

Colleen Krestensen – Associate Senior Reviewer - Canberra

Colleen Krestensen has an extensive background in government and non-government sectors, with a particularly strong record of achievement in the area of mental health and complex behavioural issues. She has over 30 years' Commonwealth Government experience in health, community services and Indigenous affairs, and held a Senior Executive Service (SES) position in the Department of Health for 9 years. Since retiring in 2016, Colleen has worked as a private consultant for State and Commonwealth government agencies, private health services, primary health networks and other non-government organisations.

In government, as an SES officer Colleen managed complex portfolios, large programs and led diverse teams. This included leading mental health, suicide prevention, population health and drug and alcohol branches, working on sensitive and complex subject matter and at times complicated workplace issues. She worked with staff to navigate major staff reductions and organisational change and managed a broad range of complex staff needs. Her role had a strong focus on understanding, working within and sometimes reviewing key regulations, standards, guidelines, and codes of practice. She was the primary architect of the Commonwealth Government Response to the Review of Mental Health Programs and Services in 2015, which helped shape current primary mental health care programs.

As a consultant, Colleen has demonstrated expertise in service design, technical writing and evaluation in areas including disaster recovery, Indigenous health, research, primary care, and mental health. Her skills in producing analytical, evidence-based and implementable reports have been sought by a range of agencies. She has led the development and implementation of joint regional service plans, prepared national guidance and governance documents, and undertaken analytical evaluations. She also prepared national guidance on supporting people with complex behavioural issues, drawing on her own psychology background. She has reviewed services, systems, and collaborative governance arrangements, extracting practical learnings from these reviews.

Colleen has a Bachelor of Arts (Honours in Psychology) from Sydney University, and a Diploma in Education (Secondary) from Sydney Teachers College.

Providing Reviews of Decisions and Actions, Workplace Investigations
and Related Strategic Advice to the Public Sector and Other Organisations