

## Sydney North Health Network Community Council Terms of Reference

### Background

In the 2014-15 Budget, the Australian Government announced the establishment of Primary Health Networks (PHN). The objectives of the PHN are to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of medical services for patients, particularly those at risk of poor health outcomes; and improve coordination of care to ensure people receive the right care in the right place at the right time.

PHNs must establish and maintain Community Councils that will report to the PHN Board on consumer issues to guide decisions on the unique needs of their respective communities.

### Purpose

The Sydney North Health Network Community Council will assist the Sydney North Health Network (SNHN) to develop local strategies to improve the operation of the health care system for people in the Sydney North region. It will focus on facilitating effective, person-centred primary health care to improve the overall health of our population and reduce avoidable hospital presentations.

The Community Council will provide guidance to the SNHN Board on Community issues relevant to Primary Care to:

- Inform decisions, investments, and innovations based on local health consumer and carer experiences and expectations,
- support patient-centred, high-quality, cost-effective outcomes responsive to local community needs
- Support local primary care providers to improve peoples' outcomes and experiences with the health care system.
- Evaluate and identify inefficiencies and optimise the use of existing services and resources

It will work in partnership with the Sydney North Clinical Council and Northern Sydney Local Health District (NSLHD) to achieve this and with other key organisations including NSLHD and any additional relevant Health Consumer Groups/Bodies such as PHNs, NFPs and NGOs working in Community Health.

### Responsibilities

- Contribute to the SNHN Population Needs Assessment process and provide input from a consumer and community perspective to assist in determining local health priorities.
- Provide a consumer and community perspective when the Board is seeking advice on issues and initiatives delivered by SNHN.

- Collect and articulate the community and health consumer voice (stories and experiences) on health issues, needs and concerns through connections to the wider SNHN Health Consumer Network and via regional consumer forums and other community networks.
- Advise on the conduct, methodology and diversity of community consultations, and framing of recommendations for action.
- Advise on developing partnerships with relevant stakeholders to strengthen response to community and health consumer needs.
- Advise SNHN on health consumer engagement best practice

## Membership

- **Council Size:** The Community Council will comprise 9-12 members
- **Broad-based:** Membership should be diverse and representative of broader consumer and community interests in local health services. Members will bring perspectives from their background, area of interest or expertise, rather than representing their specific organisation on the Council.
- **Active:** As active participants of the council, it is expected that members will canvas feedback from their broader network base to inform opinion and gain additional insight into community and consumer-related issues.
- **Dynamic:** In addition to this core membership it may be appropriate to invite other attendees, when relevant.
- **Cross-representation:** There will be cross member representation on both the Clinical and Community Councils.

## Appointments and tenure

Consumers and community members will be invited to participate through an open Expression of Interest process undertaken by SNHN. Members will be appointed/approved by the SNHN board.

Appointments will be for an initial term of up to two years, with 50% of positions to become vacant each year. There will be an option for reappointment for a second term.

Membership will cease when:

- A member resigns.
- A member has not attended three consecutive meetings, except on grounds of leave granted.
- The maximum term has been reached.
- A member breaches confidentiality and/or the law, or
- Does not adequately declare conflicts of interest.

## Chairperson

The Community Council Chair will be appointed by the SNHN Board.

## Meeting frequency and notice

The Community Council will meet bi-monthly in the first year of SNHN operation and then quarterly thereafter, for approximately two hours per meeting.

Extraordinary meetings may be called with a minimum 2 weeks' notice.

Agendas and papers will be circulated no later than 5 working days before the meetings.

Minutes of the meeting will be circulated within 10 working days of the meeting after approval by the chair.

The minutes of these meetings will be provided to the SNHN Board.

Communique's that report on Community Council activities will be publically available to ensure transparency, when relevant.

## Secretariat

SNHN will provide administrative support for SN Community Council including meeting venues, conferencing facilities and collation and circulation of meeting papers, minutes and agendas.

## Quorum

A quorum will be 50% of current appointed members plus one. At least one of either the Chair of the Community Council or the SNHN CEO must be present at each meeting.

## Agendas and Reporting

The development and distribution of agendas and agenda papers for each meeting will occur in accordance with the business rules agreed by the Community Council.

Minutes of the meeting will be circulated within 10 working days of the meeting after approval by the chair.

The minutes of these meetings will be provided to the SNHN Board, and Council Minutes and agendas will be publicly available to ensure transparency.

SN Council will report to the SNHN board via quarterly meetings with the SNHN board chair and SN Clinical Council chair.

Brief notes or communiques may be distributed to other relevant stakeholders as determined by the SNHN board.

The SNHN Board may form focused working groups or subcommittees of the Community Council and Clinical Council to investigate particular issues in more detail, as required.

## Remuneration

Members will receive a sitting fee per meeting attended as determined by the SNHN Board.

## Performance review

The terms of reference and the performance of SN Community Council will be reviewed annually by the board of SNHN.

## Guiding Principles

Members will:

- Commit to attending meetings with apologies given, where possible, 1 week in advance.

- Ensure that knowledge is shared with the Community group they are representing and routinely seek and provide feedback on issues discussed at meetings within agreed timeframes.
- Ensure papers are circulated to relevant stakeholders.
- Endeavour to operate on the basis of consensus, however, where this is not possible the majority view will prevail.
- Adhere to the values of honesty, integrity, service, accountability, collaboration, openness, respect and empowerment.
- Declare any potential, perceived or actual conflicts of interest.
- Maintain confidentiality and adhere to the SNHN privacy policy.
- Participate in continuing professional development activities if required to effectively fulfil the position responsibilities.
- Participate in an annual evaluation of the Community Council's performance.