

**What is your perception of mental health system?**

**Embedded: the experiences of local nurse researchers during an action research study focused on strengthening the safety culture of acute mental health inpatient units.**

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# Strengthening the Safety Culture of Inpatient Mental Health Units in New South Wales

## PROJECT TEAM

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# Agenda

- + Background
- + Aims
- + Approach
  - Action Research study
  - Experience of a local nurse researcher
- + Outcomes
- + Take home messages

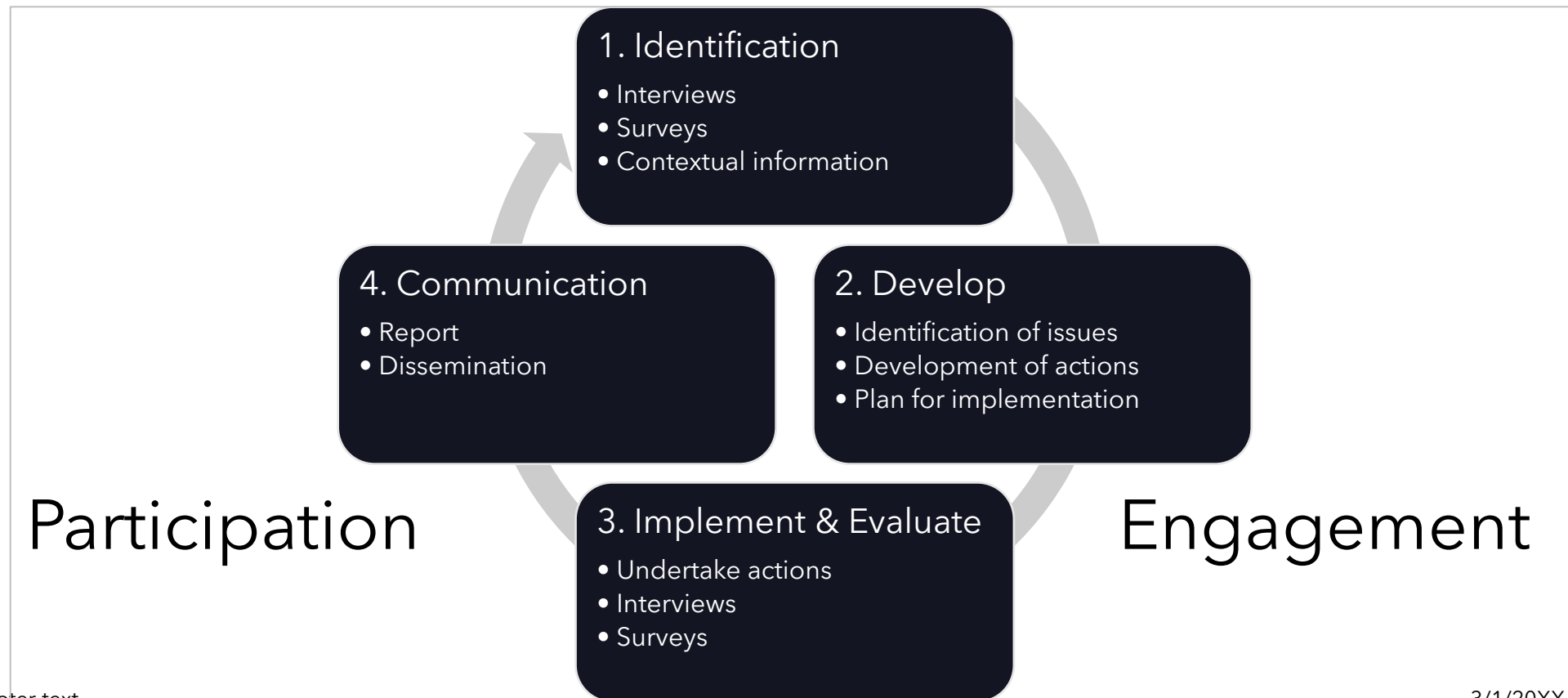
# Background

- ❖ Inpatient mental health units provide safe care and treatment for people with acute and severe mental health symptoms.
- ❖ However, adverse events have occurred more frequently than expected in a well-functioning mental health system.
- ❖ Safety culture as a determinant of consumer safety and quality of care.
- ❖ There is a clear need for effective and sustainable changes to strengthen the safety culture in inpatient mental health units.

# Aims of the Action Research study

- + Identify the barriers and facilitators to person-centred, recovery-oriented, high-quality, and safe, therapeutic nursing care.
- + Engage staff in developing targeted interventions to improve safety culture and
- + Implement and evaluate targeted interventions to improve safety culture

# Action Research study



# Staff engagement

## Research facilitators

- + Building **Collaborative** relationship with staff members
- + **Inclusion**: involvement of the multidisciplinary team
- + Staff were invited to **participate** continuously in the processes of strengthening the safety culture



# Consumer engagement

- + Consumers appreciated the therapeutic engagement with the local nurse researcher.
- + Being listened to
- + Sense of contribution

## Challenges

- Staff willingness to engage in the study
- Staff negative attitudes towards change
- Consumer-related violence and aggression
- Managerial support and engagement
- Lack of knowledge of contemporary mental health practice

# Targeted interventions

- + Consumer morning meeting
- + Recovery tree
- + "All About Me" group activity
- + Safety Huddles
- + In-service education session regarding mental health nursing and therapeutic relationship

# Outcomes

- + Better understanding the culture context
- + Foster professional growth among team members
- + Support their learning at the point of care
- + Apply their learning to change clinical practice within their workplace
- + Improve change sustainability

# Take home messages

Utilizing embedded local research leads and involving staff and consumers in identifying the barriers and facilitators of safety practices can help develop and implement strategies that enhance safety culture in mental health settings.