

NCIRS Consumer Advisory Group Terms of Reference

Background

The National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance (NCIRS) is the leading research organisation on Australia that provides objective expert advice on all aspects of vaccine preventable diseases and other issues related to immunisation, to inform policy and planning for immunisation services in Australia.

Social science research is a core component of NCIRS's work. The aims of social science research at NCIRS are to:

- seek insights on the behavioural, social, cultural and structural drivers of vaccine uptake
- investigate evidence-based approaches to improve vaccine uptake
- inform immunisation policy and programs.

The [NCIRS Social Science Unit](#) conducts original research to achieve these aims using a range of methods, including qualitative interviews and focus groups, surveys and online intervention testing.

NCIRS also incorporates social science research and insights across a broad range of organisational activities, including communications, policy development, program evaluation, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander immunisation, vaccine safety and immunisation in the Asia-Pacific regions.

The NCIRS Social Science Unit also collaborates and consults on a range of social science immunisation projects with local and international collaborators and organisations.

Timeframes

In 2022 the SSU Consumer Advisory Group (CAG) was initially set up for twelve (12) months. In 2023 the CAG was extended for two (2) more years.

Role & Responsibilities

The guiding principle of the SSU Consumer Advisory Group (CAG) is to integrate consumer and lived experience perspectives into the work of the SSU.

The responsibilities of the SSU CAG are to:

- Help the SSU team identify issues and priorities that would improve vaccination uptake, including about services and information provided to consumers, families and carers.
- Review and provide feedback on research proposals (as lay summaries).
- Review and provide feedback on activities and resources that are designed for or have an impact on consumers.
- Contribute to projects and initiatives taking place in the SSU.

Drafted: 11 August 2022

Revised: 11 November 2022

Endorsed: 21 February 2023

Membership

- There will be up to 11 consumer advisors, including the consumer Chair.
- At least two staff members of the SSU team will also attend meetings as support and guidance.
- Members will be appointed initially for a term of twelve (12) months with a view to extend following a review of the advisory group.

Chair

The Chair of the Consumer Advisory Group will initially be held by Catherine Hughes, with the opportunity to mentor and support an advisory group member to be a Deputy Chair of the advisory group following the trial twelve (12) months.

Links with NCIRS governance structures

The SSU team and the Chair of the Consumer Advisory Group will link with the Social Science Unit Advisory Group, which provides strategic advice to the SSU on new and existing social science research projects. The outputs of this group are overseen by the NCIRS Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC). The NCIRS SAC contributes to and endorses SSU research strategies within the broader context of NCIRS strategic aims and monitors the performance of SSU scientific outcomes and quality of the research.

Reporting

The Consumer Advisory Group minutes and reports will be provided to the Social Science Advisory Group via the SSU. This can be done through a verbal or written report.

If any issues are required to be raised or reported, this will be provided offline to the NCIRS Associate Director of Surveillance, Coverage, Evaluation and Social Science.

Meetings

- Three (3) meetings will be held quarterly for the initial 12 months – October 2022, February, and June 2023.
- Meeting times will be set based on consumer advisor location (time differences) and the start of daylight savings.
- Meetings will be held virtually (Teams/videoconference).
- Additional pre-reading and preparation will be required by members prior to each meeting.
- A quorum of half of the Advisory Group membership will be required for a meeting to occur.

Meeting values

The Chair will check in with all those attending CAG meetings, both consumers and staff to set agreed values. A reminder of these values will be made at the commencement of each meeting and conversations will be guided based on these agreed values.

Record of meetings

A written record of the Consumer Advisory Group meetings will be through action minutes and will be compiled by an SSU staff member and circulated for review within two weeks of each meeting.

A copy of the minutes will also be provided with the meeting papers.

Review

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed by the Consumer Advisory Group membership and approved following the first meeting.

The Terms of Reference will be endorsed by the SSU team and CAG members.