

Consumer resource

Health Consumer Representatives on committees, networks, advisories and working groups

Health Consumer Representatives are involved in committees, networks, advisories and working groups throughout our health service.

They bring a unique patient centred and community perspective. They may draw upon:

- their own health condition/s,
- lived healthcare experiences,
- family member (or someone they care for) healthcare experiences,
- involvement within the local community or a community organisation(s).

Consumer involvement contributes to improving our health services and the health outcomes for our entire community. When done well, it can be a rewarding experience for the committee, the hospital, and the consumer.

This tool provides ideas and advice to help consumers participate meaningfully.

What is my role?

- To ensure accountability to consumers and community.
- Provide a consumer perspective (how consumers think and feel).
- You are not expected to represent everyone's perspective.
- Contribute to improving consumer experiences.
- Ensure consumer concerns are heard.
- Provide feedback to the committee on issues affecting consumers.
- Share committee activities with other consumers or community (if applicable).

What can I expect?

- To be an equal and valued committee member.
- To be treated with respect.
- To be listened to.
- To be able to ask questions and receive answers.
- To be supported.
- Entitled to disagree.
- To be able to talk to others about your involvement to get support, information, and education (if applicable).
- To be given information in a timely manner, including the agenda, and supporting documents.
- To be offered reimbursement (you should not be out of pocket to engage with us) and/or remuneration (some of the time you can be paid to be engaged with us) for your involvement and for some committees.

Before you begin

- You will be provided with details including:
 - the purpose of the committee,
 - expectations of your involvement,
 - details of the committee members and
 - details of the meetings including location, frequency and dates and times.
- Provided a contact person (this may be the chair or secretariat) and their contact information.
- You will be required to complete some background reading and paperwork, such as the committees Terms of Reference and previous minutes.

During the meetings

Tips to help you participate effectively:

- It may help to organise a short catch up before and after meetings with the committee chair.
- Arrive on time and come prepared to be an active committee participant.
- Read the agenda, minutes and papers and seek clarification if there is something you are not sure of.
- Take notes during the meeting and familiarise yourself with other members of the committee, including the chair and secretariat.
- Ask questions or for clarification if there is something you don't understand.
- Remember that you have been selected as the committee wanted you to be involved based on your experience and skills. You don't have to have all the answers or represent the whole community and give yourself time to settle in and familiarise yourself.

Questions you might like to ask or prompts to help you in a meeting:

- How will this benefit consumers?
- What will be the impact on consumers?
- What evidence is that based on?
- Does it meet consumers' needs and expectations?
- How will this be communicated to consumers and the community?
- Will consumers and the community be consulted?

After the meetings

- Ensure you have the details of the relevant contact person.
- Ask questions if there is anything you aren't sure of.
- Provide feedback on your experience.

Contact

Patient Experience and Consumer Engagement

Phone: 4932 5359

Email: CQHHSPatientExperience@health.qld.gov.au.