

**Nepean Division of General Practice
Consumer Reference Group**

Established in 1999.

ADGP Federal Excellence Award Winner for Consumer Engagement 2004

AGPN Network: Communications and Advocacy Excellence Award 2007

Health Consumer Advisory Committee Terms of Reference and Procedures

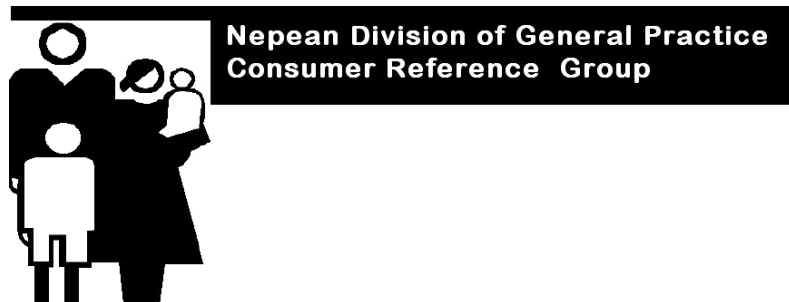
Of the Nepean Division of General Practice Inc trading as the



Phone: 4734 8556

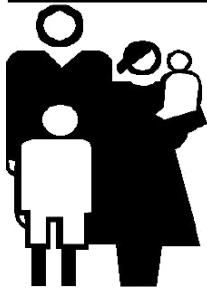
email: office@nepeangpnet.org.au

Postal Address: Box 241 Penrith 2751



Contents

Background.....	3
What is a Health Consumer Advisory Committee?.....	3
Why does the Nepean GP Network have Health Consumer Advisory Committee?	3
What is my role as a health consumer representative?	4
Representation.....	4
Terms of Reference 2020.....	5
1. Role:.....	5
2. Aim:	5
3. Functions:	5
4. Affiliations.....	5
5. Method of Recruitment.....	6
6. Minutes Agenda and records:	6
7. Quorum.....	6
8. Reporting Responsibilities.....	7
9. Review of Terms of Reference	7
10. Conflict Resolution.....	7
Guidelines & Procedures for Operation of the Consumer Reference Group	7
11. General.....	7
12. Membership	8
13. Membership Criteria:.....	9
14. Orientation, training and on-going support	9
15. Procedures:	10
16. Confidentiality & Privacy Agreement	11



Nepean Division of General Practice Consumer Reference Group

Background

What is a Health Consumer Advisory Committee?

A Consumer Advisory Committee consists of people who come together to provide advice to an organisation, from a consumer health perspective. Consumers may be requested to represent on some Program Advisory Focus Groups.

Why does the Nepean GP Network have Health Consumer Advisory Committee?

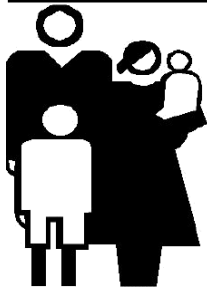
As a sub Committee to the Board the Consumer Advisory Committee provides advice from a consumer perspective. This advice contributes towards the decision-making process of the Nepean GP Network and other Health Organisations that are undertaken. The Consumer Representative provides:

- An avenue for two way communication between GPs and consumers/consumer organisations
- A broad perspective of consumers opinions and experiences with primary health care
- An opportunity for consumers to provide feedback to general practice in a formal and confidential manner as a means for ensuring continuous quality improvement
- An efficient mechanism for gathering consumer's suggestions on health and social issues relevant to the Primary Health of consumers
- Community awareness of health issues
- Links with marginalised sectors of the community, to ensure that health services best meet the needs of the range of demographics within the local population

Activities where the consumer have input include:

- Strategic program development of the Nepean GP Network (NGPN)
- Identification of gaps in health services
- Strategic planning/priority setting of the NGPN
- Feedback about health services and how they can be improved
- Comment on changes facing General Practice that will impact consumers
- Policy issues on which the GP Network may wish to lobby
- Evaluation and Review of Consumer feedback surveys

Background



**Nepean Division of General Practice
Consumer Reference Group**

What is my role as a health consumer representative?

The role of a consumer representative is to provide a consumer perspective. This may differ from a bureaucratic service provider, industry, academic or professional perspective. The role of a consumer representative involves:

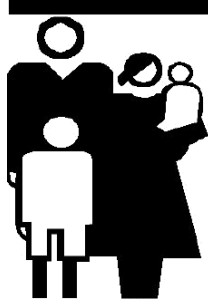
- ◆ protecting the interests of consumers
- ◆ presenting how consumers may feel and think about certain issues
- ◆ contributing the consumer experience
- ◆ ensuring the CRG and Board recognises consumer concerns
- ◆ reporting the activities of the CRG to other consumers that they are in contact with and obtain their views
- ◆ acting as a watchdog on issues affecting consumers
- ◆ providing information about any relevant issues affecting consumers

Representation

Consumers will be represented on the Consumer Advisory Committee (HCAC) as a sub-committee of the NDGP Board.

A consumer is free to express their views from their own perspective and those of other people that they are associated with.

Whilst an individual may have views that may not be consistent with values and ethos of the GP Network, if a majority viewpoint is reached then each member will represent the agreed viewpoint as being the view of the HCAC.



**Nepean Division of General Practice
Consumer Reference Group**

Terms of Reference 2020

1. Role:

The Nepean GP Network Board fully supports the role and function of its Consumer Advisory Committee as a sub committee of the Board. It values the voice of Consumers in relation to the Health of the Community and informing the Board of issues relating to Primary Health within the Community.

2. Aim:

To develop an alliance between the Nepean GP Network (NGPN) and consumers within the Penrith Local Government Area (LGA), from a strategic perspective, that contributes to the provision of high-quality general practice service and Primary Health Care. The CRG will have in particular, a Wellness, Preventive and coordinated model of care perspective.

3. Functions:

1. To be the informed voice of Consumers to the NGPN Board and indirectly to Local GPs.
2. To provide information and advice from a consumer perspective to enhance the role, advocacy and work of the NGPN in promoting the health and welfare of the local community
3. To discuss and comment on the needs of communities in the Penrith area and issues related to general practice and Primary Health Care
4. To comment on health issues as consumers that are being developed within the NGPN and other Health Providers that affect the community and individuals
5. To participate and provide the consumer aspects in the strategic planning of the NGPN
6. Suggest and support further opportunities for consumer involvement in research, education and activities of the NGPN.
7. To participate and consult with other Health organisations as necessary to fulfil the aim and role of the CRG.

4. Affiliations

The HCAC will hold membership with Consumers NSW and the Consumer Health Forum as an avenue to remain current of Consumer issues from a State and Federal level. Where possible, the HCAC will also contribute to the voice of Consumers to these two peak bodies.



**Nepean Division of General Practice
Consumer Reference Group**

TERMS OF REFERENCE 2020

5. Method of Recruitment

HCAC Members will be recruited against the Demographics of the Penrith LGA by various means including but not limited to:

- Advertising in the local press and social Media
- Recommendations by HCAC members and the NGPN Board.
- Resulting from enquiry from the NGPN Website.

Potential members will be interviewed by the Consumer HCAC Chair and two other people as endorsed by the Board which may include a staff member of the NGPN and/or HCAC Member. An applicant may be invited to attend a HCAC meeting as an observer prior to committing to be a member.

6. Minutes Agenda and records:

- Meetings will be chaired by a co-chair or in an absence of either as elected by the HCAC for that meeting only
- Members wishing to place items on the agenda must notify the secretary at least three working days prior to the scheduled meeting
- Agenda and relevant papers will be sent out to all members seven days prior to the meeting
- Late agenda items will be tabled at the discretion of the chair
- Apologies should be received at least two days prior to the scheduled meeting date except in unforeseen circumstances

Minutes will be distributed to members within fourteen days of the meeting

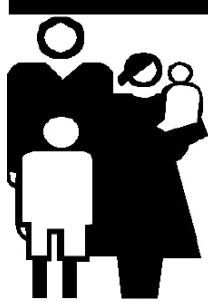
Standing agenda items:

- Confirmation of previous minutes
- Business Arising from Previous Minutes
- New Business of the Day including education session
- Consumer Reports from PHN/LHD
- NGPN Board Report including request for comments if not covered under new Business
- Consumer members Business if not covered elsewhere

7. Quorum

The quorum for HCAC meetings will be half the members plus one.

A meeting may proceed if there are at least four members present but where a quorum is not formed any motions must be deferred until the next meeting. If there is still no quorum at this subsequent meeting, the number attending will be considered a quorum for that meeting only, but only those motions deferred from the previous meeting may be resolved.



**Nepean Division of General Practice
Consumer Reference Group**

TERMS OF REFERENCE 2020

8. Reporting Responsibilities

The HCAC will report to the NGPN Board.

9. Review of Terms of Reference

As a minimum, the HCAC Terms of Reference will be reviewed every three years by the HCAC and be endorsed by the NGPN Board

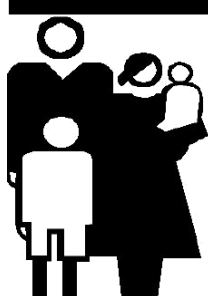
10. Conflict Resolution

In the event of a conflict arising from within the HCAC or with the NGPN then it shall be referred in accordance with the procedures of **NGPN SOP 3.5 Grievance**

Guidelines & Procedures for Operation of the Consumer Reference Group

11. General

- a) The Consumer Advisory Committee (HCAC) is a subcommittee of the Board of the Nepean GP Network (NGPN)
- b) The Board of the NGPN will appoint a Director to co- chair each meeting of the HCAC. The NGPN Company Secretary will participate in the HCAC meeting and where necessary take executive responsibility. In the absence of both co-chairs and a quorum is present, the meeting will elect a chair for that meeting.
- c) The HCAC will elect a Co- Chair and Secretary from amongst its members
- d) The Board of the NGPN will refer relevant matters related to health policy to the HCAC for comment and advice
- e) Development of health initiatives will be referred by the Board to the HCAC seeking their comment and ideas for consumer involvement.
- f) As a matter of protocol the Board of the NGPN will consider pertinent information, ideas and comments from the HCAC, and discuss these at their Board meetings.



Nepean Division of General Practice Consumer Reference Group

GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

- g) The Board of the NGPN will seek and consider input from the HCAC in the strategic planning process, and Program proposals.
- h) All efforts are to be made to share any relevant information (written or verbal) with the HCAC
- i) Issues taken to the Board by the HCAC need to be substantiated with appropriate background information
- j) There is to be no release of information to the media by the HCAC unless previously approved by the NGPN Chair or Company Secretary.
- k) In specific circumstances the HCAC Members are expected to report back to their community groups to obtain the wider Community perspective on health issues, This may be .subject to any sensitive matters that will be declared.
- l) Members are encouraged to take up any opportunity for training that is offered to build knowledge and develop new skills.
- m) Meeting times and dates will be set by the HCAC.

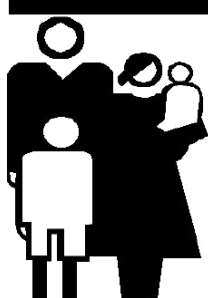
12. Membership

The Consumer Advisory Committee will consist of six to twelve consumer representatives. Membership will also include at least one local GP who is a member of the NGPN Board and Company Secretary.

The HCSAC will be made up of Penrith LGA demographic representation drawn from GPs, GP patients, and members of the community.

When seeking to recruit new members, the HCAC will consider the diversity within the community to be reflected in the make-up of this group, ie. age, gender, ethnicity, etc.

Committee membership will be for a period of three years. Membership can be renewed annually up to a maximum of 12 continuous years. After stepping down for one year a Member may be invited to re-join the HCAC. The Board, on application, may extend that period in exceptional circumstances.



Nepean Division of General Practice
Consumer Reference Group

GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Regular non-attendance at meetings - with or without an apology - will be reviewed by the CRG in conjunction with the NGPN Board. The member in question will then be contacted to discuss time commitment and priorities, which may result in the forfeiture of their membership.

Members of the NGPN CRG are covered under the Professional; Liability Insurance of the organisation.

13. Membership Criteria:

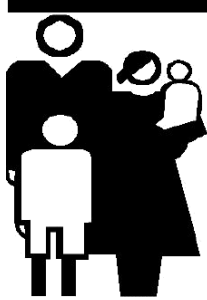
- a) Consumer of local health services and / or live in the Penrith LGA or surrounding district.
- b) Able to **commit 1.5 hour per quarter** to attend meetings, as well as travel and pre-meeting reading time
- c) Have a broad understanding and experience of health issues and a passion to improve the Health system
- d) Should not be paid workers from the Public Health Service
- e) Able to listen to the views of others and operate effectively in a group setting
- f) Will exercise discretion and maintain confidentiality with respect to sensitive issues that may arise during the course of duty as consumer representative. If in doubt about the sensitiveness of any issues, contact the NGPN Company Secretary
- g) Be committed to the furtherance or health wellness and Health Literacy within the community

14. Orientation, training and on-going support

The NGPN provides orientation including using this Information Kit. In addition follow up discussion between the Company Secretary and nominated Consumer Representative will occur. Further informal training and support will be provided as required including attendance at applicable Continuing Professional Development (CPD) events when able to source training and advocacy through Peak Consumer groups.

There will be regular education presentations in the meetings on topical subjects.

Costs for attendance at external Education forums and conferences, once approved, will have travel and fees reimbursed.



**Nepean Division of General Practice
Consumer Reference Group**

GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

15. Procedures:

- a) Meeting dates and times will be set at the end of each HCAC meeting.
- b) Meetings will be chaired as in agreement between the co-chairs.
- c) In the event that neither Co-Chair is present, and a Quorum is present, then the meeting will elect a Chair for that meeting.
- d) Meetings will run for approximately one and a half hours
- e) The frequency of meetings will be approximately once every three months
- f) The HCAC will meet in the offices as made available of the Nepean Blue Mountains Primary Health Network
- g) Consumer representatives will be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses at a rate as determined by the Board with an extra loading for the elected Consumer Co-Chair and Secretary.
- h) An Attendance List will be presented at each meeting to be signed by those present. This will be used for direct bank transfer for reimbursement of out of pocket expenses.
- i) NGPN will provide administrative backup (photocopying, faxing, mailing, etc) for HCAC.
- j) HCAC Members are required to sign and adhere to the NGPN Confidentially Agreement

Approved by the HCAC

Endorsed by the NGPN Board

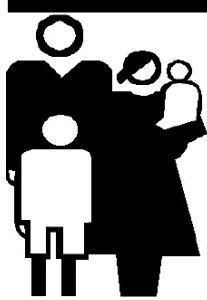
.....

.....

Dated:

Dated:

Review Date: November 2021



**Nepean Division of General Practice
Consumer Reference Group**

16. Confidentiality & Privacy Agreement

I agree that I will not at any time either during my period of engagement with the NDGP or after the leaving the HCAC for any reason divulge any **Confidential Information** to any other company, person or persons under the provisions of the NGPN Privacy Policy except:

- as required by law;
- with the previous written consent of the Employer; and
- to the Employer’s agents, employees or advisors in the performance of your duties.

I will not disclose to any unauthorised person any information which comes to my knowledge during the course of my engagement, including, but not limited to, personal information relating to health conditions, appropriately marked discussion papers, directories or lists, office documents and patient/member matters. I understand that unauthorised disclosure to a third party of confidential information about matters connected with the business may render me liable to disciplinary action and/or civil proceedings to restrain you from disclosing the information to a third party, or from making personal use of it without authority, or for damages if loss to the organisation results from the unauthorised disclosure.

For the purpose of this agreement, “**Confidential Information**” shall include but not be limited to the following:

- all information, no matter how stored, recorded or compiled relating to the affairs of the Employer and marked as Confidential, Medical in Confidence or Committee in Confidence or;
- information that the recipient knows or ought to know is confidential;
- the organisation’s intellectual property
- sensitive information relating to the NDGP Board and/or Company Secretary discussions, information and material.

I will disclose any conflicts of interest either potential, real or what maybe perceived at the beginning of a HCAC meeting for a decision by the meeting, as to whether I should participate in discussions and or vote on a particular issue.

I will disclose to the Company Secretary on engagement or during engagement with the HCAC any matter relating to an adverse Criminal and/or Civil Record, and/or working with at-risk groups including children and the elderly that may preclude me from serving on the HCAC

I understand a breach of this Confidentiality Agreement may result in termination of my engagement.

I, _____ (*print name*), hereby commit to this Confidentiality Agreement.

Signature: _____

Date:

Witness by:

Date: