

# Consumer participation information FAQ sheet

updated July 2016

Document 4.1

## Participating in department committees and groups

Participation occurs when consumers, carers and community members are meaningfully involved in decision making about health policy and planning, care and treatment, and the wellbeing of themselves and the community. It is about having your say, thinking about why you believe in your view, and listening to the views and ideas of others. In working together, decisions may include a range of perspectives.

The *Doing it with us not for us policy* grew from the Victorian Government's commitment to involving people in decision making about health care services and the need for a strategic policy to guide the process. The Department of Health and Human Services supports a range of initiatives that promote and support consumer involvement in:

- Decision making about their own treatment and care
- service development and quality improvement
- health policy developments.

This FAQ sheets provides information for consumers participating in department policy and project advisory committees and groups.

## Payment for participation

### Is there a payment for participation?

Yes, the Department of Health and Human Services provides payment for participation in accordance with the Department of Premier and Cabinet's *Appointment and Remuneration Guidelines (1 July 2016), Schedule C: Classification criteria and remuneration schedule - Group C organisations schedule C*, page 31 outlines the payment scale:

#### Advisory Committees, Registration boards and Management boards of small organisations

Band	Classification criteria	Chair (Fee per day)	Member (Fee per day)
3	(a) Advisory bodies to departments. These bodies could be established under legislation or at the instigation of a Minister or department Head. The role of such bodies would be to hold internal inquiries/investigations in relation to an operation (or some aspect of an operation) of a particular department. The body would report within the department and at the department Head level or below.  (b) Advisory committees required to consider issues/matters that are local or affect confined areas including local land and water advisory committees.  (c) Trade and para-professional registration and licensing committees where legislation defines qualifications and regulates operating requirements of practising individuals.	Up to \$252	Up to \$216

Effective from 1 July 2016. Note: Remuneration levels are exclusive of any superannuation obligations.

This equates to \$25 per hour for participation in a Department of Health and Human Services advisory committee or similar meeting



## **How do I get paid?**

If you have an ABN number, you can issue the Department of Health and Human Services with a tax invoice.

Alternatively, you can be appointed to the Department Health and Human Services as an employee. You need to complete the Department's 'new employee forms', including an Australian Taxation Office *Tax file number declaration form* and a bank account nomination form. You will also need to undergo a police check to join a Department of Health and Human Services advisory committee and a ministerial advisory committee or group, or to be appointed to a board. You will then be issued with a Department payroll number.

At each meeting you attend you will be asked to sign an attendance form. The attendance form is used to verify your attendance at the meeting and is attached to the payment request that is submitted to the Department's finance team. A copy of the meeting minutes you attended can also be used to verify your attendance at a meeting.

Please note remuneration may also be provided in the form of a voucher, particularly for one off activities or very short term tasks.

## **Am I able to get reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses?**

Yes, the Department of Health and Human Services will reimburse out-of-pocket expenses associated with your participation on the committee or group. The reimbursement rates are outlined within the above guidelines.

These rates and the guidelines should be referred to within the Terms of Reference of your committee or group.

You can request to be reimbursed for the cost of using your car, including parking, or public transport to attend the meeting. After each meeting, complete a *Personal Expenses claim form* to be reimbursed for the kilometres travelled or cost of the trip on public transport. Documentation of expenses must be provided to the Department of Health and Human Services. For example, send in your car park receipt, have your Myki receipt photocopied by a Department of Health and Human Services staff member, or provide full details of your motor vehicle and odometer readings. Alternatively, if you require a taxi, speak to the committee organiser about the availability of taxi cab vouchers.

Claims will take approximately 3 to 4 weeks to process. Payment is via electronic transfer into your nominated bank account.

## **Who do I talk to if I am not getting paid?**

Please inform the Department of Health and Human Services staff person or committee organiser.

## **Who do I talk to**

### **If I have any problems, whom can I talk to at the Department of Health and Human Services?**

It is best to talk to the committee or group organiser or chairperson (if a Department of Health and Human Services employee) and most issues can be resolved quickly and without any formal process. The Terms of Reference for your committee may outline additional pathways.

### **Am I able to discuss what the committee is working on with other consumers, carers or community members?**

As a member of the committee or group, you are subject to the same rules of confidentiality as all other committee members. The committee's Terms of Reference outline the rules, which by accepting a position on the committee you have agreed to abide by. If you are unsure, please ask your committee organiser or Chair to discuss the rules with you.

## **Am I able to meet with other consumers, carers or community members on Department of Health and Human Services committees and groups?**

You can network with other consumers through the Health Issues Centre's (HIC) *Consumers Step Up* program. To be placed on the register you can contact the *Consumers Step Up* coordinator on (03) 9664 9343 or [csu@healthissuescentre.org.au](mailto:csu@healthissuescentre.org.au). The register lists consumers and the committee/s they sit on. If you would like to make direct contact with a particular consumer, you may be able to do so through the Health Issues Centre

## **Is there support if I need it?**

The Department of Health and Human Services funds the Health Issues Centre to provide support to consumers, carers and community members on its committees. You can join the Health Issues Centre *Consumers Step Up* program, which will give you access to information, support and training run by the Health Issues Centre. You can contact the *Consumers Step Up* coordinator on (03) 9664 9343.

## **Attending the meeting**

### **How do I get into the building?** (Note this is for 50 Lonsdale Street Melbourne)

The Department of Health and Human Services' security policy requires that advance notice of all visitors need to be provided. Therefore, it is important that you RSVP to invitations to attend meetings.

Department staff will give your name to security staff. When you enter the building make your way to the Department of Health and Human Services security desk. All visitors must report to the security desk and produce photo identification before they are granted access. Visitor passes provide access through the speed stiles and the lift lobby into the relevant floors reception area.

Look for the appropriate lift to take you to your designated floor level. The floor level corresponds to the first half of the meeting room number. For example, meeting room 13:01 is on floor level 13. To open to the reception area door, swipe your card over the console. If your meeting room is in the foyer of the floor make your way to the room.

If the meeting room is in other part of the floor, visitors will either be met by the person they are visiting or they can use the telephone and list of names and extension numbers to ring the committee organiser.

Make sure you always have the numbers of a few people you can contact at the Department to let you into the floor level area.

Please return your card to the security desk on the ground floor prior to leaving the building.

### **How can I get hard copies of meeting papers?**

The meeting organiser can provide you with hard copies of committee or group papers. Please ask the meeting organiser to post you the papers prior to the meeting. Also, some documents are quite lengthy and you are not expected to print these documents out at home.

### **Will there be other consumers, carers or community members on the committee and groups?**

Where possible the Department of Health and Human Services will appoint two consumers, carers or community members to a committee or group. However, due to a limited pool of consumers, this is not always possible.

### **How do I get issues on the agenda?**

Talk to the committee or group Chair and Department committee or group organiser about adding an item to the agenda. Items should be added to the agenda at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

Health Issues Centre produced this document with assistance from the Department of Health and Human Services, Consumer Partnerships and Quality Standards Unit.

For further information, please contact:

**Health Issues Centre**

T: 03 9664 9343

E: [csu@healthissuescentre.org.au](mailto:csu@healthissuescentre.org.au)

W: [www.healthissuescentre.org.au](http://www.healthissuescentre.org.au)

**Department of Health and Human Services**

W: [www.health.vic.gov.au/consumers](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/consumers)