



8.1 HCCA CODE OF CONDUCT - MEMBERS, VOLUNTEERS AND CONSUMER REPRESENTATIVES

A. Introduction

1. The Health Care Consumers' Association of the ACT (HCCA) is the peak health consumer advocacy organisation in the ACT. It has supported and developed health consumer perspectives and policy in the ACT since 1978.
2. HCCA is an organisation that supports health care consumers to participate in policy, planning and service decisions that affect their health. HCCA members and volunteers are expected to work to improve the quality and availability of health services and to support consumers to identify shared priorities about health and then represent these views to the ACT Government.
3. At all times the Code of Conduct is informed by reference to HCCA's Strategic Plan and is aligned with its Constitution.

B. Members and Volunteers Code of Conduct

4. This Code of Conduct applies to HCCA members, consumer representatives and volunteers.
5. The Code of Conduct is focussed around three key areas:

- 1. Respect for people and the law**
- 2. Professional and personal integrity**
- 3. Privacy and confidentiality**

C. Respect for people and the law

- a) Treat people with respect for their different values, beliefs, cultures, religions, social and economic status, and gender identities.
- b) Refrain from any act or statement which could be interpreted as bullying or harassment.
- c) Value and acknowledge the contribution of others and engage co-operatively

D. Professional and personal integrity

- a) Be aware of and comply with the laws and policies that apply to a particular issue.
- b) Question a direction or a policy if you believe it is unreasonable, unethical or unlawful.
- c) Report any illegalities of which you become aware.
- d) Act in a professional manner with honesty and integrity, avoiding conduct that would negatively impact the reputation of HCCA.
- e) Declare any potential for conflict of interest, and stand aside when conflict of interest exists or is perceived to exist by others.
- f) Act transparently and within your authority.
- g) Strive to be objective and unprejudiced in your approach, considering each case on its own merits.
- h) Do not use your position to gain an advantage for yourself, family or friends.
- i) Consider the broader impact of your decisions on your consumer relationships, the community and HCCA.

E. Privacy and confidentiality

I. Members and Volunteers

- a) Appropriate levels of privacy and confidentiality should be observed in all verbal and written communication.
- b) Maintain confidentiality of information communicated in a private context.
- c) Observing the confidentiality and privacy of information does not prevent participants from seeking wider consumer views by discussing important issues in general terms with other health consumers.
- d) Do not make statements to the media – HCCA has a delegated media spokesperson who is the only person authorised to make public statements on behalf of the organisation.
- e) The HCCA Privacy and Confidentiality Policy applies to all members, volunteers and consumer representatives.

II. Consumers Representatives as members of committees

- a) A consumer representative while appointed by HCCA to a committee, is to represent the views of the community, and not any personal views and should not purport to represent the views of HCCA. This applies to any business of the committee, both in and out of session, and to any dealings with the general public.
- b) A consumer representative must maintain the level of confidentiality required by the level and type of business conducted by the committee at all times. If they are unsure about how to consult with other consumers

about important issues, it is important that they check and seek clarification from the chairperson of the committee in the first instance, and with HCCA's Executive Director if additional clarification is needed.

- c) If the committee is dealing with an issue that the consumer representative believes is not being adequately addressed by the committee then the representative should discuss this with the chair of the committee and/or the Executive Director of HCCA before taking any action in relation to this issue.

F. Breaches

6. Breaches of the Code of Conduct may result in a member or volunteer facing disciplinary action, including removal from a committee/s or expulsion from the organisation. Breaches of the Code of Conduct will be managed in accordance with HCCA's Constitution, Section 6.11 - Disciplining of Members.
7. Members, volunteers, staff and consumer representatives have an obligation to notify the Executive Director or a member of the Executive Committee if they become aware of a breach of the Code of Conduct. If the breach relates to obligations relating to an external committee, they can also raise the matter with the chairperson of the committee.

Related Documents:

1. Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
2. Media and Public Communications Policy
3. HCCA Constitution
4. HCCA Complaints Procedure

Agreements:

1. 8.10 Code of Conduct Agreement - Consumer Representatives
2. 2. 8 Code of Conduct - Executive Committee
3. 2.1 Code of Conduct – Staff
4. 8.9 Volunteer Agreement