

Consumer engagement plan

2013 – 2017



Engaging with our consumers





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Advisory Committee and Chief Executive

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We are pleased to introduce Austin Health's 2013 – 2017 Consumer Engagement Plan.

This plan demonstrates our commitment to engaging with our consumers, whether they be patients, their family and/or carers, or community members. This plan is organisation wide and provides a mechanism to coordinate consumer engagement across Austin Health's many services and sites.

Consumer engagement refers to the wide range of strategies in which consumers are involved in the planning, service delivery and evaluation of our health care. It covers partnerships between patients and their family and/or carers and health professionals when care is provided at an individual level, as well as partnerships with consumers at a health service level.

The vision for consumer engagement at Austin Health is to be a health service that integrates consumer engagement into every part of the organisation, so that consumers are active partners in how we undertake our business and care provision. We want consumers at Austin Health to be given meaningful opportunities to actively engage, and ensure that their perspective are listened to and valued in the planning, service delivery and evaluation of our health service.

To achieve this, we are committed to fostering a positive organisational culture where consumers and staff have the access and support they require for active consumer engagement.

This Plan builds on our previous 2009-2012 Community Engagement Plan. We are proud of what we achieved in 2009 – 2012 with respect to consumer engagement, with highlights including:

- » Working closely with Access Services for Kooris (ASK) to improve post-discharge care coordination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) people. ASK, in consultation with our Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer, helps patients achieve their discharge plan and keep engaged in the management of their own health;
- » Our Victorian Spinal Cord Service recently worked with health service and community partners to established a Spinal Hub, which connects people with spinal cord injury to one another, and provides up to date information regarding spinal cord injury;
- » We have engaged a large number of volunteers to spread the word in their communities regarding advanced care directives;
- » We appointed a dedicated Consumer Engagement Manager to lead, drive, coordinate and support consumer engagement activities across Austin Health;
- » Increasing the number of Consumer Representatives that sit on Austin Health committees, including Board and Executive level committees; and
- » Launching a weekly peer support and drop in centre for young people accessing Austin Health's Mental Health services. This service is provided by a youth consumer advisory group. The young people have commented that this service gives them 'hope to see other young people who have been through the service and are getting on with their lives'.

It is clear that we can only achieve our vision for consumer engagement with the strong support of consumers. This plan has been developed following extensive consumer consultation and input, and we would like to thank everyone who contributed in this process.

Mary Ann Morgan

Chair, Community
Advisory Committee

Dr Brendan Murphy

Chief Executive Officer

About us

Austin Health is a long-established major academic medical service providing health care, health professional education and health research in Northern East Melbourne. We play a central role in delivering health services to our local community, and a state-wide role in the delivery of tertiary and quaternary adult health care.

We have a strong reputation as an innovative, progressive health service that actively pursues and achieves sustainable improvement in service access, quality and safety. This has enabled us to accommodate significant growth in service demand while continuing to improve performance and maintain a sound budget position.

Austin Health is one of Victoria's largest health care providers, employing over 8,000 people across several locations, including the Austin Hospital, Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital (HRH), the Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre (RTRC) and the Olivia Newton-John Cancer & Wellness Centre (ONJC&WC).

Austin Health is renowned for its specialist work in cancer, liver transplantation, spinal cord injuries, neurology, endocrinology, mental health and rehabilitation including a number of State-wide services, including:

- » Victorian Spinal Cord Service,
- » Victorian Respiratory Support Services,
- » Victorian Liver Transplant Unit,
- » Acquired Brain Injury Unit,
- » Child Mental Health Inpatient Unit, and
- » Victorian Toxicology Service.

Austin Health is an internationally recognised leader in clinical teaching and training, affiliated with eight universities. In addition, it is the largest Victorian provider of training for specialist physicians and surgeons. Our extensive research program includes a focus on cancer, diabetes, respiratory disease, liver disease, heart disease, stroke, epilepsy and psychiatry. Through the internationally renowned Austin LifeSciences, we bring together eight leading research institutes and over 800 Austin Health researchers.

We participate with state and local service providers in a range of partnerships. These partnerships focus on the improvement of service planning, provision and coordination. Some of our partners include organisations encompassed by the Planning for a Healthier North alliance and the North East Primary Care Partnership Chronic Disease Collaborative and North Eastern Integrated Melbourne Cancer Service.

Austin Health employs over 8,000 staff who provide a wide range of services every year including:

- » 100,000 inpatient admissions
- » 25,000 operations
- » 220,000 attendances to 360 specialist outpatient clinics
- » 80,000 attendances to a range of allied health outpatient clinics
- » Over 75,000 emergency department attendances

OUR FACILITIES

Austin Hospital

Initially established in 1882, Austin Hospital was significantly redeveloped in 2005 with two new hospital towers, one occupied by Mercy Hospital for Women.

The Austin Hospital features:

- » Over 560 acute beds
- » A 20 bed Intensive Care Unit
- » A 42 cubicle adult emergency department containing a specialist six-bed unit for children
- » A purpose-built, 26-bed high-tech spinal unit to serve all of Victoria and Tasmania
- » An expanded mental health precinct with 55 adult mental health beds
- » A unique teaching, training and research precinct including a teaching space and laboratory on each level of the Austin Hospital Tower
- » Home to a number of state-wide services
- » Home to the Olivia Newton-John Cancer & Wellness Centre day oncology and wellness centre.

Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital

The Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital has a proud history of caring for Veterans and War Widows.

Originally built in 1941, the hospital became part of Austin Health in 1995. Today the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital continues to treat Veterans and War Widows and also provides services to the wider community including day surgery, palliative care, mental health services, aged care, and a range of outpatient services including radiotherapy, nuclear medicine, radiation oncology and radiology.

With the opening of four additional operating theatres at the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital in 2012, it will take on a much more substantial elective surgery role.

Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Hospital

The Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre is a specialist provider of intensive rehabilitation programs, providing a comprehensive and coordinated range of medical, nursing, therapy and support services to people with a wide range of disabilities.

Areas of specialty include acquired brain injury rehabilitation, amputee rehabilitation, neurological rehabilitation, spinal cord injury rehabilitation, orthopaedic rehabilitation and orthotic and prosthetic services. Services are provided on an inpatient and day patient basis.



OUR COMMUNITY

At Austin Health, we take pride in providing high quality patient care to a diverse multicultural population, a significant veteran community, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and to our local, rural and interstate communities.

Austin Health serves a local catchment population of approximately 1.28 million people, living in eight local government areas (LGAs): Banyule; Boroondara; Darebin; Hume; Manningham; Moreland; Nillumbik and Whittlesea.

- Local catchment
- ✚ Austin Hospital
- ▲ Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital
- ◆ Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre

Over the life of this Plan, the catchment will grow by just over 7% to 1.37 million people in the five years to 2016, and 13% to 1.63 in the ten years to 2021. However, population growth across the catchment is highly variable. Whittlesea and Hume LGAs populations are expected to increase by 34% and 20% respectively over ten years. Populations of other LGAs of Austin Health's catchment will grow by 7% or less over the same period: a significantly slower growth rate than Victoria as a whole.

The catchment is characterised by:

- » High levels of cultural diversity in six of our eight catchment LGAs apart
 - » A high proportion of people from Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander background in Darebin
 - » Pockets of socio-economic disadvantage – particularly in the Darebin, Hume, Whittlesea and Moreland LGAs
 - » Significant variation between our catchment LGAs regarding health behaviours, with high smoking rates in Darebin, Hume and Whittlesea. These LGAs also have high GP utilisation rates
- As a state-wide service provider for a number of key clinical services, Austin Health's community also includes a large number of people from other metropolitan and rural areas. Whilst there is potential for anyone to access these Austin Health services, the majority of state-wide consumers tend to present with highly complex needs. These can be for either an emergency (e.g. spinal trauma) or chronic condition (e.g. transplant, or child mental health) but often require frequent utilization of services over an extended period of time. Some state-wide consumers will have a lifetime relationship with Austin Health.

OUR VISION AND PURPOSE

Vision: To provide outstanding patient care, research and education.

Purpose: Austin Health is the major provider of tertiary health services, health professional education and research in the northeast of Melbourne.

OUR VALUES

At Austin Health we remain firmly committed to our values of:

Integrity:

We exercise honesty, candour and sincerity

Accountability:

We are transparent, responsible and answerable

Respect:

We treat others with dignity, consideration, equality and value

Excellence:

We continually strive for excellence

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Priority 1: Patient experience is exceptional

Our patient-focused approach to clinical service improvement aims to ensure that our patients receive the best care possible and achieve the best health outcomes. We intend to further develop our patient-centric, holistic and integrated approaches, with dramatic improvements in patient empowerment, health literacy, self-management and ultimately, satisfaction with their overall experience of our care.

Priority 2: A global leader in specialized care and research

Our aim is to clearly articulate and promote our areas of current and aspirational specialisation. We intend to attract the world's best people, models and technology to support our research ambitions, and position Austin Health as an Australian leader in health research, linked internationally, with pre-eminent university partners, and advanced capacity in basic, clinical and translational research. At the same time, we will use our research and clinical profile to attract trainees, top class clinicians and other high calibre staff.

Priority 3: We deliver outstanding care

Our aim is to work with other healthcare and social service partners to get health services right in our region - increasing patients' ability to access clinical services and other supports, as inpatients, outpatients and emergency presentations. We will enhance our commitment to service innovation, yielding outstanding care outcomes.

Priority 4: An excellent place to work and learn

Our aim is to maintain our position as an Australian leader in clinical education and staff capacity building, via formal teaching, mentoring and coaching programs. We will develop new and better team-based 'on-the-job' staff development models and increase our commitment to clinical and non-clinical leadership development. We intend to further enhance staff satisfaction by developing highly capable and adaptive leaders, building strong teams, and helping each person who works with us to understand.

Priority 5: A productive and sustainable organisation

Our long-term financial objectives are to further improve our financial performance, generating funds to reinvest in our organisation and update facilities and equipment. We aim to allocate our limited resources in a way that maximises overall quality and performance. To achieve our financial goals we need to utilise information technology and build on our role in Victoria's leader in health-based electronic information systems. In addition, we aim to be an exemplar amongst public health services for responsible and sustainable resource use.

CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT AT AUSTIN HEALTH

Austin Health has a long-standing practice and commitment to consumer engagement.

The importance of consumer engagement is supported by Austin Health's clinical governance framework, which identifies consumer engagement as one of the four core framework domains. In addition, the Austin Health Board endorsed Patient Care Policy sets the overarching expectations relating to the provision of high quality care, and the importance of consumer engagement and principles relating to person centred care in this delivery.

POLICY CONTEXT

Across Australia, the importance of consumer engagement is supported by the *Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights*¹, the *Australian Safety and Quality Framework for Health Care*², the *Australian Safety and Quality Health Service Standards*³, other national policies, reports of state-based inquiries and a range of other jurisdictional initiatives.

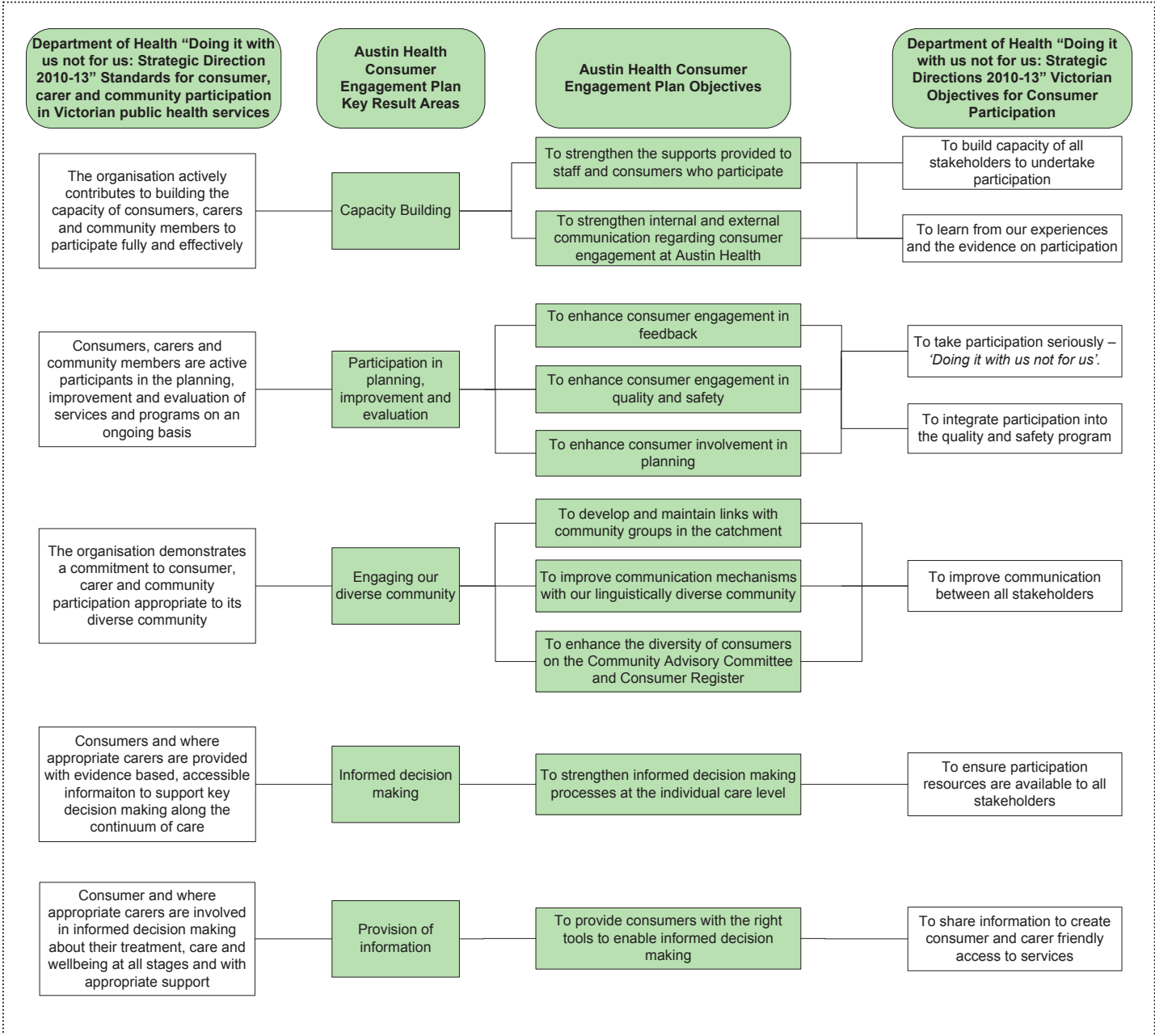
In Victoria, *Doing it with us not for us* is the Department of Health's policy on consumer, carer and community participation in the health care system. The aim of this policy is to set a framework whereby consumers, carers and community members can participate within health services and the Department of Health in improving health policy and planning, carer and treatment, and the wellbeing of all Victorians.

To achieve this aim, there are seven objectives which outline what health services need to do in order to make participation happen:

1. To take participation seriously – ‘*Doing it with us not for us*’
2. To share information to create consumer and carer friendly access to services
3. To improve communication between all stakeholders
4. To build the capacity of all stakeholders to undertake participation
5. To integrate participation into the quality and safety program
6. To learn from experiences and the evidence on participation
7. To ensure participation resources are available to all stakeholders.

In addition, *Doing it with us not for us* outlines five specific participation standards that health services should monitor and report against:

1. The organisation demonstrates a commitment to consumer, carer and community participation appropriate to its diverse community
2. Consumers, and, where appropriate, carers are involved in informed decision-making about their treatment and care and wellbeing at all stages and with appropriate support
3. Consumers, and, where appropriate, carers are provided with evidence-based, accessible information to support key decision-making along the continuum of care
4. Consumers, carers and community members are active participants in the planning, improvement, and evaluation of services and programs on an ongoing basis
5. The organisation actively contributes to building the capacity of consumers, carers and community members to participate fully and effectively.



1 Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare, 2008, *Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights*
 2 Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare, 2010, *Australian Safety and Quality Framework for HealthCare*
 3 Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare, 2012, *National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards*

Relationship between Victorian Department of Health "Doing it with us not for us: Strategic Direction 2010-13" standards and objectives for Consumer Participation and the Austin Health Consumer Engagement Plan Key Result Areas and Objectives.

DEFINITIONS

Carer refers a person who provides care to another person with whom they are in a care relationship.

A person is in a **care relationship** if they provide another person, or receive from another person, care because one of the persons in the relationship has a disability, is older, has a mental illness or has an ongoing medical condition.

Community members are groups of people who have an interest in the development of an accessible, effective and efficient health and aged care service that best meets their needs.

Consumer Engagement refers to the wide range of strategies in which consumers are involved in the planning, service delivery and evaluation of health care. It covers partnerships between patients and health professionals when care is provided at an individual level, as well as partnerships with consumers at a health service level.

Consumers of healthcare refers to patients, potential patients, carers and community members.

A **patient** is a person receiving healthcare, with synonyms including consumer and client.

Person Centred Care is an approach to treatment and care whereby:

- » the treatment and care provided is adapted according to the patient's values, preferences, expressed needs, beliefs, cultural needs, family situation and lifestyle;
- » the patient and their family and/or carer are treated with dignity and respect;
- » the patient and their family and/or carer are an integral part of the care team who collaborate with health care professionals in decision making around their care; and
- » there is open communication and sharing of information between the patient and their family and/or carer and health care professionals.

Person centred care can be used interchangeably with patient centred care, patient and family centred care and patient centredness.

CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Consumer engagement at Austin Health is underpinned by four key domains: planning, decision-making, feedback and support. The model on the following page provides a visual representation of this framework.

Within each of these domains there are a number of core functions to ensure appropriate consumer engagement.

Some of these core functions include:

- » Consumer engagement policies, procedures and guidelines;

- » Committees which provide governance of consumer engagement at Austin Health, such as the Community Advisory Committee and the Partnering with Consumers Committee;
- » Consumer consultation in strategic, operational and service planning;
- » Patient information materials and consumer consultation in the development of these materials;
- » Mechanisms and processes to empower consumers to be actively engaged in decisions about their own care;
- » Conduct of patient satisfaction and patient experience surveys;
- » Consumer representation on strategic and operational committees;
- » Consumer consultation in quality and safety;
- » Conduct of community forums, focus groups and consumer workshops;
- » Feedback systems such as MySay and Patient Centred Walk Arounds;
- » Complaints management and patient advocacy processes;
- » Training and education for consumer representatives and staff;
- » Allocation of staffing resources for consumer engagement e.g. Consumer Engagement Manager and Consumer Participation Support Officer; and
- » The Austin Health Consumer Register.

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

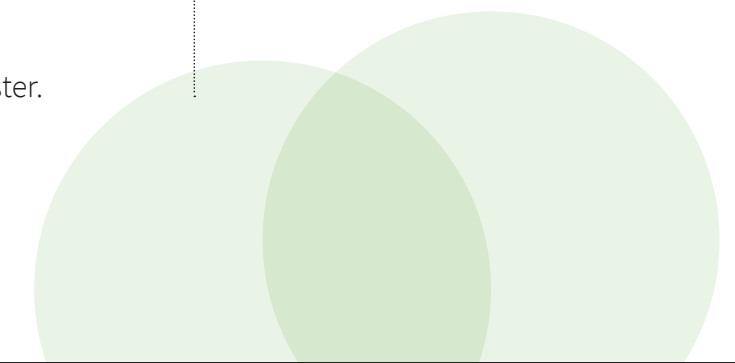
A major strategy for ensuring the development of effective consumer engagement at Austin Health is through the resourcing of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC).

The CAC is legislated for in the Victorian State Government's Health Service Act 1988 and is directly accountable to the Board of Austin Health. Membership consists of 8-12 consumers who reflect the special needs and interests of specific communities within the Austin Health catchment, three Board members and four staff members.

The CAC has responsibility for advising Austin Health on governance, policy and strategy in relation to consumer engagement and its impact on health service outcomes, and advocating to the Austin Health Board on issues relevant to consumer well being.

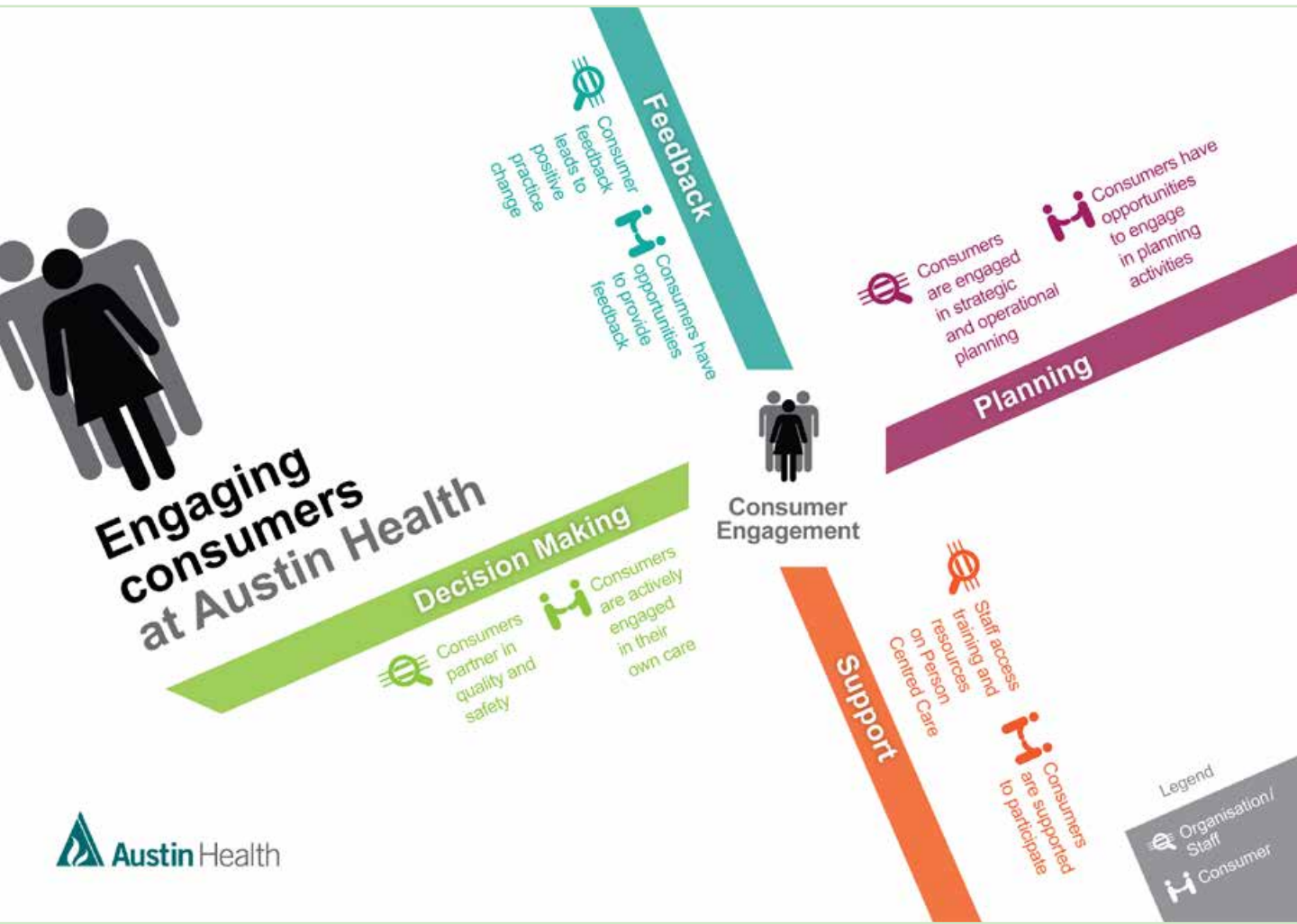
The Austin Health Board has a complementary responsibility to seek informed advice in a timely manner from the CAC on major strategic issues and developments within the health service affecting consumers.

One way in which the CAC assists in developing and enhancing consumer engagement at Austin Health is through the development and monitoring of the Consumer Engagement Plan.



OUR CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Austin Health has a structured organisation wide planning framework, with the strategic plan setting the overarching direction and agenda for the whole health service. Underneath the strategic plan are a number of organisation wide support plans, these including the Consumer Engagement Plan. Organisation wide support plans such as the Consumer Engagement Plan influence the development and implementation of all other plans at all levels of the organisation.



The 2013 – 2017 Consumer Engagement Plan reports against five key result areas:



1. Capacity Building – how Austin Health contributes to building the capacity of staff and consumers to participate fully and effectively;



2. Participation in Planning, Improvement and Evaluation – how consumers are active participants in the planning, improvement and evaluation of Austin Health services and programs on an ongoing basis;



3. Engaging our Diverse Community – how the needs of Austin Health's diverse community are considered in all services, particularly multicultural and indigenous communities and people with a disability;



4. Informed Decision-Making – how patients and their family and/or carer are involved at Austin Health in informed decision-making about their treatment, care and wellbeing at all stages and with appropriate support; and



5. Provision of Information – how consumers are provided with evidence based, accessible information to support key decision-making.

Within the plan, against each key result area are a number of objectives and actions which detail how Austin Health will achieve that key result area.

CONSUMER CONSULTATION FOR THE PLAN

The development of the plan was informed/ strengthened by consumer consultation. The purpose of this consultation was to understand consumer perspectives on what Austin Health does well and should focus on in the next five years in relation to consumer engagement.

The consumer consultation strategy involved three key aspects:

- » Conduct of a focus group with consumers across Austin Health;
- » Conduct of a consumer survey; and
- » Conduct of one-on-one consumer interviews.

A total of 109 consumer consultations occurred (five consumers through the focus group, 49 responses to the consumer survey and 46 one-on-one consumer interviews).

The key theme emerging from the consultation was for Austin Health to strengthen concepts and principles related to person centred care, for example:

- » Improving the overall experience for the patient;
- » Investing in strategies to empower and educate consumers;
- » Improving the mechanisms to recognise and respond to the needs to diverse patient groups; and
- » Developing more person centred policies and procedures.

When asked how the consumers would like to have more of a say in how Austin Health services are planned and delivered, responses included:

- » Delivering news about Austin Health more frequently via social media;
- » Conducting patient experience surveys; and
- » Providing consumers with opportunities to be directly involved in those committees where quality and safety decisions-making occurs.

This feedback, combined with feedback obtained from the Austin Health Consumer Advisory Committee in a dedicated planning workshop, has shaped the 2013 – 2017 Austin Health Consumer Engagement Plan.

MONITORING AND REPORTING OF THE PLAN

Within Austin Health, monitoring of the implementation of the plan will occur regularly through the Austin Health Partnering with Consumers Committee and Community Advisory Committee.

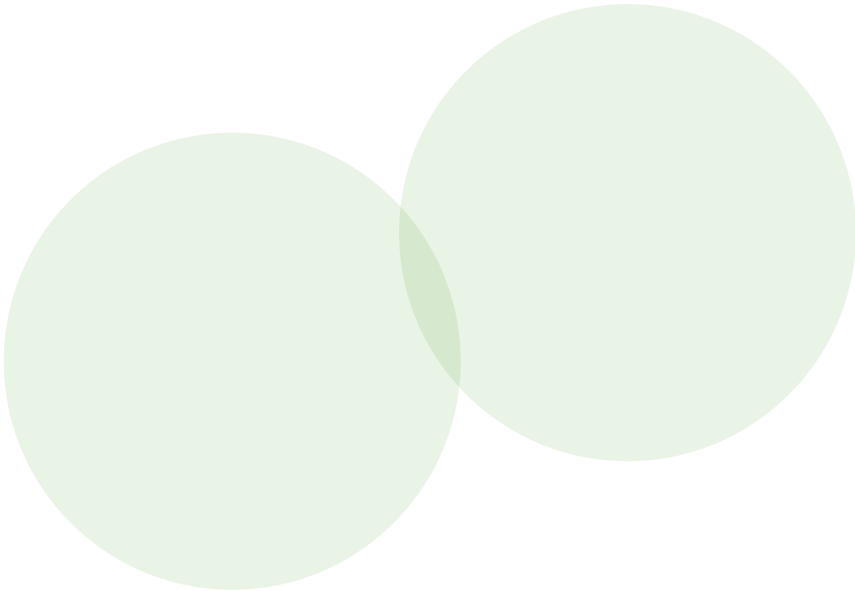
Annual progress reports will also be provided to the Executive Committee and Board Committee.

Reporting externally will occur to the Department of Health in line with annual mandatory reporting requirements. Implementation will also be monitored annually by the Australian Council on HealthCare Standards (ACHS) as part of Austin Health's accreditation processes under the National Safety and Quality in Health Service Standards.

The wider community will be kept abreast of the implementation of the plan via the annual Austin Health Quality of Care Report and through regular updates provided on the Austin Health internet.

THE 2013 – 2017 AUSTIN HEALTH CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Key Result Area	Objective	Action	Year
1. Capacity building	1.1 To strengthen the supports provided to staff and consumers who participate	1.1.1 Implement a mentoring and support network for consumers who participate at Austin Health	2014
		1.1.2 Develop and implement a recognition program for consumers who participate at Austin Health	2014
		1.1.3 Develop and implement a recognition program for staff activities involving consumer engagement	2013
		1.1.4 Provide internal training and education opportunities for staff to improve skills related to consumer engagement	2013 – 2017
	1.2 To strengthen internal and external communication regarding consumer engagement at Austin Health	1.2.1 Explore alternative mechanisms for promoting consumer engagement at Austin Health e.g. social media	2013 – 2017
		1.2.2 Develop and implement a system to centrally record and capture consumer engagement activities that occur across Austin Health	2013
		1.2.3 Promote and communicate the 2013-2017 Consumer Engagement Plan to Austin Health staff and the wider community	2013
		1.2.4 Develop formal feedback and communication mechanisms between the Community Advisory Committee and consumers who participate on other governance committees across Austin Health	2013



Key Result Area	Objective	Action	Year
2. Participation in planning, improvement and evaluation	2.1 To enhance consumer engagement in feedback	2.1.1 Explore additional mechanisms for consumers to provide feedback about their experience at Austin Health	2014 – 2015
		2.1.2 Develop mechanisms for consumer involvement in the review of themes and trends related to feedback and complaints	2013
		2.1.3 Undertake patient satisfaction survey in relation to inpatient meals across all three sites and report on outcomes to the Community Advisory Committee	2014 – 2015
		2.1.4 Develop formal processes for reporting on feedback data to the Austin Health Community Advisory Committee	2014
	2.2 To enhance consumer engagement in quality and safety	2.2.1 Enhance consumer representation on key governance committees	2013 – 2017
		2.2.2 Provide consumers with opportunities to directly contribute to quality and safety improvement initiatives at Austin Health	2013 – 2017
		2.2.3 Enhance the monitoring of key Austin Health quality and safety activities by the Community Advisory Committee	2013
	2.3 To enhance consumer involvement in planning	2.3.1 Consult with consumers about key facility upgrades and new developments	2013 – 2017
		2.3.2 Provide direct consumer input into the development of the Austin Health 2014 Cultural Responsiveness Plan	2014
		2.3.3 Develop the Austin Health 2015 Disability Services Plan with direct input from consumers	2015
		2.3.4 Develop the Austin Health 2018 Consumer Engagement Plan with direct input from consumers	2017

Key Result Area	Objective		Action		Year
3. Engaging our diverse community	3.1	To develop and maintain links with community groups in the catchment	3.1.1	Identify key Austin Health community groups and engage with them to develop appropriate relationships and consumer engagement referral mechanisms	2016 – 2017
	3.2	To improve communication mechanisms with our linguistically diverse community	3.2.1	Explore opportunities to better support communication with linguistically diverse consumers e.g. translation of key patient information material, use of smart devices for translation purposes	2014 – 2015
	3.3	To enhance the diversity of consumers on the Community Advisory Committee and Consumer Register	3.3.1	Implement strategies to increase the number and diversity of consumers on the Austin health Consumer Register	2013 – 2017
			3.3.2	Implement strategies to facilitate appointment of an Aboriginal Consumer Advisory Committee member	2015
			3.3.3	Implement strategies to facilitate appointment of a Veteran Consumer Advisory Committee member	2014
4. Informed decision making	4.1	To strengthen informed decision making processes at the individual care level	4.1.1	Undertake an audit of patient satisfaction with consent in high risk areas and report on outcomes to the Community Advisory Committee	2015
			4.1.2	Undertake an audit of patient satisfaction with advance care planning and report on outcomes to the Community Advisory Committee	2016
			4.1.3	Enhance opportunities and mechanisms for patients to be more active participants in decision making about their care	2014 – 2017
			4.1.4	Review the Austin Health Charter of Healthcare Rights and Responsibilities in collaboration with consumers and strengthen the mechanisms for informing staff and consumers of the charter	2013
5. Provision of information	5.1	To provide consumers with the right tools to enable informed decision making	5.1.1	Enhance the accessibility of patient information material on the Austin Health Internet, in collaboration with consumers	2014 – 2015
			5.1.2	Implement mechanisms to ensure that all Austin Health patient information material is developed in consultation with consumers	2013
			5.1.3	Explore opportunities to improve the information provided to patients prior to and on admission to hospital	2015 – 2017

