactive
- retaliation for himself and his family if he files a report and follows the legal process
- taking time off work to organise replacement items and have medical treatment
- not being able to get to work or TAFE safely.



Coen's challenges:

- feeling it's too hard
- a belief that his past will reflect poorly on him
- generational trauma
- poor perceptions of government authorities
- being misunderstood by government agencies.

What would a trauma-informed interaction look like for Coen and Queensland Government employees?

Coen's contact with Queensland Government



Supporting Coen in a trauma-informed way



Supporting community

- Identify needs for cultural support.
- Provide consistency with services providers where possible to limit retraumatisation.
- Identify the source of Coen's trauma.
- Understand that Coen's response/behaviour may be trauma-related.
- Approach conversations as "What happened to you?" or "What do you need?"
- Reduce the risk of retraumatisation.
- Refer to appropriate pathways for further support.



Supporting ourselves

- Self-care practices in the work environment
- Resources and formal support networks.



Supporting peers

- Know the signs of trauma and/or vicarious trauma in others.
- Know the resources and formal support networks available.
- Identify and support those who have experienced trauma/vicarious trauma.



Leading others

- Support team members to ensure they can identify causes of trauma.
- Ensure systems and procedures are in place to support trauma-informed practice.
- Establish or access mechanisms for team members to seek support.

Marianne's story



Age: 53 years

Location: Mt Isa

Occupation: public servant

Income: \$100,000 per year

About Marianne

Marianne works in a customer-facing role. Marianne left a violent relationship in her late 20s and hasn't ever shared this with anyone in her workplace.

Her experiences

Marianne recently became a team leader, which has meant that customers who are often seen as "difficult" by staff in her team are referred to her. She has started to find that dealing with complex situations, supporting her staff and the additional negative interactions with customers are making her feel angry. She thinks her feelings are a reflection that she's not good at her job.

Because of the regional nature of her work, she finds it difficult to share her experiences with colleagues, mainly because they are in her team, and she feels this would be unprofessional. She feels isolated and isn't sure what to do to regain her passion for her job.

Marianne is disappointed in herself. She's always been proud to serve the people of Queensland but recently she has felt burnt out, disengaged and cynical.



Marianne needs:

- better workplace support
- to feel engaged and committed to her work, like she used to.



Marianne fears:

- being sacked
- leaving a job she used to love
- not being a good mentor or leader for her team.

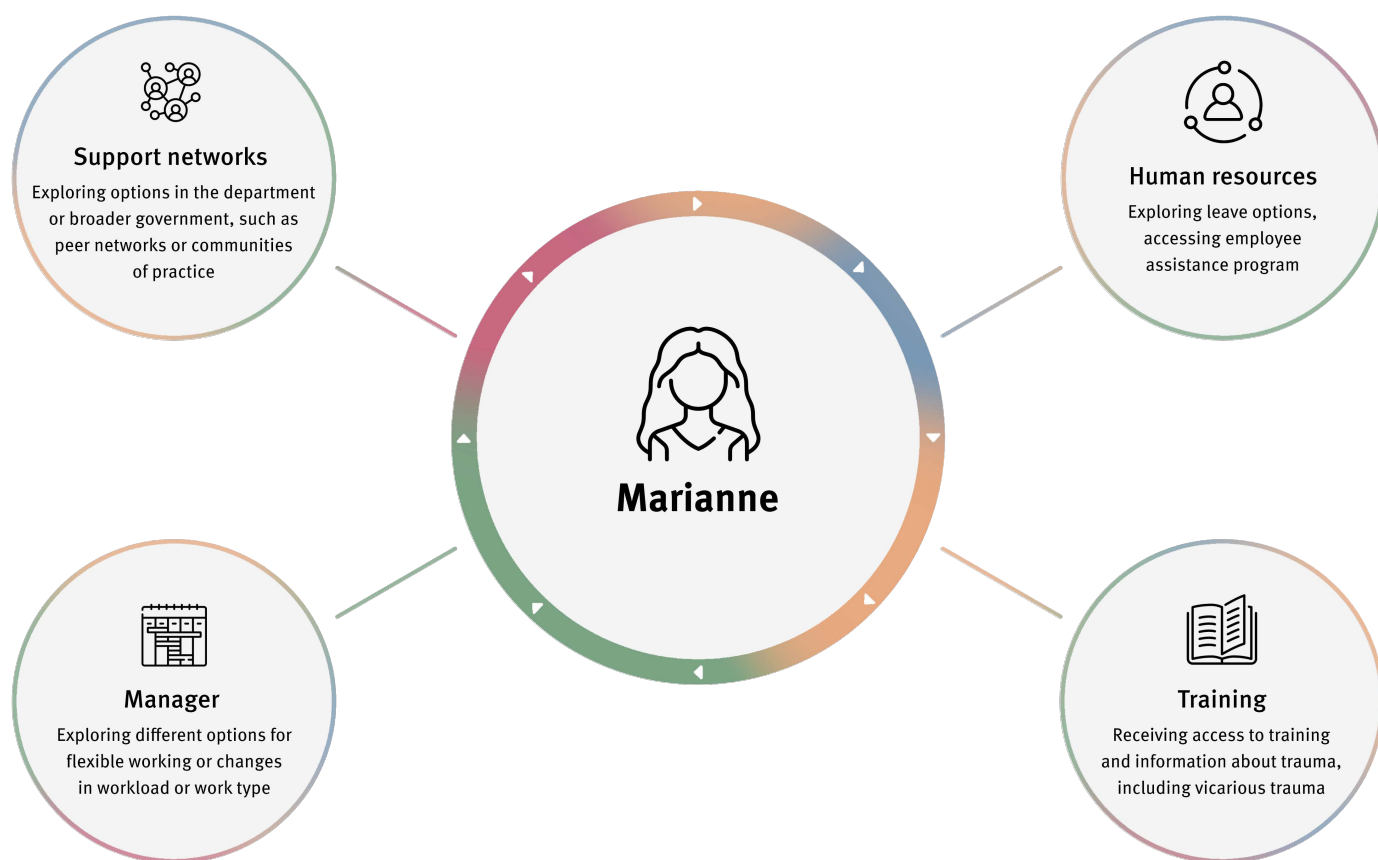


Marianne's challenges:

- not understanding that her own experiences might be affecting her work
- not having a manager who picks up on the signs that Marianne is struggling.

What would a trauma-informed interaction look like for Marianne as a Queensland Government employee?

Marianne's interactions with her department



Supporting Marianne in a trauma-informed way



Supporting community

- Be equipped to deal with customers with complex needs.
- Receive trauma-informed training.



Supporting ourselves

- Self-care practices in the work environment
- Resources and formal support networks
- Assistance programs and flexible working options.



Supporting peers

- Know the signs of trauma and/or vicarious trauma in others.
- Know the resources and formal support networks available.
- Identify and support those who have experienced trauma/vicarious trauma.



Leading others

- Support team members to ensure they can identify causes of trauma.
- Identify team's training needs.
- Ensure systems and procedures are in place to support trauma-informed practice.
- Establish or access mechanisms for team members to seek support.

Appendix 3: Glossary

Term	Definition
Vicarious trauma	Vicarious trauma is the effect of being exposed to someone else's trauma — trauma that you have not personally experienced, but you've learned about from others, often through a first-hand account or narrative of a traumatic event.
Trauma-informed	<p>Trauma-informed care and service is based on the understanding that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a significant number of people have experienced trauma in their lives • trauma may be a factor for people in distress • the impact of trauma may be lifelong • trauma can impact the person, their emotions and relationships with others.
Trauma (psychological)	Trauma is an emotional response to an intensely stressful event/s and situations. Trauma can cause a wide range of physical and emotional symptoms.
Complex trauma	Complex trauma is a response to a series of traumatic events that take place over a long period of time, like months or years. Complex trauma can arise in any situation where you feel an ongoing sense of fear, horror, helplessness or powerlessness over an extended period of time, with the perceived or actual inability to escape.
Trauma-informed leadership principles	<p>Trauma-informed leadership enables you to lead in a compassionate, inclusive manner that ultimately empowers those you lead to grow through a traumatic event. It emphasises nurturing leadership that builds trust and empowers the resilience of your team, and the organisation more broadly. There are 5 key principles of trauma-informed leadership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • safety • choice • collaboration • trustworthiness • empowerment.
Victim	A person who is harmed by a criminal act committed against them or a family member. This includes domestic and family violence. A person is a victim regardless of whether the offence is reported to police or of the outcome of any investigation or prosecution. Harm means physical, emotional, or psychological harm, property loss or damage or financial or economic loss.

Victim-survivor	Some victims prefer the term survivor or victim-survivor because it acknowledges the ongoing effects and harm caused by crime as well as honouring the strength and resilience of people with lived experience of crime.
Resilience	A person's ability to cope with difficult situations. The resiliency of a person varies depending on their unique circumstances and the challenges they face.
Empathy	The ability to emotionally understand, relate and share the feelings of another and their perspectives.
Compassion	A feeling of sympathy, understanding and sadness for other people's suffering and a desire to help.
Recovery	Recovery focuses on someone regaining control of their life, which may or may not include living with symptoms.
Retraumatization	Retraumatization is the re-experiencing of a previously traumatic event, either consciously or subconsciously due to stress, or stimulus that are similar to or remind a person of the original trauma.

Office of the Victims' Commissioner

Acknowledgement of Country We pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ancestors of this land, their spirits and their legacy. The foundations laid by these ancestors – our First Nations peoples – give strength, inspiration and courage to current and future generations towards creating a better Queensland.

Victim Recognition We recognise all victims of crime, their advocates, supporters and families.