

# **CONSUMER CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE to the Health Care Complaints Commission**

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE AND CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **ROLE**

The Health Care Complaints Commission's Consumer Consultative Committee (CCC) is an important mechanism for consumer input and was established to ensure that health care consumers are given an effective voice in the Commission's affairs.

The CCC provides advice and input to the Health Care Complaints Commission (the Commission) to assist it in fulfilling its obligations under the *Health Care Complaints Act 1993* (the Act).

The existence of the CCC recognises the importance of consumer participation in guiding and developing the health care complaint resolution process, which is an essential element of health system accountability.

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The CCC represents the interests of health care consumers in relation to the operation of the Commission by providing advice and feedback to the Commission regarding:

- consumer complaints about health services generally;
- the maintenance and standards of health service delivery;
- issues that raise public interest concerns of relevance to the Commission;
- policy issues raised by the Commission.

The CCC also provides a focus for dissemination of information from the Commission to health care consumers.

The purpose of the CCC is to provide a core group of individuals, each with expertise from a consumer's perspectives of a range of health issues, with whom the Commissioner can consult.

Membership is restricted to groups which are viewed as peak organisations. CCC members will:

- be nominated by their organisation;
- represent the views of their organisation;
- speak on behalf of their organisations, and
- provide conduit for information flow between the Commission and their organisation and its constituents.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Member organisations may nominate representatives and an alternative for appointment to the CCC.

The Commissioner appoints members to the CCC:

- from nominated representatives of community and consumer groups
- as individuals who can make an important contribution to the work of the CCC.

Existing members of the CCC are consulted prior to new members being appointed. The CCC must agree to the nominee and the Commissioner has power of veto.

Members of the CCC are appointed for a term of office of up to three years, with eligibility for re-appointment if nominated by their sponsoring community or consumer group. Members may be removed if, for any reason, they cease to represent that group.

Members (or organisations) who, by breach of confidentiality or other matter, cause the CCC to be reduced in its effectiveness, may have their right to membership of the CCC withdrawn. Such decisions may be made by the CCC or by the Commissioner and will be followed up with written reasons for the decision.

The chair of the CCC is the Commissioner of the Health Care Complaints Commission. The Commission appoints the Executive Officer to assist the CCC.

## **ORGANISATIONS REPRESENTED ON THE CCC**

- Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council
- Alzheimer's Association
- Association of Wellbeing of Children in Healthcare
- Carers NSW
- Combined Pensioners & Superannuants Association
- Community Restorative Centre NSW
- Council on the Ageing NSW
- Ethnic Communities Council
- Health Consumers of Rural and Remote Australia
- Mental Health Coordinating Council
- NSW Consumer Advisory Group-Mental Health
- NSW Council for Intellectual Disability
- NSW Council of Social Services
- People with Disability Australia Incorporated
- Positive Life NSW
- Youth Action and Policy Association NSW
- Women's Health NSW

## **OPERATION**

The CCC meets quarterly. The quorum for meetings of the CCC is **five (5)** members, not including the Executive Officer. After each meeting a summary of the deliberations of the CCC is prepared and may be freely distributed.

The CCC may decide, from time to time, to establish sub-committees or working groups to pursue its objectives. The CCC may co-opt onto the sub-committees/working groups any person who the CCC believes will be able to contribute to the work of the sub-committee or working group.

The CCC operates in accordance with the following Code of Conduct.

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## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **Confidentiality**

The work of the Commission takes place in a complex legal and political environment and is often the subject of intense media and public scrutiny.

To ensure effective consultation between the Commission and the CCC, sensitive information which is not in the public domain may sometimes be disclosed to members on a confidential basis. Members are asked to be mindful of the confidentiality of this information and should not disclose it to outside parties.

If members are unsure about the confidentiality status of particular information disclosed to them, the Executive Officer should be asked to clarify the position.

### **Other responsibilities**

Members have a responsibility to advise the CCC of individual approaches by the media, complainants, health providers or any other person seeking information about issues discussed at CCC meetings. Members are free to discuss in general terms the role and function of the CCC without reference to a CCC meeting.

### **Public comment**

Members should avoid making public comments that may appear to be an official comment of the Commission or the CCC.

### **Other Issues**

Members are encouraged to bring concerns about the operation of the Commission to meetings of the CCC, or to the attention of the Chair, before making public comment about the Commission.

**CONSUMER CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE  
to the Health Care Complaints Commission**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE, CODE OF CONDUCT AND CONFIDENTIALITY  
AGREEMENT**

I have read and accept the above terms of reference and code of conduct.

Organisation .....

Chairperson/Executive Officer .....

Name

.....  
Signature Date

Representative .....

Name

.....  
Signature Date

Designated Alternative .....

Name

.....  
Signature Date