

THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL AT WESTMEAD

FAMILY ADVISORY COUNCIL

TERMS OF REFERENCE

PURPOSE

The Children's Hospital at Westmead's (CHW) Family Advisory Council (FAC) will provide a family perspective with regards to planning, policy, service development and improvement at CHW. The FAC is also the formal mechanism for the partnership between families and staff with a focus on improvement and planning.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FAMILY ADVISORY COUNCIL

- To provide feedback and input from a family perspective on issues referred to it by CHW.
- To raise significant issues and recommendations of a systemic nature, from a family perspective, which it would like the Hospital's senior management to consider.
- To maintain a strong and positive partnership between staff and families, with an emphasis on policy, planning and improvement.
- To represent the wider population of families who use the hospital and the different services within the hospital.
- To uphold CHW's vision of Better Health for Children and Excellence in Child Health Care.
- To provide a forum for promoting family centred care at CHW.
- To produce an annual Action Plan for proposed tasks and projects.
- To produce a bi-annual report to the Health Care Quality Committee (see Reporting and Accountability).

MEMBERSHIP

- Twelve parents and/or carers that represent a wide range of departments and services within the hospital.
- Three community members representing organisations, for example, the Association for the Wellbeing of Children in Healthcare (AWCH), Association for Children with a Disability, HeartKids etc.
- Three CHW staff members who provide support to the group in terms of facilitation and secretariat. These positions are filled by the Head of the Service Improvement Unit, Carer Support Program Coordinator and Consumer Participation Coordinator.
- The Executive Sponsor for the group is the Director of Clinical Governance who will attend the FAC when requested and/or as the need arises.

New positions may be created as the need arises.

TERMS OF MEMBERSHIP

Two years for parent/carer & community members, with a possible option to renew membership for two additional two year terms. The Family Advisory Council will maintain a staggered rotation to ensure continuity within the group. Outgoing members may be asked to provide mentorship to new members of the group with support of staff members.

The FAC and Senior Management of CHW will co-opt members for working groups as needed, and CHW staff, including the CHW Executive, will be invited to meetings for the exchange of information as required.

Parent/carer members will have an annual membership review to assess whether membership continues to be mutually beneficial to the individual and the FAC.

COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

Elections for Chair and Deputy Chair of the Family Advisory Council will be held every year. Ideally, the positions will be filled by a parent/carer member of the Family Advisory Council.

Nominations for Chair can be made by all members, and members can self nominate. The nominee/s will be asked to answer several questions about themselves in order to help members cast their vote. The questions and answers will be distributed to members one week before the election meeting.

The positions of Chair and Deputy Chair will be voted upon separately.

Elections will be held at an ordinary meeting of the Council. Proxy voting is allowed.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHAIR

The Chair will:

- be a figurehead for the FAC
- ensure the Council complies with the Terms of Reference (this document).
- participate in review of Council functions.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEPUTY CHAIR

The Deputy Chair will:

- provide assistance to the Chair as required.
- fulfil the responsibilities of the Chair should the Chair be unavailable.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SECRETARIAT

Secretariat will be provided by the CHW staff members of the FAC, particularly the Consumer Participation Coordinator.

The Secretariat will:

- liaise with the Chair regarding the agenda and business of the meetings.
- ensure the meetings run according to agenda.

- take minutes and distribute them as soon as possible and within a week of the meeting date
- facilitate the review of documents to the FAC from CHW.
- gather and keep track of information that will be required for the bi-annual report.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Council members will:

- bring their experiences as family members of a child or young person with health problems to the table, without personal bias.
- see beyond their personal experiences to assist CHW so that it may achieve its vision for child health.
- maintain confidentiality at all times.
- contribute at meetings, and provide advice and review relevant documents between meetings as requested.
- reply to emails or mail in a timely manner.
- work in a spirit of partnership and within the values of CHW.
- adhere to relevant sections of the NSW Health Code of Conduct.
- submit to a background check and sign a prohibited employment declaration form.

Ideally, at least two FAC members will attend any meetings, functions or seminars that are arranged by and/or to which the FAC is invited. Any individual members wanting to represent the FAC must receive its prior consent.

If a Council member has any concerns or issues about the general functioning of the FAC, with another member or about their own membership, they are encouraged to contact the Head of the Service Improvement Unit or, if not available, the Consumer Participation Coordinator, to discuss.

If the Head of the Service Improvement Unit or the Consumer Participation Coordinator have any concerns about an individual's membership, they may arrange to meet with that individual to try and resolve any issues and discuss ongoing involvement in the Council.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF ORGANISATION REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS

Council members representing organisations will:

- Provide feedback on current issues in children's healthcare.
- Provide feedback from the organisation's perspective on CHW issues.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Staff council members will:

- Provide information and feedback to members to enable them to fulfil their purpose and responsibilities.
- Provide facilitation, secretariat and other support required by the FAC to enable them to fulfil their purpose and responsibilities.
- Work in a spirit of partnership and within the values of CHW.

MEETINGS

The FAC will meet at the Hospital every 4 weeks for three hours, or as agreed by members.

A quorum for voting purposes is 50% plus one.

Members must notify the Consumer Participation Coordinator if they are unable to attend the meeting.

If a member is absent for more than three meetings without reason, their position may be considered vacant.

Members are strongly encouraged to not attend the FAC during periods of acute illness or stress with their child, which is related to their ongoing relationship with CHW.

CHW will cover parking expenses incurred by family members in attending meetings and will provide morning tea, lunch and child care to enable family members to attend.

MEETING AGENDAS & DOCUMENTS FOR REVIEW

The Consumer Participation Coordinator must send an email to the FAC containing the minutes from the previous meeting and a draft agenda for the next meeting at least two weeks prior to the meeting date. This email should also contain any documents for review by the FAC and on which the FAC must provide comment at the upcoming meeting.

All members are required to review the draft agenda and provide amendments or additions by the end of the week preceding the meeting.

The Consumer Participation Coordinator will then email the final agenda to all members no later than two days before the meeting date and discuss the items on the agenda with the Chair prior to the meeting.

Members of the FAC are expected to have reviewed any documents prior to the meeting and be prepared to discuss them.

REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

FAC will make a formal report of its activities to the Health Care Quality Committee every 6 months on:

- how the FAC has fulfilled its responsibilities to CHW
- tasks/projects that have been initiated and their progress.

FAC will report annually on its achievements as measured against the action plan.

FAC is accountable to the Executive and Senior Management Group at CHW, through the Head of the Service Improvement Unit and the Executive Sponsor, who is the Director of Clinical Governance and Medicine.

Once approved by Family Advisory Council, a summary of its activities will be provided for family newsletters and will be placed on the Intranet and Internet for public information.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN COUNCIL MEMBERS

Any member of the Family Advisory Council that attends a meeting on behalf of the Council is responsible for reporting back the outcomes of the meeting to the rest of the Council. If two or more members attend a meeting, they must select one person to be responsible for reporting back to the Council.

The report back must be done within two days of the meeting to enable all members to be kept up-to-date with developments and also allow other members to respond.

The Consumer Participation Coordinator is required to make sure that the person responsible for reporting back to the group does so.

When responding to an email sent by another member, the respondent must use "Reply All", unless it is not appropriate to do so.

If a member of the FAC has questions or would like an update on the Council or wishes to discuss previous or upcoming meetings, they may contact the Consumer Participation Coordinator.

RECRUITMENT OF NEW MEMBERS

Recruitment of new members will be undertaken by the staff members of the Family Advisory Council. New members must successfully complete the recruitment process which may include:

- an interview with the staff members and Chair and Deputy Chair,
- consideration of references supplied by the family's clinical team,
- a Working With Children Check,
- orientation to CHW and the Family Advisory Council.

Final decisions regarding successful applicants will be made by the staff members, Chair and Deputy Chair.

New members will be on a provisional membership for six months, after which time, their membership will be reviewed by the staff members, Chair and Deputy Chair.