



# Community Advisory Council Membership Application Kit

## Introduction

Welcome and thank you for your interest in joining the Mental Health (MH) Community Advisory Council (CAC).

This application kit will give you some background information on what is involved in being a CAC member and the steps to apply to join.

We hope you find this application kit helpful.

If you have any questions contact:

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## What is a Community Advisory Council?

Community Advisory Councils (CAC) are an important mechanism to embed the voice and perspectives of consumers, carers and families in decisions and processes that impact their healthcare experience and journey.

### Our CACs:

- Represent the equality and diversity of consumers, community, carers and families in communities we serve.
- Provide a mechanism to for people with lived experience of the health system to ensure that care is person centred.
- Contribute to change in a range of ways from providing feedback to participating in the design, and evaluation health services.
- Care about wellness, partnership, equity, learning and growing, mental health and safety, care, trust and modelling these in our work.

## What does the CAC do?

CACs contribute to improving the experience and journey of health consumers and their carers and families.

To do this, CACs focus their efforts on 5 priority areas:

1. Environments in which healthcare is delivered.
2. Communication and information between consumers, carers and health service providers.

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**One** team, **many** dreams.

Care / Respect / Innovation / Teamwork / Integrity



3. Safe, effective, and quality health services.
4. Connections with and between consumers, carers, NMHS staff and leadership and networks.
5. Representation and participation of consumers, carers and families in mechanisms to improve person-centred care.

## What is involved in being a CAC member?

### Scope and Responsibilities

The responsibility of CAC members is to provide the perspective of consumers and their carers and families, by:

- Providing information about priorities of consumers, carers, families, and communities that will contribute to ensuring that people's health experience and journey is person centred.
- Ensuring the voices and perspectives of consumers, carers, families, and community are represented in discussions and decision-making processes.
- Contributing to CAC discussions and decision-making processes
- Providing information and feedback to community groups and organisations.
- Building and maintaining positive and effective connections with a range of stakeholders including hospital staff, other CACs and community.
- Championing consumer, family, carer and community engagement, participation and leadership.

### Limits to the role of a CAC member

CAC members are not expected to:

- Have a technical background on subjects being discussed. The CAC member provides perspectives based on their lived or living experience and those whom they represent.
- Undertake consumer and community consultations beyond what is required to inform your own input at meetings. If wider consultation is required, the member can advise the committee on how this might be achieved but are not expected to undertake the work themselves.

### Commitments

As a CAC member, you are committing to:

- Attend CAC meetings, as scheduled and for the duration, and other meetings as negotiated.
- Read materials and documents provided in preparation for meetings.



- Participate in orientation and training as required.
- Maintain confidentiality required in the role of the CAC member.
- Participate in an annual performance and development review of the functions and operations of the CAC.
- Work within:
  - CAC Terms of Reference.
  - CAC purpose and functions.
  - Relevant legislation, policies and Standards (which you will be introduced to).
  - Values and behaviours as agreed by the CAC.

**Meetings:** The CAC meets monthly, for a period up to two hours at least 10 times per year.

**Term:** The term of appointment for members will be two (2) years from the date of the appointment.

## What skills and experience do I need to be a CAC member?

CAC members need to have:

- A passion for improving people's health care experience and journey.
- Experience of a health service provided at Mental Health as a consumer, carer or family member (current or recent i.e. within the last 5 years preferred).
- Understanding of the hospital experiences of different groups the group represented in the WA community as relevant to this hospital.
- Personal integrity, empathy, and compassion.
- And the ability to:
  - network and gather information from grassroots consumers and carers
  - actively listen and communicate effectively.
  - work respectfully as a member of a large team of professionals to find solutions.
  - negotiate and resolve issues.
  - think critically and creatively to find solutions.
  - put aside personal views explore the perspectives and priorities of others

## What support do I receive as a CAC member?

By participating in a CAC you will be:



- Welcomed, accepted and respected as part of the MH health team.
- Enabled (to the best of our capabilities) to participate (for example, ensuring venues are accessible, virtual meetings, printing of papers).
- Provided with information and training to make sure you feel supported and comfortable to contribute.
- Reimbursed for your participation at meetings (more information will be provided when you apply).
- Given the opportunity to ask any questions you have and have answered them openly and honestly.
- Heard and have the opportunity to share what you know about issues that impact consumer journey and experience.
- Provided with a mentor/buddy (for new members) and ongoing training opportunities.
- Acknowledged and valued for your contribution.

## How do I become a member?

There are a number of steps in the application process and these are summarised in the flow chart on the next page.

If you think the CAC is a good fit for you, we encourage you to return a completed application form to [MHPHDS.CommunityAdvisoryCouncil@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:MHPHDS.CommunityAdvisoryCouncil@health.wa.gov.au)

We will be in contact with you about your application.

**Thank you for your interest in being a part of the MH CAC.**

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request.

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## Steps to become a member



### Joining a CAC

